



# EU-ASIA DIALOGUE

*Shaping a Common Future for Europe and Asia –  
Sharing Policy Innovation and Best Practices in Addressing Common Challenges*

## Conference Report

# “Regional Cooperation on Maritime Security”

SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, APRIL 12, 2013





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Seoul, 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2013

## Report

### Policy Conference

#### “Regional Cooperation on Maritime Security”

On 12 April 2013, a Policy Conference on “Regional Cooperation on Maritime Security” took place in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The conference was co-organized by The Sea Lanes of Communication Study Group –Korea. The event, which brought together experts, academics and policy-makers from Europe and Asia, focussed on regional cooperation in the South China Sea, Arabic Sea, and between Europe and Asia. The aim of the conference was to discuss new arising challenges in Asia and the national maritime policies of key countries. More broadly, participants were asked to identify opportunities for closer cooperation between the European Union and Asia to ensure maritime security and avoid conflicts over the new sea lane through the Arctic region. Altogether, 33 experts from navies, the political sector and think tanks from Asia and Europe participated in the event.

After a brief opening speech by **Dr. Wilhelm Hofmeister**, Director Regional Programme Political Dialogue with Asia, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Singapore, who introduced the EU-Asia Dialogue project and the goals of the cluster “Maritime Piracy and Security”, **Prof. Dr. Jin-Hyun Paik**, Chairman, The Sea Lanes of Communication Study Group – Korea (SLOC), Republic of Korea, and Judge, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, Germany, delivered his welcoming remarks. He stressed that security is a very important topic in East Asia. While the tensions with North Korea are of particular interest to South Korea, maritime security has emerged as the main security issue over the past years. SLOC is one of the key study groups on this topic in the region and provides detailed analyses on a wide range of topics connected to maritime security and safety. The strengthening of the naval powers in China, Japan and South Korea as well as the existing territorial disputes underline the importance of the East and South China Sea. Thus, it is important to foster dialogue among the countries involved and extra-regional actors such as the EU and ReCAAP.



Mr. **Johannes Regenbrecht**, Deputy Head, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Korea, started his speech by highlighting the importance of dialogue and sharing of policy innovations. Forums such as the EU-Asia Dialogue work as a platform for this kind of exchange and are mutually beneficial. He underlined that the disputes over the various islands can be settled only through a combination of regional and bilateral cooperation. In order to make cooperation work, East Asia requires two main conditions. Firstly, international law on the sea has to be strengthened and enforced. Secondly, regional institutions have to be established as they help to build trust and confidence. In this context the sharing of the European experiences on conflict management and confidence-building can be very useful.

The final welcoming remark was given by Mr. **Uwe Wissenbach**, First Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Korea. Mr. Wissenbach emphasized the importance of exchange between policymakers and experts. A close cooperation between those two groups is highly desirable and needed. The Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) are of shared interest to both parties of this Strategic Partnership since Europe and South Korea are the starting and end point of one of the longest SLOCs in the world. Additionally, most of the trading goods between the two regions are transported by ship. The European Union is committed to play its part in ensuring the safety and stability of this trade route, but it relies on local experts and the naval powers to do so. Thus, the EU is strongly interested in a close cooperation with South Korea and the other countries in the region.

The guest of honor of the conference was **Jin Ha Hwang**, Member of the National Assembly, Republic of Korea. Mr. Hwang started his key note speech by thanking the participants to come to South Korea despite the times of crisis. This shows the international support for the Republic of Korea and the importance of cooperation. While maritime tensions are increasing all over the world, they are particularly strong in East Asia. This is due to the high level of development of the countries, the increasing investments into naval powers and the unsettled disputes. There are clear signs that weapons of mass destructions (WMD) are transported over the sea lanes. One country of origin appears to be North Korea and thus, this is a source of income for the isolated neighbor. In addition, there are not only disputes over islands but also the borders between territorial and international waters. These borderlines have implications on law enforcement and the usage of the waters. Thirdly, piracy and to a bigger extend maritime terrorism are threats to East Asia. All these challenges require a close cooperation. The European countries can be very helpful partners for East Asia since they are old naval powers and were able to settle their disputes in a peaceful manner.



## Session I: New Arising Challenges to Maritime Security in Asia

The first session started with a presentation by **Dr. Hui-Yi Katherine Tseng**, Research Associate at the East Asian Institute, Singapore, who talked on *Maritime Disputes in East Asia*. She started her presentation by giving an overview of the developments in 2012 which became tense, especially after Japan signed the official contract with the private owner of the Senkaku / Diaoyu Islands, which meant a formal nationalization of the islands and the potentially resource rich waters. In 2012 China also released a White Paper on the Diaoyu Islands. Together with the continental shelf claims which were submitted to the United Nations, this document is the first official statement made by China. One major problem for resolving the conflict is that Japan does not accept the Chinese claims and denies the existence of a dispute. Thus, direct talks with China mean a de facto acknowledgement of the dispute which then requires a positioning from Japan. In addition, the claims by Taiwan are largely ignored. But a shift can be seen as Japan tries to engage with Taiwan mainly as it fears Taiwan could cooperate with China.

Tseng highlighted four issues East Asia is facing: the territorial disputes over the Diaoyu / Senkaku islands; the rights to no-resource-related activities in foreign exclusive economic zones (EEZ); the demarcation of EEZs and continental shelf; and the joint development (JD) cooperation. The controversies in this context are the historical rights versus effective control and the absence of international legislations. This results in a war of law over the meaning of EEZs and the effective use of gray zone areas which are not yet regulated. In order to resolve the problems, task forces were established, but they have had very little effect so far due to a lack of implementation and enforcement. A problem in this regard is that some countries link the claims to its government's legitimacy which makes it more difficult for them to make concessions. Besides these nationalistic movements, the role of external stakeholders, mainly the United States and its pivot to Asia, has to be taken into account.

Tseng concluded by saying that besides the effective control by Japan, China tries to establish new realities. Regular patrols through the China Marine Surveillance (CMS) and the China Meteorological Administration (CMA) function as civilian law enforcement agencies which shall create awareness of oceanic interest among the public.

**Dr. Ian Storey**, Senior Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, spoke on *Maritime Security in Southeast Asia*. From 2001 to 2007 piracy, sea robbery and terrorism dominated the discussion on maritime security in Southeast Asia. As a result the countries initiated proactive regional responses, such as coordinated naval and air patrols or the establishment of ReCAAP, and relied on capacity building from external powers. These two measurements helped to improve the situation dramatically.



Similar to East Asia, territorial and maritime boundary disputes have emerged in the South China Sea since 2008, especially between China, Vietnam and the Philippines. Given the growing China-US competition in the region, Storey said that these disputes will remain for the foreseeable future. However, no country has interest in a violent conflict due to the high level of economic interdependence and a common interest in stability as well as free maritime trade. On the other hand, the number of stand offs might increase making an accidental clash possible.

The two main disputes have occurred over the Paracel and Spratly Islands. While the Paracel conflict is of bilateral nature between China and Vietnam, the Spratly islands are a multilateral problem with occupations made by China, Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines. Has the conflict formerly shown a cyclic development, no sign of de-escalation can be observed since 2008 and 2010. According to Storey, this has six reasons: growth of popular nationalism where each concession would be a sign of weakness; strengthening of jurisdictional claims and sovereignty; growing competition over maritime resources; modernization of the Chinese navy and paramilitary maritime agencies; military modernization programs by almost every country; and America's more proactive behavior.

ASEAN and China have been trying to resolve the problem and achieved some basic agreements such as the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. But there is no moving forward at the moment since China rejects a formal Code of Conduct and due to the lack of unity among the six littoral and four non-littoral ASEAN members. Storey highlighted three possible solutions for the situation. Firstly, the claims could be submitted to the International Court of Justice. This solution is unlikely as China sees the disputes in the South China Sea as bilateral, and rejects third party mediation and international legal arbitration. Secondly, a settlement could be negotiated among the claimants, but this is hindered by the unwillingness to make concessions. Thirdly, the disputes could be shelved through joint development initiatives. Thus, he concluded that the status quo will remain for quite some time with ebbs and flows of rising tensions.

The third presentation *Strategic Shift towards Asia – A European Perspective* was delivered by **Col. Ralph Thiele**, Chairman, Political-Military Society, Germany. He stressed that everybody is speaking of the US pivot to Asia, but ignores that the EU has always been present in the region and is a key actor. Usually the policies of NATO and EU follow US-movements around five years later. But given the already existing presence, the EU can take a much more active stance this time.

He emphasized that maritime security does not take place only on the water, but also at the space. Today's navigation systems strongly rely on satellites. In this context Maritime Domain Awareness is a key topic and offers possibilities for a close practical cooperation



among Asian countries and between Europe and Asia. This technical cooperation is also an economic factor and should not be ignored. Secondly, climate change plays an important role for maritime security. The opening of the Arctic offers new trade routes, but at the same time floods and rising sea level pose a threat to the major harbors in Asia. Thiele concluded by saying that these are two less complicated issues on which Europe and Asia can start a cooperation. After trust and confidence were built up, the cooperation can evolve and address tense topics.

The discussion after the presentations concentrated strongly on legal issues and the involvement of China. It was stressed that China enhanced its engagement with Asian partners and fostered more dialogue with small countries for which UNCLOS is the most important legal basis. Although the law was signed but not ratified by the USA, they still implement it. China, on the other hand, is committed to ITCLOS and has ratified UNCLOS, but uses an ambivalent interpretation of the law. The problem is that there is very little discussion on rules of engagement and on civil warfare which is strongly used by the Chinese. It was mentioned that the situation in East Asia is more dangerous than in Southeast Asia due to the stronger armies, the lack of cooperation and conflict management. This is a possible entry point for the EU. For instance, an Asian version of the SHADE project can be implemented to share awareness and start a non-military cooperation within Asia and between Europe and Asia.

## **Session II: Maritime Security in the East and South China Sea**

The second session focussed on more national perspectives on the current challenges in the East and South China Sea. The first presenter was **Dr. Nong Hong**, Associate Research Professor and Deputy Director, Research Center for Oceans Law and Policy, National Institute for South China Sea Studies, China. At the beginning of her presentation *Understanding China's South China Sea Policy and Exploring the Prospects of Dispute Management* Dr. Hong showed three different South China Sea issues: islands regimes; historic concepts and other maritime regimes; resources management, marine environment and freedom of navigation. She said that settlement of the disputes depends on the sensitiveness of the issue. While island regimes are highly sensitive, resources management, marine environment and freedom of navigation are the least sensitive topics and show potential for cooperation.

Hong underlined that the Chinese claims are based on the sovereign right defined by UNCLOS and historic rights. The island regimes in the South China Sea grant sovereignty, maritime zones (Art. 121 of UNCLOS) and influence the delimitation of EEZs. While China and Vietnam have historical demands, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and the Philippines



base their claims on modern demands. Thus, the question is how important historical demands are in contemporary international law and how both demands can be balanced. In the following Dr. Hong explained why the dispute has escalated since 2009. Firstly, there are still old claims based on the above mentioned demands which are now emphasized through new dimensions such as national legislations, international attention and submission of legal documents. Secondly, the situation is further complicated through the involvement of external players and the strong focus on China's responsibility. She explained that China does not want resources, but only its sovereignty and peaceful co-existence based on international law. The maintenance of freedom of navigation and the security of the SLOC is China's core interest. There might be misperceptions over China as they focus too much on bilateral approaches. But they are open to regional efforts and joint development.

Possible ways for dispute management among the claimant states are bilateral efforts, UNCLOS and other international laws, the evolvement of a Code of Conduct (COC) and confidence building. The problem with the CoC with ASEAN is that China wants to speak to each country individually, while ASEAN wants to achieve internal agreement first and then speak as one block. The disputes can also be settled through third party forums, guaranteeing freedom of navigation and maritime security cooperation deriving from convergence of interest.

Second speaker of this panel was **Dr. Chang-Hoon Shin**, Director, International Law and Conflict Resolution Program, ASAN Institute for Policy Studies, Republic of Korea, who presented *A Korean Perspective on Maritime Security in the East China Sea*. Dr. Shin highlighted five challenges which are present at the East China Sea. The first challenge is the dispute over the Senkaku / Diaoyu Islands, but the Republic of Korea has no official position to this issue as it is not directly affected. However, they are concerned about the implications on the Dokdo issue, which is an island dispute between South Korea and Japan. Secondly, Taiwan is seen as the most dangerous flashpoint between China and the USA. Although the cross-strait relations have improved, they might still be a time bomb. The third challenge is security interests which are directly affecting the Chinese-Korean relations. China has strong interests in the Eastern seaboard region as it is vital to its economic development. Thus, each event in this region triggers a Chinese reaction. For instance, the Ieodo marine scientific research station and the Jeju naval base created tensions in the bilateral relations. Fourthly, economic interests on resources and maritime boundaries influence the relations. Due to the small size of the East China Sea (less than 400 nm wide), the EEZs of China and South Korea overlap which creates tensions over the responsibilities. The fifth challenge is North Korea's WMD programme. In recent years there have been proofs that North Korea transported biological and



chemical weapons / material as well as missiles through the East China Sea.

Dr. Shin concluded by discussing possibilities for cooperation in the region. Cooperation in security issues is possible with South Korea and Japan moving forward on this matter. However, the Dokdo issue might delay and hamper the military cooperation. Cooperation in economy is improving. In 2008 Japan and China agreed on a principle consensus on the East China Sea. Cooperation in counter-proliferation is still limited and lacks multilateral legal agreements. Due to the limited cooperation among nation-states, the involvement of the civil-society and NGOs should be explored.

**Dr. Peter Roell**, President, Institute for Strategic-Political-Security and Economic Consultancy, Germany, concluded this session by providing *A European Perspective on Disputes in the East and South China Sea*. Roell's presentation followed the thesis that Securing the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) is and will remain one of the core interests of the People's Republic of China and the new Chinese leadership will continue to strengthen its military capabilities to underline its maritime ambitions. He emphasized that China's investment in the military has been increasing for the past years and will continue to do so, but that China is also interested in cooperation and respecting the existing laws. The cooperation between China and the USA might be hindered by different strategies. While China wants to resolve strategic issues first, the US tries to focus on details. But both countries also have similar interests on counter-piracy measures, humanitarian assistance, disaster response, and, to a limited extent, counter-proliferation. Roell though highlighted that there are small incidents between China and its neighbors which can escalate. In this regard, China has a tendency to use economic force rather than military.

China has also shifted its strategic priorities from defence of China's borders to force protection within East Asia in order to secure the important SLOC. It aims to be a peer competitor to the US in 2050. But China has still weaknesses in its military capabilities. The technological advances are modest and they depend on foreign defence technologies. Roell concluded by saying that the European Union and the individual Member States should continue to offer its support to the Asian countries and engage in regular talks with them as this is done by German officials.

The discussion after the presentations focused on the role of China in the region. Dr. Hong underlined that China shows a passive behavior if all three seas are considered and mostly only reacts to topics initiated by other countries. For instance, the South China Sea was stable until 2009 when the other countries submitted their claims. As a reaction China submitted its well-known u-shape claim to the UN. It was also mentioned that the coastal cities are important for China's prosperity and these cities again strongly depend





on the maritime situation. Therefore, China is getting more active in the maritime arena, but has no interest in worsening the situation. A problem is that Taiwan is not accepted as an independent state which limits the possibilities to have agreements with them on anything but fishery. Another point of criticism was the huge spending on defense. If this money would be invested in economic cooperation, piracy could be stopped and economic prosperity achieved. In order to advance cooperation, multilateral tracks have to be explored besides bilateralism. In this regard, the involvement of the EU can be very helpful. For instance, experts from Europe can help to build regional networks on specific areas such as counter-proliferation.

### **Session III: Regional Cooperation in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabic Sea**

The third session started with a presentation by **Commodore R Seshadri Vasan**, Head of Strategy and Security Studies, Center for Asia Studies, India, on *The Role of Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea*. The Arabian Sea is the SLOC connecting Europe and Asia which results in the presence of extra-regional powers who have an interest in the security of this SLOC. At the same time, it is a volatile neighborhood faced with cross-border terrorism. Three choke points can be identified in the Indian search and rescue region – Hormuz, Aden and Malacca. Besides those three choke points a number of other security challenges exist within the Indian EEZ. Among others, these are smuggling and trafficking, marine pollution, asymmetric warfare with cyber attacks, terrorism and increased investments in military forces. In order to tackle those issues, the Indian Navy is updating its capabilities and becomes more active in maritime domain awareness. Another aspect of the strategy is the ‘looking west-gulf cooperation’ with the Gulf Cooperation Council and individual countries (Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar) to improve trade and mutual security assistance. In the aftermath of the Mumbai terror attacks, measures against such kind of attacks from the sea have been increased and incorporated into the naval strategy of India. Vasan concluded his speech by showing possibilities for future actions. India should establish itself as the regional leader and engage with its maritime neighbors to promote stability and security. The country should increase monitoring of the SLOCs and maritime environment. In addition, India should provide assistance to other littoral states and engage in capacity building.

The second presentation *The European Union – A Key Actor in Maritime Security* was delivered by Mr. **Robert Missen**, Head of Unit, Maritime Security, DG Mobility and Transport, European Commission, Belgium. Mr. Missen started his presentation by saying that maritime and harbor security have been of huge interest since the attacks of 09/11 as the US feared attacks with ships. This resulted in rules to prevent accidents and the



use of ships for attacks. Out of the 27 EU Member States, 22 are coastal states and 25 flag states which results in over 9500 flagged vessels and 764 ports requiring protection. Since 2004 the EU has released four regulations / directives to maritime transport security: Regulation (EC) n° 725/2004 maritime and port facility security, Directive Port Security EC no° 65/2005, Commission Regulation 324/2008 on inspections and Regulation (EC) 450/2008 Modernised Customs Code. In this context, inspections, which are carried out by Member States and the Commission, play a vital role to ensure the security. Between 2005 and 2012 the Commission conducted more than 600 inspections on companies, organizations, ports, national administrations, ships and port facilities. Mr. Missen highlighted that piracy needs a global vision and should not focus on one situation or one solution. In order to be successful, short, medium and long term responses have to be combined. Consistency is a core necessity and different kinds of resources have to be mobilized. In particular, a multi-level approach including diplomacy, military engagement and development aid is the most promising way to prevent and prosecute piracy. While the Gulf of Aden is in the focus at the moment, the EU is concerned about the increasing number of incidents in the Gulf of Guinea.

**Vice Admiral Hubert de Gaullier des Bordes**, EU-MARSIC, France, presented *A French Perspective on Maritime Security*. Mr. De Gaullier highlighted that freedom of transport is of high importance to France since it has one of the biggest EEZ (11,200,000.00 km<sup>2</sup>) in the world, if the overseas territories are included. Besides the security of the SLOCs and the EEZ waters, they are most concerned over the exploitation and preservation of the maritime ecosystems as well as the increasing transnational crimes. France is also a reliable partner and active in each mission of the EU, NATO and UN. The State Action on Sea is a multilevel approach of France which solves interagency problems that often hinder effective cooperation. But De Gaullier said that it is very difficult to transfer this concept. Besides responsibility issues, intelligence and sovereignty problems hinder cooperation between different countries. But at the same time the French fear a "Maritimisation" of the world which ignores other problems.

In the second part of his presentation, De Gaullier focussed on the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC) and the EU-MARSIC project which tries to establish regional maritime information centers similar to ReCAAP. The DCoC has four pillars – information sharing, legislation, capacity-building and training. In order to provide the necessary technical assistance the Djibouti regional training center was established. Altogether 21 nations cooperate in this network with three different centers in Sana´a, Mombasa and Dar es Salaam. The MARSIC project of the European Union tries to enhance regional information sharing and training through combining national networks and information, and making them available to each other. The Djibouti Regional Training Centre provides training



programmes, all necessary information and documentations, and coordinates trainings between the signatory states.

The fourth presentation by **Vice Admiral Maritime Dato <sup>^</sup> Ahmed Puzi Bin Ab Kahar**, Deputy Director General of Operations, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, Malaysia discussed *Implications of the Situation in the Gulf of Aden on Maritime Security in Southeast Asia*. He started his presentation by highlighting that the Strait of Malacca, one of the busiest and narrowest straits in the world, is the major shipping route between Europe and Asia. Especially the narrow Strait of Singapore requires a permanent presence since the robbers are gone immediately as they can reach shore within a short time. As the Gulf of Aden is the extension of this SLOC, the prosperity of Southeast Asia is strongly affected by the situation in Africa. The threats in the region include transnational crimes, illegal seaborne migration, environmental and economic problems. But especially the piracy situation could be improved due to the good cooperation among the neighbors and no incident has been reported since 2009. The Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) played an important role in fighting piracy. Before MMEA was established, 13 individual agencies were responsible for piracy-related issues. Now surveillance, prevention and prosecution are under one roof. Puzi stressed that it is important to differentiate between piracy and armed robbery. While piracy takes place outside the jurisdiction of any State, armed robbery occurs within a State's jurisdiction. According to Puzi all three causes of piracy and sea robbery – economy, social and technology – have to be tackled.

When comparing the Strait of Malacca and Gulf of Aden, it becomes obvious that both have more differences than similarities. The Strait Malacca is faced with sea robbery in territorial waters, has functional governments which conduct the anti-piracy patrols and cooperate bilaterally as well as multilaterally. The Gulf of Aden, on the other hand, is faced with piracy at high sea, not all countries have functional governments and international forces are strongly involved in the anti-piracy controls.

He concluded by saying that information sharing and capacity-building have to be enhanced. Southeast Asian countries can be of help to the countries in the Gulf of Aden although the situation differs.

The discussion at the end of this session focussed on the possibilities to fight piracy. It was emphasized that clear standards have to be established for the cooperation with security companies. These companies play an important role in protecting vessels, but act in a legal grey zone. While the protection of vessels during daytime is increasingly successful, problems still exist during the night and this is why some pirates / robbers change their strategy. Another fear is that terrorists can form an alliance with pirates,



but so far there are no signs of such cooperation, for instance, between the Al-Shabaab and the Somali pirates.

#### **Session IV: Possibilities for Regional Cooperation between Europe and Asia**

The last session focussed on possible cooperation between Europe and Asia and began with a presentation on *Information-Sharing and the Need for Confidence-Building* by **Mr. Yoshihisa Endo**, Executive Director, ReCAAP ISC, Singapore. ReCAAP was initiated against the background of increasing piracy in the Strait of Malacca in the 1990s and early 2000s which threatened maritime navigation, economic development and increased the operating costs. At this time maritime patrols were conducted by individual States, bilateral arrangements were signed between neighbors and bilateral exercises by the Japan Coast Guard existed in India, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand. Additional initiatives included trilateral coordinated patrols, Malacca Strait Patrols and Eyes in the Sky. In order to improve cooperation and collaboration, ReCAAP-ISC was officially launched in November 2006 as the first government-to-government anti-piracy effort in the region. ReCAAP consists of three pillars – information-sharing, capacity building and co-operative arrangements. The Information Sharing Center in Singapore forms the hub for combating piracy in Asia. Besides, each ReCAAP signatory has a focal point to manage incidents, act as point of information exchange, facilitate its country's law enforcement investigations and co-ordinate with neighboring focal points. The capacity building measures include visits to other focal points, senior officials meetings, workshops and information sharing exercises.

The links to Europe are also very close. Four European countries are full members of ReCAAP and more are interested in joining. Both sides work together in implementing the DCoC through joint meetings, trainings and seminars. The vice-president of the European Commission visited ReCAAP-ISC in 2012 and the Commission attended the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Governing Council Meeting as an external participant.

The next presentation was given by **Prof. Kijoo Kim**, Professor, National Defense University, Republic of Korea, and focused on *Capacity-Building and Joint Military Training – The Case of the RoK Navy*. At the beginning Prof. Kim gave an overview of the maritime security environment on the Korean peninsula and in East Asia. In peacetime the Republic of Korea (RoK) Navy has the mission of deterrence, protection of maritime sovereignty and support for national diplomacy. In wartime it protects the SLOC, enforces maritime control and projects power.

Joint military trainings take place with the US and other Western Pacific navies. The only joint training with European navies is RIMPAC which takes place every second years and



involves 22 countries. There is clear need for strengthening joint military trainings with Europe. However, cooperation between Europe and South Korea does exist. There are navy-to-navy talks, personnel/education exchange programs, cooperation in the defense industry and mutual ship visits. While both regions have a strong willingness to cooperate and some shared threat perceptions, the low capability of the RoK navy hinders a closer cooperation. Prof. Kim concluded that more contacts are needed to understand each other better, the two regions should cooperate on common challenges and Europe can actually help Asian countries to build-up its naval capacities and share information with them. On the other hand, the cooperation with the direct neighbors is hindered by the ongoing tensions.

**Vice-Admiral (ret.) Lutz Feldt**, German Maritime Institute, Germany, gave a presentation on *The Importance of the Arctic Region – Implications for Europe and Asia*. There are two drivers why the Arctic region will be of increasing importance to Europe and Asia. Climate change results in an opening of the route and technological development helps to make the area accessible. The region is an opportunity for closer cooperation as it will reduce the trade route between Rotterdam and Busan from 12.300 nm to 7.000 nm. The important actors in this game are the Arctic Five and the Arctic Council. Thus, China, Japan, Italy, South Korea and the European Union wish to gain permanent observer status in the Arctic Council. But the opening of the new shipping routes also leads to new challenges. Coastlines will be affected by the changes in ice coverage, competition over natural resources will influence international relations, legal aspects and common understanding of UNCLOS have to be revised. It is also a risk for conflict as it contains 25 % of the world's gas and oil reserves plus high value minerals, but the demarcation lines for the waters are not yet fixed. While the technology improves, there are still very few ships that can pass the region without an icebreaker. In addition, the vessels will have to deal with the complicated Russian administration. Finally, strategic factors like capabilities to maintain naval presence including a comprehensive approach to maritime surveillance have to be guaranteed. Measures to support the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy and to take these challenges into account include support on Arctic research, promotion and development of environmental friendly technologies, and enhancing bilateral dialogue on Arctic issues with the Arctic Five. Feldt concluded by saying that the Arctic region offers great opportunities, but the risks have to be managed well. This is best done if one agency is responsible for the region and not many to avoid overlapping responsibilities.

The last presentation was given by **Ms Dilarde Teilane**, Policy Officer for Counter Piracy and Maritime Security, European External Action Service, Belgium. She started her



presentation *How to Promote In-Depth Cooperation between Europe and Asia?* by giving an overview on the existing cooperation between the two regions, highlighting the Nuremberg Declaration on an EU-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership, the ASEAN Regional Forum and the Asia-Europe Meeting. Teilane emphasized that many countries in Asia and Europe are blue economies whose sustainable growth is driven by littoral regions and cities. This provides the foundation for a close cooperation which needs high-level engagement. Given the current tensions in Asian waters, the EU can share its experience on maritime cooperation (military and non-military) and regional integration. For example, the management of natural resources can be shared. Cooperation is also required on capacity- and confidence building. Teilane concluded by showing possibilities for a closer cooperation. Among others, this includes a close collaboration between ReCAAP and MARSIC, an extension of the SHADE project on Asia and joint naval trainings.

The final discussion concentrated on information-sharing and the Arctic region. While more countries join ReCAAP, Malaysia and Indonesia have not yet ratified the agreement and it appears that this will not happen in the near future. Despite this, both countries cooperate closely with the signatory countries of ReCAAP. In order to make information sharing work, a change of mindset from need-to-know to obligation-to-share is required. For both the Arctic region and the Asian waters, the way of the European Union to first settle the demarcation lines before exploring the natural resources would be the most tension-free solution. It was criticized that this process might take quite long given that Norway and Russia negotiated for almost 40 years before they finally reached an agreement. It was also mentioned that the requirements for joining the Arctic Council are not very transparent. Since the Arctic Council used to be a closed club, there are many more observers than actual members. But it is necessary to start cooperation in this region, for instance through joint coastal patrols, as the shipping is increasing while no law is in place yet. A solution might be to give specific rights to the littoral states who will then allow ships to pass. As all littoral states have indicated their commitment to environmental protection in the arctic, this might be a common ground for a first agreement. But it will then be difficult to balance the interest in exploitation and protection.

The conference showed that European and Asian countries have a strong interest in maritime security and should enhance their cooperation. ReCAAP and the EU should cooperate closely on information-sharing and capacity-building for its respective member states and in the Gulf of Aden. Although all countries respect UNCLOS, more legal rules are necessary to avoid ambiguous interpretations. The EU can share with Asian partners its experiences on the peaceful settlement of territorial conflicts and military as well as non-military challenges.



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This project is supported by the European Union



A project implemented by the contractor

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