

Maritime cooperation ideas

[Background]

Most Asian countries are surrounded by the sea. There are a number of disputes and conflicts concerning sovereignty and sovereign rights on maritime issues in the region, such as territorial sea, EEZ and continental shelves.

◎Disputes on fisheries resources

There exists constant danger of direct conflicts between fishermen and the authorities, which may escalate to state-to-state confrontation.

◎Disputes on mineral resources

Conflicts can be prevented through government level dialogue, as states are directly involved.

[Idea ①] As sustainable development and use of fisheries resources are important for the stability of fisheries, and further stability of the sea, we propose to consider the following steps:

- (1) Examine modalities of fisheries resources management, using as a reference the fisheries resources management mechanisms in other regions (*e.g.* the North Pacific, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean)
- (2) Consider how the study results of (1) can be applied to this regional sea, with the aim of setting up an interim solution mechanism.



If participating countries agree, we would like to propose to set up a meeting where experts on fisheries can discuss the above-mentioned issues.

[Idea ②] In order to avoid conflicts and accidents at sea from escalating, and considering the outcome of international workshop at Tokyo, we propose the following confidence building measures.

- i) Cooperation on anti-piracy measures in the field of legal assistance;
- ii) Study on existing government-level communication channels which can be used to avoid state-to-state confrontation at sea;
- iii) Promotion of cooperation on search and rescue (SAR); (Japan considers the possibility of hosting an ARF seminar on SAR at an appropriate date next year);
- iv) Presentation on the outline of “Good Seamanship” that are now being prepared by Japanese MOD within the framework of ADMM Plus.