Role of Mediation in Territorial Disputes in East Asia

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to analyze the role of mediation in territorial disputes in East Asia.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: In East Asia, mediation plays a pivotal role in addressing territorial disputes by fostering diplomatic dialogue and negotiation. It aims to de-escalate tensions and find mutually acceptable solutions, preventing conflicts from worsening. Despite challenges like historical animosities and power imbalances, mediation remains a crucial tool for managing territorial disputes in the region.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Structural realism, constructivism & regional institutionalist theory may be used to anchor future studies on mediation in territorial disputes in East Asia. Mediation offers a constructive mechanism for de-escalating tensions and facilitating dialogue between disputing parties. Promoting mediation as a preferred method for resolving territorial disputes in East Asia can enhance regional peacebuilding efforts and promote a rules-based international order.

Keywords: *Mediation, Territorial, Disputes*

INTRODUCTION

Mitigation of territorial conflicts in developed economies such as the USA, Japan, or the UK often involves diplomatic negotiations, peacebuilding initiatives, and legal frameworks aimed at resolving disputes and preventing escalation. For example, in the United States, the resolution of territorial conflicts often involves legal mechanisms such as interstate compacts or treaties. According to data from the U.S. Department of State, there has been a decline in interstate conflicts involving territorial disputes over the past decade, with diplomatic negotiations and international agreements playing a crucial role in mitigating tensions (State.gov, n.d.). Similarly, in Japan, territorial disputes, particularly over islands in the East China Sea and the Sea of Japan, have been managed through diplomatic channels and bilateral negotiations with neighboring countries. Statistics from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicate a decrease in the frequency of maritime incidents and a commitment to peaceful resolution through dialogue and cooperation (MOFA, 2020).

In Europe, particularly in the context of the European Union (EU), territorial conflicts have been mitigated through regional integration, diplomacy, and legal frameworks. For example, the EU has played a crucial role in resolving territorial disputes in the Western Balkans through its enlargement process and support for reconciliation efforts. According to a report by the European External Action Service (EEAS, 2018), the EU's engagement in the region has contributed to stability, cooperation, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Additionally, legal mechanisms such as the European Court of Justice (ECJ) have provided avenues for resolving territorial disputes among EU member states. Statistics from the ECJ indicate a decrease in cases related to territorial conflicts, reflecting the effectiveness of legal mechanisms in managing disputes (ECJ, 2020).

In the Middle East, territorial conflicts are often complex and deeply entrenched, requiring a combination of diplomacy, international mediation, and conflict resolution efforts. For example, the United Nations has been actively involved in mediating territorial disputes in the region, such as the Israel-Palestine conflict. According to data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA, 2021), there has been a decrease in the number of violent incidents and casualties in recent years, attributed to diplomatic efforts and peace negotiations. Additionally, regional organizations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have facilitated dialogue and cooperation among member states to address territorial disputes and promote stability. Statistics from the GCC indicate a decrease in tensions and conflicts among member states, highlighting the role of regional cooperation in mitigating territorial conflicts (GCC, 2020).

In North America, particularly in the context of the United States and Canada, territorial disputes have been managed through legal frameworks, bilateral agreements, and diplomatic channels. For example, the resolution of border disputes between the United States and Canada has been facilitated by treaties such as the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 and the Columbia River Treaty of 1964. According to data from the International Boundary Commission (IBC, 2021), there has been a decrease in border-related disputes and incidents, reflecting the effectiveness of bilateral cooperation and legal mechanisms in managing territorial conflicts. Additionally, organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) have provided platforms for dialogue and mediation to address territorial disputes in the region. Statistics from the OAS indicate a decline

in territorial conflicts among member states, attributed to diplomatic efforts and conflict resolution mechanisms (OAS, 2020).

In Africa, territorial conflicts have been mitigated through regional organizations, peace agreements, and conflict resolution mechanisms. For example, the African Union (AU) has been actively involved in mediating territorial disputes and promoting peace and stability across the continent. According to data from the AU Peace and Security Council (AU PSC), there has been a decline in the number of intra-state conflicts and border disputes, attributed to AU-led mediation efforts and peacebuilding initiatives (AU PSC, 2021). Additionally, regional economic communities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC) have played crucial roles in conflict prevention and resolution. Statistics from ECOWAS indicate a decrease in armed conflicts and cross-border tensions among member states, highlighting the effectiveness of regional cooperation in managing territorial disputes (ECOWAS, 2020).

In Asia-Pacific, territorial conflicts have been managed through diplomacy, confidence-building measures, and multilateral forums. For example, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has established mechanisms such as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to promote dialogue and cooperation among member states. According to data from ASEAN, there has been a decrease in territorial disputes and military confrontations in the region, attributed to ASEAN-led initiatives and diplomatic efforts (ASEAN, 2021). Additionally, multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) have facilitated dialogue and mediation to address territorial disputes and promote regional stability. Statistics from the United Nations show a reduction in the frequency of territorial conflicts and a commitment to peaceful resolution through diplomacy and dialogue (UN, 2020).

In the Caribbean and Latin America, territorial conflicts have been addressed through diplomatic negotiations, regional cooperation, and legal mechanisms. For example, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has played a key role in promoting peace and stability in the region through initiatives such as the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) and the Treaty of Chaguaramas. According to data from CARICOM, there has been a decrease in border disputes and conflicts among member states, attributed to diplomatic efforts and legal frameworks (CARICOM, 2021). Additionally, bilateral agreements and confidence-building measures have been employed to manage territorial disputes between countries in the region. Statistics from the Organization of American States (OAS) indicate a reduction in territorial conflicts and cross-border tensions, reflecting the effectiveness of regional cooperation and diplomatic initiatives (OAS, 2020).

In Oceania, territorial conflicts have been addressed through regional organizations, multilateral agreements, and legal frameworks. For example, the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) has been instrumental in promoting dialogue and cooperation among member states to address territorial disputes and promote regional stability. According to data from PIF, there has been a decline in conflicts related to maritime boundaries and resource management, attributed to PIF-led initiatives and diplomatic efforts (PIF, 2020). Additionally, legal mechanisms such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have provided avenues for resolving territorial disputes among Pacific Island nations. Statistics from the ICJ indicate a decrease in cases related to territorial conflicts, reflecting the effectiveness of legal mechanisms in managing disputes (ICJ, 2021).

In developing economies, such as those in Latin America or Southeast Asia, the mitigation of territorial conflicts often involves regional organizations, peacebuilding efforts, and conflict resolution mechanisms. For instance, in Latin America, the Organization of American States (OAS) plays a significant role in conflict mediation and resolution among member states. According to a study by Mares (2017), the OAS has successfully facilitated dialogue and negotiated settlements in territorial disputes, contributing to regional stability and cooperation. Similarly, in Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has established mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to address territorial disputes and promote peaceful resolution through dialogue and confidence-building measures (ASEAN, 2020).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, territorial conflicts have been a significant challenge, often stemming from colonial legacies, ethnic tensions, and resource competition. However, efforts to mitigate these conflicts have been made through regional organizations, peacekeeping missions, and diplomatic initiatives. For example, the African Union (AU) has been actively involved in conflict resolution and prevention across the continent. The AU's Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) oversees peacekeeping operations, mediation efforts, and conflict resolution initiatives. According to data from the AU PSC, there has been progress in managing territorial conflicts, with a reduction in armed conflicts and interstate disputes in recent years (AU PSC, 2020).

Additionally, regional economic communities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have played crucial roles in conflict mediation and peacebuilding. These organizations have facilitated dialogue among conflicting parties, implemented peace agreements, and monitored ceasefires. According to statistics from ECOWAS and IGAD, there has been a decrease in the frequency and intensity of territorial conflicts within their respective regions, indicating the effectiveness of regional cooperation and conflict resolution mechanisms (ECOWAS, 2021; IGAD, 2020). However, challenges remain, including governance issues, political instability, and the proliferation of non-state actors, underscoring the need for sustained efforts to address the root causes of territorial conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, territorial conflicts have been mitigated through a variety of mechanisms, including regional organizations, peace agreements, and international mediation efforts. For instance, the African Union (AU) has been at the forefront of conflict resolution on the continent. The AU's Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) oversees peacekeeping missions, mediation processes, and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives. According to data from the AU PSC, there has been a decline in the number of armed conflicts and interstate disputes in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade, indicating progress in conflict mitigation (AU PSC, 2020). Furthermore, regional economic communities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have played significant roles in managing territorial conflicts. Through diplomatic efforts, peacekeeping operations, and the deployment of mediation teams, these organizations have contributed to the peaceful resolution of disputes and the maintenance of stability in the region (ECOWAS, 2021; SADC, 2020).

In Sub-Saharan economies, the mitigation of territorial conflicts often involves a combination of local mediation, international intervention, and peacebuilding efforts. For example, in the Horn of Africa region, the African Union (AU) has been actively involved in resolving territorial disputes through its Peace and Security Council. According to data from the AU, there has been a decrease in armed conflicts and border disputes in the region, attributed to AU-led mediation efforts and

peacebuilding initiatives (African Union, 2019). Additionally, in West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has played a key role in mitigating territorial conflicts and promoting regional integration through its conflict prevention and mediation mechanisms (ECOWAS, 2021).

The use of third-party mediators in mitigating territorial conflicts involves a multifaceted conceptual analysis. Firstly, one common application of third-party mediators is in facilitating diplomatic negotiations between conflicting parties over disputed territories. These mediators, often representing international organizations or neutral nations, provide a platform for dialogue and negotiation, helping to bridge the gap between opposing sides and find mutually acceptable solutions (Jones, 2018). Secondly, third-party mediators can act as impartial observers, monitoring compliance with agreements and ensuring that both parties adhere to the terms of any territorial settlement. By offering their expertise and oversight, these mediators contribute to maintaining peace and stability in disputed regions (Wagner, 2016).

Additionally, third-party mediators play a crucial role in facilitating confidence-building measures between conflicting parties, which can help de-escalate tensions and build trust over time. Through shuttle diplomacy and informal dialogue, mediators work to build rapport and establish channels of communication between adversaries, laying the groundwork for future cooperation (Bercovitch & Jackson, 2009). Lastly, third-party mediators can provide technical assistance and expertise in drafting territorial agreements, helping to clarify ambiguous terms and address complex legal issues, thereby reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings or disputes in the future (Dixon, 2012). Overall, the use of third-party mediators in territorial conflicts serves as a vital tool for promoting peaceful resolution and preventing the escalation of disputes into full-scale conflicts.

Problem Statement

In East Asia, territorial disputes persist as longstanding sources of tension, posing significant challenges to regional stability and security. Despite various diplomatic efforts, these disputes often escalate due to the lack of effective mechanisms for resolution. While mediation has emerged as a potential means for mitigating such conflicts, its role and effectiveness in addressing territorial disputes in East Asia remain ambiguous and underexplored (Zhang & Chen, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

Structural Realism

Originated by Kenneth Waltz, structural realism posits that states' behaviors in the international system are primarily influenced by the structure of the system itself, particularly the distribution of power among states (Waltz, 2018). In the context of territorial disputes in East Asia, this theory suggests that the strategic interests of major powers in the region, such as China, Japan, and the United States, play a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of mediation efforts. The theory underscores the importance of power asymmetries and strategic calculations in understanding why certain mediation attempts may succeed or fail in resolving territorial disputes in the region.

Constructivism

Developed by scholars like Alexander Wendt, constructivism emphasizes the role of ideas, norms, and identities in shaping state behavior and international relations (Wendt, 2018). In the context of territorial disputes in East Asia, constructivism highlights the significance of historical narratives, cultural identities, and perceptions of sovereignty in fueling or mitigating conflicts.

Mediation efforts, therefore, need to consider not only material interests but also the ideational factors that underpin the territorial claims of the involved parties. Understanding how these ideational factors shape states' willingness to engage in mediation and compromise is crucial for effective conflict resolution.

Regional Institutionalist Theory

Originating from scholars like Amitav Acharya, regional institutionalist theory focuses on the role of regional institutions and mechanisms in managing conflicts and promoting cooperation among states within a particular geographical area (Acharya, 2021). In the context of East Asia, where various regional forums and organizations exist, such as ASEAN and the East Asia Summit, this theory underscores the potential of regional mediation mechanisms in addressing territorial disputes. By providing platforms for dialogue, confidence-building measures, and normative frameworks for dispute resolution, regional institutions can complement and reinforce bilateral and international mediation efforts in mitigating tensions and promoting stability in the region.

Empirical Review

Kim and Moon (2019) examined the effectiveness of third-party mediation in resolving territorial disputes in East Asia. Employing a comparative case study methodology, they analyzed various mediation efforts led by neutral third parties, such as international organizations or neighboring countries, in different territorial conflicts across the region. Through their research, Kim and Moon aimed to assess the impact of mediation on reducing tensions and facilitating dialogue between disputing parties. Their findings revealed that mediation processes, when conducted impartially and with the consent of both parties, can serve as a valuable mechanism for conflict resolution. In cases where mediators effectively facilitated communication and negotiation, they observed a higher likelihood of reaching mutually acceptable agreements and de-escalating hostilities. Based on their empirical analysis, Kim and Moon recommended that policymakers and international actors prioritize diplomatic efforts and support impartial mediation initiatives to address territorial disputes in East Asia effectively.

Li and Zhao (2018) investigated the impact of mediation strategies on the resolution of territorial disputes in the South China Sea. Employing a qualitative content analysis approach, they examined various mediation efforts undertaken by regional and international actors to manage tensions in the disputed maritime area. Li and Zhao's research aimed to identify patterns and outcomes associated with different mediation approaches, including diplomatic negotiations, confidence-building measures, and multilateral dialogues. Their findings suggested that mediation processes focusing on building trust, enhancing communication, and promoting cooperative solutions have the potential to contribute to temporary de-escalation and stability in the region. However, they also noted challenges and limitations in the effectiveness of mediation efforts, particularly when geopolitical interests and power dynamics overshadow diplomatic initiatives. Based on their empirical analysis, Li and Zhao recommended that policymakers prioritize dialogue, cooperation, and confidence-building measures to mitigate tensions and foster peaceful resolution of territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

Park and Lee (2017) explored the role of track-two diplomacy in mediating territorial disputes in East Asia. Through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including government officials, diplomats, and civil society representatives, Park and Lee aimed to assess the impact of informal dialogue and non-governmental actors in facilitating communication and building trust between

conflicting parties. Their research focused on the significance of track-two diplomacy as a complementary approach to official negotiations, providing opportunities for discreet dialogue and creative problem-solving outside of formal diplomatic channels. Park and Lee's findings highlighted the importance of informal interactions and backchannel communications in generating ideas, exploring potential solutions, and building interpersonal relationships among disputing parties. They emphasized the need for policymakers and mediators to recognize the value of track-two diplomacy in supplementing formal mediation efforts and creating conducive environments for conflict resolution. Based on their empirical findings, Park and Lee recommended that policymakers and international organizations support track-two initiatives and foster networks of dialogue to facilitate peaceful resolution of territorial disputes in East Asia.

Suzuki (2016) investigated the effectiveness of multilateral mediation mechanisms in managing territorial disputes in East Asia. Through a review of case studies and historical examples, Suzuki aimed to assess the role of regional organizations, such as ASEAN, in facilitating dialogue, building consensus, and promoting cooperation among conflicting parties. His research focused on examining the strengths and weaknesses of multilateral mediation approaches in addressing complex territorial issues and managing competing interests among member states. Suzuki's findings highlighted the importance of regional cooperation and consensus-building in mitigating tensions and fostering stability in East Asia. He observed that multilateral mediation mechanisms, when supported by robust institutional frameworks and inclusive decision-making processes, have the potential to promote peaceful resolution of disputes and prevent the escalation of conflicts. Based on his empirical analysis, Suzuki recommended that policymakers strengthen regional mediation mechanisms, enhance diplomatic engagement, and promote dialogue among stakeholders to address territorial disputes effectively.

Chen and Wang (2019) focused on the evolution of territorial disputes in the East China Sea and the role of mediation efforts in managing tensions. Employing a mixed-methods approach combining historical analysis, interviews with policymakers, and quantitative data analysis, Chen and Wang aimed to assess the effectiveness of various mediation strategies employed by regional actors and international organizations. Their research sought to identify patterns and trends in the escalation and de-escalation of territorial conflicts over time, as well as the impact of mediation initiatives on conflict resolution outcomes. Their findings revealed that while mediation efforts have at times succeeded in reducing tensions and promoting dialogue between disputing parties, they have also faced significant challenges due to geopolitical rivalries and competing national interests. Chen and Wang's empirical analysis underscored the importance of sustained diplomatic engagement, confidence-building measures, and multilateral cooperation in managing territorial disputes in the East China Sea. Based on their research, they recommended that policymakers prioritize dialogue, transparency, and conflict prevention mechanisms to mitigate tensions and promote stability in the region.

Yang and Liu (2018) examined the role of international mediation in territorial disputes across East Asia. Using a comparative analysis of case studies from countries such as China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, Yang and Liu aimed to assess the impact of external mediators, including the United States, United Nations, and other regional actors, on conflict resolution processes. Their research sought to identify factors contributing to the success or failure of mediation efforts, as well as the broader implications for regional security and stability. Their findings suggested that while external mediation can play a constructive role in facilitating dialogue and reducing tensions,

it is often constrained by geopolitical complexities and power dynamics among disputing parties. Yang and Liu's empirical analysis highlighted the need for mediators to adopt a nuanced and context-specific approach that takes into account the historical, cultural, and political factors underlying territorial disputes in East Asia. Based on their research, they recommended that international mediators prioritize impartiality, transparency, and inclusivity in their engagement with conflicting parties to enhance the prospects for peaceful resolution of territorial conflicts.

Wu and Cheng (2017) explored the role of non-traditional mediators, such as civil society organizations, academic institutions, and religious leaders, in facilitating dialogue and reconciliation in territorial disputes in East Asia. Through interviews, focus groups, and participant observation, Wu and Cheng aimed to examine the contributions of non-state actors to conflict resolution processes and the challenges they face in navigating complex geopolitical dynamics. Their research focused on case studies from countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea, where grassroots initiatives and people-to-people exchanges have played a significant role in fostering understanding and trust between conflicting parties. Their findings suggested that while non-traditional mediators may lack the formal authority of state actors, they can leverage their networks, expertise, and moral authority to bridge divides and promote peaceful coexistence. Wu and Cheng's empirical analysis underscored the importance of inclusivity, diversity, and bottom-up approaches in mediating territorial disputes and building sustainable peace in East Asia. Based on their research, they recommended that policymakers and international organizations support civil society initiatives, promote intercultural dialogue, and empower local communities to play a more active role in conflict resolution processes.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: Kim and Moon (2019) examined the effectiveness of various mediation strategies, but there is a need for a comprehensive theoretical framework that integrates different approaches to mediation and identifies key variables influencing conflict resolution outcomes. Li and Zhao (2018) focused on short-term outcomes of mediation processes, such as de-escalation of tensions, but further research could refine the conceptualization of mediation effectiveness to include long-term impacts on peacebuilding, reconciliation, and regional stability. Park and Lee (2017) explored the role of track-two diplomacy in mediating territorial disputes, but limited attention has been paid to the influence of emotions, identity, and psychological factors in shaping interethnic tensions and mediation outcomes.

Contextual Gaps: Suzuki (2016) investigated the effectiveness of multilateral mediation mechanisms in managing territorial disputes in East Asia, but there is a lack of comparative analysis with other regions, such as Europe or the Middle East, which have experienced similar

challenges in conflict resolution. Chen and Wang (2019) focused on specific regions within East Asia, such as the East China Sea, neglecting other territorial disputes involving Japan, South Korea, or Taiwan, indicating a need for broader geographical coverage in future research. Wu and Cheng (2017) examined the role of non-traditional mediators in conflict resolution processes, but there is limited research on the involvement of subnational actors, ethnic communities, and grassroots initiatives in mediating territorial disputes.

Geographical Gaps: Yang and Liu (2018) analyzed the role of external mediators in East Asia, but there is a lack of research on the interactions between regional stakeholders and external actors, such as the United States, Russia, or the European Union, in mediating territorial disputes. Li and Zhao (2018) investigated mediation efforts in the South China Sea, but there is limited attention to other territorial disputes in the region, such as those involving Japan, South Korea, or Taiwan, indicating a need for broader geographical coverage in future studies. Chen and Wang (2019) focused on the evolution of territorial disputes in the East China Sea, overlooking emerging geopolitical trends such as the rise of China or shifting alliances in the Indo-Pacific, which may influence mediation dynamics and outcomes in East Asia.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

In conclusion, the role of mediation in territorial disputes in East Asia is multifaceted and holds promise for fostering peaceful resolutions to complex geopolitical challenges. While these disputes are deeply entrenched and often aggravated by historical animosities and nationalist sentiments, mediation offers a viable pathway towards de-escalation and cooperation (Chen, 2021). Through impartial facilitation and dialogue, mediators can help disputing parties find common ground, explore mutually acceptable solutions, and build trust (Johnston & Ma, 2020). Moreover, mediation can provide a forum for addressing underlying concerns, such as security fears and resource competition, in a constructive manner (Park, 2019).

However, the effectiveness of mediation in East Asian territorial disputes hinges on several factors, including the willingness of parties to engage in dialogue, the presence of credible mediators, and the broader geopolitical context (Kim, 2022). While mediation offers a non-coercive mechanism for conflict resolution, it is not without its limitations, and success often requires sustained commitment from all stakeholders (Huang & Oatley, 2018). Nevertheless, as regional tensions continue to simmer, the importance of mediation as a means of de-escalating conflicts and promoting stability in East Asia cannot be overstated (Wang & Lin, 2023). Ultimately, by fostering dialogue, building trust, and promoting peaceful coexistence, mediation has the potential to play a pivotal role in addressing territorial disputes and advancing regional peace and prosperity.

Recommendations

Theory

Mediation in territorial disputes can contribute to theoretical advancements by providing insights into the effectiveness of third-party intervention in highly contentious and complex geopolitical conflicts. Research on the role of mediators, their strategies, and the factors that influence mediation success can enrich existing theoretical frameworks in conflict resolution and international relations. Additionally, examining the cultural, historical, and political dynamics

specific to East Asia can further refine our understanding of conflict resolution processes in the region.

Practice

In practice, mediation offers a constructive mechanism for de-escalating tensions and facilitating dialogue between disputing parties. Mediators can employ various techniques, such as shuttle diplomacy, confidence-building measures, and track-two diplomacy, to create opportunities for negotiation and compromise. By fostering communication and cooperation, mediation can help prevent the escalation of territorial disputes into full-blown conflicts, thereby preserving regional stability and security. Moreover, mediators can assist in the design and implementation of confidence-building measures and dispute resolution mechanisms tailored to the unique dynamics of East Asian territorial disputes.

Policy

From a policy perspective, promoting mediation as a preferred method for resolving territorial disputes in East Asia can enhance regional peacebuilding efforts and promote a rules-based international order. Policymakers can support the establishment of regional mediation frameworks and encourage the involvement of neutral third parties, such as multilateral organizations or trusted intermediaries, in facilitating dialogue and negotiation. Additionally, policymakers should prioritize diplomatic engagement and multilateral cooperation to address the underlying drivers of territorial disputes, including historical grievances, resource competition, and geopolitical rivalries. By advocating for mediation as a viable alternative to confrontational approaches, policymakers can contribute to the promotion of regional stability, economic development, and mutual trust among East Asian nations.

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