

Maritime Claims and Boundary Delimitation: Tensions and Trends in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea

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The book of N. Ioannides, *Maritime claims and boundary delimitation: tensions and trends in the eastern Mediterranean Sea*, aims to cover a substantial topic that concerns international lawyers, political scientists and analysts and, generally, those interested in the application of the law of the sea in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. More specifically, the book analyses and assesses the maritime claims of Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey and the delimitations of their maritime areas.

The book consists of 4 chapters. In the first chapter, the author sketches the participation of the Eastern Mediterranean states in the UNCLOS III, law of the sea conferences, held from 1973 until 1982, with references to previous conferences. The book analyses the presence of the East Med states at and their stance towards UNCLOS III and their viewpoints on the definition of the territorial sea and its breadth, the notion of the continental shelf and EEZ, the regime of islands, the regime of enclosed and semi-enclosed seas and the issue of maritime boundary. Interestingly, it presents the contemporary state legislation, thereby making clear, in a practical way, the tensions between the East Med states. Although the presentation is restricted to the East Med states, due to the specific focus of the book, undoubtedly, the book offers a thorough picture of their claims and positions, allowing the reader to acquire an in-depth understanding of their contemporary stance.

The second chapter analyses the contemporary developments with respect to the oil and gas discoveries and maritime delimitations in the Eastern Mediterranean sea. The book overviews the offshore oil and gas activities in the region and the role of the EU. Further, it maps the East Med states' maritime boundary delimitation agreements against their specific background highlighting the political tensions and collaborations between the states of the region. Interestingly, the difficulties of a judicial maritime delimitation for the establishment of a trilateral boundary between Greece, Egypt and Cyprus that may arise because of the im-

pingement upon Turkey's rights are pointed out. The chapter further analyses the provisions of the EEZ delimitation agreements and the Egypt-Cyprus agreement on the development of cross-median line hydrocarbon resources (2013). The chapter ends with the critical analysis of Turkey's reaction to the maritime delimitation in the East Med.

The third chapter focuses on the maritime claims and the unilateral activities in the undelimited maritime areas. The chapter begins with a thorough and critical overview of the legal framework, conventional and jurisprudential, governing oil and gas activities in undelimited areas. It is supported that even though it is not clear whether the relevant LOSC provisions form part of customary international law, they reflect general principles and, thus, they must be observed even by states that are not parties to the Convention. The chapter proceeds with the application of the applicable law, as identified by the author, to the activities in maritime areas between the Greek islands of the south-eastern Aegean Sea and Cyprus and to the maritime dispute between Israel and Lebanon. Furthermore, the chapter analyses Turkey's claims through the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". In this section, the chapter analyses the "TRNC" regime under international law and assesses the continental shelf delimitation between Turkey and the "TRNC", the "Barbaros" expedition, the drilling activities performed by Turkey around Cyprus and the Turkey-Libya MoU.

In the last chapter, the book examines the maritime claims of non-state entities, namely the State of Palestine and the UK-controlled Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus, with special emphasis on the later.

The book offers a useful, thorough, critical overview of the maritime claims and delimitations in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Focusing on the East Med, the book highlights the potentials that derive from the law of the sea and the establishment of maritime boundaries according to it and, at the same time, the lack of such potentials or the difficulties faced by the states of the region that choose not to conform with it. The book is characterized by its analytical and penetrating insight and the plurality of the sources used.

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