90 years after the Åland settlement

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Recent research and publication (2011)

• The Åland Example: components, continuity and change
• The use (or not) of the Åland Example by diplomats and experts in conflict management
Learning processes re. Åland

Principles

- It has taken 150+ years for the system to mature and of course it is still open to failure
- The double tongues of statehood are not equipped to meet complex multi-level decision-making
- International society as supporter and guarantor of domestically developed proposals rather than as ’creator’ of solutions?
- Minorities need to be accommodated
- Kinstates to keep a low profile
- It takes two to tango (and good music around)
Institutional design

1. Issues of security: demilitarisation
2. Issues of power sharing: autonomy
3. Issues of identity and culture protection and support: language guarantees

Plus:
- Issues of economy addressed early on, allowing for the viability of the system (even at a time when Finland was not rich)
The Three Components of the Åland Example

I. Demilitarisation and Neutralisation


• The security issue addressed early
• The international career of Åland takes off
• Police is exclusive competence of Åland (but...)
• Border and coast guard is exclusive competence if Finland
II. The Åland Autonomy

• The status issue and political power sharing issue managed
• List of exclusive competences in Law on Autonomy
• Multiple entrenchment: constitutionally and internationally
• Governor enjoys the trust of both sides and is appointed in cooperation between Åland and Finland
III. Language and Culture Protection Regime

- The identity issue managed
- 1921 – 1922 – 1951 – 2004
- Swedish as the official language and as language of education
- As language of communication with public authorities on mainland Finland
- Right to domicile
- Right to establish business
- Presupposes the bilingual state of Finland
Some conclusions

Institutions ↔ Processes

The Åland Example is not about isolation or separation. It represents a web of contacts and interactions at local, regional, national and international level.