

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE - APRIL 2013

ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

5 May 2013: China FM visits Brunei

The two sides agreed that the current disputes are not an issue between China and ASEAN and they should be peacefully resolved through friendly consultations and negotiations between the parties directly concerned. The two sides agreed to continue to hold the SOM on implementation of the DOC; hold the Joint Working Group meeting on the implementation of the DOC in Thailand in May this year; and discuss how to advance the COC process under this framework.

The two sides also agreed to establish an Eminent Persons and Experts Group (EPEG) on COC and that discussions under the EPEG and the Joint Working Group would reinforce and complement each other.

<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1037620.shtml>

3 May 2013: China FM visits Singapore

On the South China Sea issue, both sides agreed on the need for ASEAN and China to work actively on the way forward for an early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea on the basis of consensus.

http://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/mfa/media_centre/press_room/pr/2013/201305/press_20130503_01.html

2 May 2013: Chinese FM's visits ASEC

SG Minh and Foreign Minister Wang Yi also exchanged views on the issue of the South China Sea. They emphasised the importance of ensuring full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and moving towards the conclusion of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). They reaffirmed that maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea and the region continues to be of paramount importance.

http://www.asean.org/news/item/foreign-minister-of-the-people-s-republic-of-china-visits-asean-secretariat?category_id=27

2 May 2013: Chinese FM's visits Indonesia

China has always remained open to discussions on the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea, Wang said, adding China and ASEAN members have long shared the view of eventually concluding the COC on the basis of consensus reached by all parties through consultations, which has been included in the DOC. From implementing the DOC to concluding a COC is a step-by-step process, Wang admitted. The consensus reached by China and Indonesia this time is that all parties shall work together, expand common ground and remove disturbances and discuss and steadily promote the COC procedure while implementing effectively the DOC in an all-round way. Wang stressed that China has the resolve and ability to build the South China Sea together with the ASEAN into a sea of peace, friendship and cooperation. At the same time, we should keep vigilant against potential disturbances of some countries for their own interests, Wang added.

<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx/t1037682.shtml>

29 April 2013: Taiwan mulls opening South China Sea park

Related government agencies and experts in Taiwan are currently conducting evaluations on whether to open an offshore island national park in the South China Sea for tourism and environmental education activities, the Marine National Park Headquarters (MNPH) said recently.

<https://chinadailymail.com/2013/04/29/taiwan-mulls-opening-south-china-sea-park/>

27 April 2013: PH won't give up claims to South China Sea territories

A Palace spokesperson made it clear that Manila was not about to surrender areas in the South China Sea it claims to be part of the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and refers to as the West Philippine Sea, a day after China claimed that the Philippines was trying to legalize its occupation of islands in the disputed area.

<https://globalnation.inquirer.net/73237/ph-wont-give-up-claims-to-south-china-sea-territories#ixzz5a5kCrWhp>

26 April 2013: China accuses Philippines of trying to 'illegally' occupy South China Sea territories

"The Philippine side is trying to use this to negate China's territorial sovereignty and attach a veneer of 'legality' to its illegal occupation of Chinese islands and reefs," China's foreign ministry said.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/10020508/Philippines-accused-of-trying-to-illegally-occupy-South-China-Sea-territories.html>

7 April 2013: China to open disputed Paracel islands to tourism

The Xinhua news agency said tourists would live on board ships, as the largest island has only one hotel and no fresh water.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-22056661>

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

25 April 2013: ASEAN Summit Discusses the South China Sea Disputes

The leaders underscored the importance of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), ASEAN's Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea, and the Joint Statement of the 10th Anniversary of the DOC. They also reaffirmed the collective commitments under the DOC to ensuring the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, without resorting to the threat or use of force, while exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities.

<http://www.asean2013.gov.bn/images/download%5C22nd ASEAN Summit-Chairman%27s Statement-FINAL-1.pdf>

11 April 2013: ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat

The ministers emphasised on the importance of maintaining peace, stability, mutual trust and cooperation to enhance maritime security and on ensuring the peaceful resolution of disputes in the South China Sea in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the SEA (UNCLOS). The Ministers also reiterated the need for all parties to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes. The Foreign Ministers further reiterated their Statement on the Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea, and emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum on dialogue and consultations following the positive outcome of the 19th ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations. The Ministers tasked their senior officials to work actively with China on the way forward for the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct on the basis of consensus.

http://rtbnews.rtb.gov.bn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9828:asean-foreign-ministers-retreat&catid=72:chairman-asean-2013&Itemid=107

MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

17 May 2013: EU-ASEAN Meeting discusses South China Sea disputes

At a meeting between senior officials of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU) held in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam on May 14 and 15, the EU reiterated support for the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

<http://www.dfa.gov.ph/index.php/newsroom/dfa-releases/8120-peace-stability-and-rules-based-settlement-of-disputes-in-south-china-sea-important-for-eu-supports-asean-progress-on-human-rights>