

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE – APRIL 2014

PHILIPPINES VS. CHINA

9 April 2014: China urges Philippines to drop UN arbitration case

The new Chinese Ambassador to the Manila urged the Philippines to set aside its United Nations arbitration case over the South China Sea dispute in order to bring back the good relations of both countries.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/101806/china-wants-ph-to-drop-arbitration-case-to-heal-diplomatic-wounds>

1 April 2014: Philippines stands by rejection of Beijing's claims to South China Sea

Manila resorted to arbitration after more than a decade of unsuccessful regional attempts to forge a binding code of conduct in the sea, Aquino told reporters.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/31/philippines-beijing-south-china-sea-benigno-aquino-arbitration>

ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

28 April 2014: Taiwan stages largest drill since 2000 in Spratlys

Lin Yu-fang said the landing drill was held on the Taiwan-administered island of Taiping, part of the Spratlys -- a chain which is also claimed in whole or in part by China, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/taiwan-stages-largest/1088426.html>

27 April 2014: U.S., Philippines Sign Defense Pact Amid China Shoal Tensions

The Philippines and the U.S. signed an agreement today that will boost the American troop presence in the Southeast Asian nation, as it seeks to counter China's assertiveness over territorial disputes.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-04-27/philippines-to-sign-defense-deal-with-u-s-amid-china-tensions.html>

15 April 2014: Vietnam Launches Force to Keep an Eye on its Waters

Officials did not specify the size of the force, but said that it would be headquartered in Hanoi and would have four divisions throughout country.

<http://blogs.wsj.com/searealtime/2014/04/15/vietnam-launches-force-to-keep-an-eye-on-its-waters/>

10 April 2014: PH, Vietnam navies to unite against China over beers, volleyball

The Philippine navy will soon return to a South China Sea island it lost to Vietnam 40 years ago to drink beer and play volleyball with Vietnamese sailors, symbolizing how once-suspicious neighbors are cooperating in the face of China's assertiveness in disputed waters.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/focus/04/10/14/ph-vietnam-navies-unite-against-china-over-beers-volleyball>

9 April 2014: COSL's Newbuild PSV Prepares to Commence Work in South China Sea

China Oilfield Services Limited (COSL or the Group), a leading integrated oilfield services provider in offshore China, announced Wednesday that the newly purchased platform supply vessel - HYSY613 has recently been successfully delivered for operation. - See more at:

http://www.rigzone.com/news/oil_gas/a/132497/COSLs_Newbuild_PSV_Prepares_to_Commence_Work_in_South_China_Sea#sthash.m0wSdKz1.dpuf

7 April 2014: Creative countermeasures needed to deal with Manila's S.China Sea schemes

Chinese diplomacy needs to take a lesson from the Philippines' effort of seeking international arbitration. China must realize that strategic restraint, which sometimes can reassure its neighbors, but can also lead to some serious consequences, in which the most critical one is the corrosion of China's strategic deterrent. This is part of the reason why some neighboring countries continue disturbing China without fear or concern.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/853017.shtml#.U0Vw3cfTaNg>

5 April 2014: PHL refutes China: You started it

"The Philippines makes clear that it will continue to exercise self-restraint and will not raise tension in the South China Sea. The Philippines is not the country that has greatly increased its naval and maritime presence in the South China Sea. Nor has it challenged freedom of navigation. Nor has it blockaded nor forcefully intimidated any other country in the South China Sea," said del Rosario. "Countries should be judged by their actions, not by their words," he added.

<http://www.sunstar.com.ph/manila/local-news/2014/04/04/phl-refutes-china-you-started-it-336606>

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

27 April 2014: South China Sea Stability Key Focus Of Malaysia's Asean Chairmanship

Stability in the South China Sea will be one of Malaysia's main priorities when it assumes the Asean chairmanship next year, said Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman. "That interest is widely shared in Asean and beyond," he told a media briefing here Friday ahead of the arrival of United States President Barack Obama tomorrow for his maiden visit to Malaysia.

<http://www.bernama.com.my/bernama/v7/ge/newsgeneral.php?id=1033531>

24 April 2014: Burma to Seek South China Sea Resolution at 'Pace Comfortable to All Countries'

Asean's most important meetings will be conducted at the end of the year. On May 10-11, the 24th Asean Summit will take place in Naypyidaw when Asean foreign ministers will gather.

<http://www.irrawaddy.org/interview/burma-seek-south-china-sea-resolution-pace-comfortable-countries.html>

22 April 2014: No timeframe for South China Sea code of conduct: Thai ASEAN affairs official

The drafting of the South China Sea code of conduct (COC) is a working process without a timeframe, the director-general of the ASEAN Affairs Department of Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs told Xinhua Monday.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-04/21/c_133278243.htm

19 April 2014: COC to dominate Asean-China meet

Thailand will push to speed up the drafting process for a code of conduct (COC) in the South China Sea during a meeting in Pattaya next week. <http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/405613/coc-to-dominate-asean-china-meet>

18 April 2014: China, ASEAN officials to meet in Thailand

The parties will exchange views on China-ASEAN relations, East Asian cooperation and international and regional issues of common concern, Hua told a news briefing.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-04/17/c_133270985.htm

17 April 2014: Indonesia keeping close eye on developments in South China Sea

General Moeldoko said: "We in ASEAN do not want a situation that would lead to instability in this region. That is our firm position. And Indonesia will contribute to ensure stability. Second, Indonesia will be following the situation from time to time."

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/indonesia-keeping-close/1073488.html>

16 April 2014: Is Indonesia shifting its South China Sea policy?

There may be no formal shift, but the recent unguarded comments by senior TNI officers, and the subsequent 'clarification' from senior diplomats, can be understood as the public manifestation of civil-military differences over China.

<http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2014/04/16/Indonesia-Natuna-shift-south-china-sea-policy.aspx?COLLCC=1212128822&>

9 April 2014: Indonesia, South China Sea and the 11/10/9-dashed lines

The mere existence of an incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent and legally problematic map will neither force Indonesia to abandon its efforts to facilitate confidence building nor suddenly make Indonesia lose confidence in its highly precise, legally correct and UN-lodged maritime projection in the SCS.

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/04/09/indonesia-south-china-sea-and-11109-dashed-lines.html>

7 April 2014: Indonesia Seeks China Clarity on South China Sea Intentions

Indonesia is seeking clarity on China's intent behind its maritime claims in the South China Sea to avoid the risk of miscalculations in a zone rich in natural gas, Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa said.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2014-04-07/indonesia-seeks-china-clarity-on-south-china-sea-intentions>

7 April 2014: Indonesia Beefs Up Air Force in South China Sea

Indonesia is deploying Su-27s, Su-30s, and AH-64E Apache helicopters to a South China Sea air base.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/04/indonesia-beefs-up-air-force-in-south-china-sea/>

5 April 2014: Asean Still Pushing for South China Sea Code of Conduct, Says Ng

Southeast Asian nations are progressing with China on a code of conduct for the contested South China Sea, with overcoming issues of sovereignty the "holy grail" of such a charter, Singapore's Defense Minister Ng Eng Hen said.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2014-04-04/asean-still-pushing-for-south-china-sea-code-of-conduct-says-ng>

MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

27 April 2014: Malaysia – US to Focus on Maritime Security and South China Sea

Following a meeting between Malaysian Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and US President Barack Obama in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday the two issued a joint statement at a press conference, saying that Malaysia and the US affirmed the importance of safeguarding maritime security, including in the South China Sea.

<http://nsnbc.me/2014/04/27/malaysia-us-to-focus-on-maritime-security-and-south-china-sea/>

16 April 2014: Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida has conveyed his government's support for the Philippines' filing of a case before a UN tribunal to settle its dispute with China as he reiterated

Tokyo's advocacy of the rule of law, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said in a statement.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/102147/japan-backs-ph-in-case-before-un#ixzz2z1LN0ctL>

10 April 2014: DFA welcomes US commitment to defense treaty

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) welcomes the strong statements recently made by US officials criticizing China's aggression in the South China Sea.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/04/10/14/dfa-welcomes-us-commitment-defense-treaty>

6 April 2014: US Defense Secretary calls China a "great power" that should respect neighbors

US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, on the eve of a trip to China, called on Beijing to use its "great power" responsibly and said he would urge its leaders to respect neighbors increasingly anxious over its posture in territorial disputes.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/international/06-Apr-2014/us-defense-secretary-calls-china-great-power-that-should-respect-neighbors>

3 April 2014: Official: China should not doubt US resolve in standing by its allies in territorial disputes

The United States cautioned China Thursday that it will meet its defense commitments to allies as tensions mount over territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

<http://www.dailyjournal.net/view/story/d9926619c8a94aa098921dd099d129f8/US--United-States-South-China-Sea/>

8 April 2014: US-Philippines war games start May 5

This year's Balikatan military exercises between the Philippines and the United States (US) will start on May 5 amid tensions caused by the territorial row in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/04/08/1310335/us-philippines-war-games-start-may-5>