

## SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE – MAY 2014

### ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

#### **28 May 2014: China oil rig finishes first phase of drilling in waters claimed by Vietnam**

A giant Chinese oil rig has finished its first round of drilling in South China Sea waters also claimed by Vietnam and moved to another site in the area, the rig's operator, China Oilfield Services Ltd (COSL), said on Tuesday.

[http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2014-05-27/news/sns-rt-us-vietnam-china-drilling-20140526\\_1\\_south-china-sea-xisha-islands-china-oil-rig](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2014-05-27/news/sns-rt-us-vietnam-china-drilling-20140526_1_south-china-sea-xisha-islands-china-oil-rig)

#### **27 May 2014: Philippines might elevate China's violations to ASEAN, tribunal**

"We brought this up and we will be bringing it up again before (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and probably also in (the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea)," Aquino said.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/05/27/1327914/aquino-philippines-might-elevate-chinas-violations-asean-tribunal>

#### **27 May 2014: China and Vietnam Point Fingers After Clash in South China Sea**

Tensions in the South China Sea escalated sharply on Tuesday as China and Vietnam traded accusations over the sinking of a Vietnamese fishing vessel in the vicinity of a Chinese oil rig parked in disputed waters off Vietnam's coast.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/28/world/asia/vietnam.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/28/world/asia/vietnam.html?_r=0)

#### **27 May 2014: Chinese Vessel Said to Ram, Sink Vietnam Fishing Boat**

"The Vietnamese fishing boat was rammed while fishing in Vietnam's traditional fishing ground and sank immediately about 17 nautical miles southwest of the oil rig," Rear Admiral Ngo Ngoc Thu, vice commander of the Vietnam Coast Guard, told The Wall Street Journal on Tuesday.

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304811904579587063112611946?mg=reno64-wsj&url=http%3A%2F%2Fonline.wsj.com%2Farticle%2FSB10001424052702304811904579587063112611946.html>

#### **26 May 2014: China calls Vietnam's claims to disputed islands 'ridiculous'**

"Seeing that the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry held a press conference last Friday on the subject, I felt it was extremely ridiculous," he said at a briefing on Monday. "The Paracels are the indisputable territory of the Chinese people."

[http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2014\\_05\\_26/China-calls-Vietnam-claims-to-disputed-islands-ridiculous-2792/](http://voiceofrussia.com/news/2014_05_26/China-calls-Vietnam-claims-to-disputed-islands-ridiculous-2792/)

#### **26 May 2014: Taiwan building US\$100mil port in South China Sea, no protest from China**

Taiwan is building a US\$100 million port next to an airstrip on the lone island it occupies in the disputed South China Sea, a move that is drawing hardly any flak from the most assertive player in the bitterly contested waters - China. The reason, say military strategists, is that Itu Aba could one day be in China's hands should it ever take over Taiwan, which it regards as a renegade province.

[http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2014/05/26/As-Taiwan-Beefs-Up-Prized-South-China-Sea-Outpost-Barely-A-Peep-From-China/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=taiwan-building-us100mil-port-in-south-china-sea-no-protest-from-china](http://www.thestar.com.my/Business/Business-News/2014/05/26/As-Taiwan-Beefs-Up-Prized-South-China-Sea-Outpost-Barely-A-Peep-From-China/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=taiwan-building-us100mil-port-in-south-china-sea-no-protest-from-china)

#### **25 May 2014: PH pleased by Vietnam's plan to challenge China**

"If it comes to pass that another country other than the Philippines brings that issue to the tribunal, then it broadens the base for those that believe and adhere to the rule of law and to the concept of peaceful settlement of disputes," Coloma said in an interview.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/105092/ph-pleased-by-vietnams-plan-to-challenge-china#ixzz32n94QPAA>

#### **24 May 2014: PH blames China for delaying maritime talks**

Del Rosario, speaking at a security outlook session of the World Economic Forum, said there had been "changes" on the ground since talks began, without specifically mentioning China.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/05/23/14/ph-implicitly-blames-china-delaying-maritime-talks>

### **23 May 2014: Manila's Philex plans to drill in disputed waters even without partner**

London-listed Forum Energy Plc will likely start drilling the appraisal wells in its Sampaguita gas field in the Reed Bank, which the Philippines calls Recto Bank, in early 2016, said Philex chairman Manuel Pangilinan. That means the exploration firm will seek another extension of a drilling permit for the area from the Philippine government.

[http://article.wn.com/view/2014/05/21/Manilas\\_Philex\\_plans\\_to\\_drill\\_in\\_disputed\\_waters\\_even\\_with\\_ou/](http://article.wn.com/view/2014/05/21/Manilas_Philex_plans_to_drill_in_disputed_waters_even_with_ou/)

### **22 May 2014: Vietnam PM says considering legal action against China over disputed waters**

Dung's comments, given in a written response to questions from Reuters, are the first time he has suggested Vietnam would take legal measures, a threat that is likely to infuriate Beijing.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/05/21/uk-vietnam-china-idUKKBN0E124E20140521>

### **21 May 2014: Vietnam, Philippines jointly denounce China's maritime moves**

The president and I shared the deep concerns over the current extremely dangerous situation caused by China's many actions that violate international law," Dung said in a statement after talks with Philippine President Benigno Aquino during a two-day visit to Manila.

<http://news.yahoo.com/vietnam-philippines-jointly-denounce-chinas-maritime-moves-115049485--finance.html>

### **20 May 2014: Malaysia Calls For Self-restraint In Territorial Disputes**

"As a party to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, Malaysia views that parties to the DOC should continue to work towards confidence building, enhancing cooperation and avoiding untoward incidents that could escalate tensions and conflicts," Hishammuddin said.

<http://www.bernama.com.my/bernama/v7/ge/newsgeneral.php?id=1039834>

### **19 May 2014: China: China's South China Sea resolve unshakable**

Chinese airlines have begun to cancel Vietnam-bound flights, while major Chinese travel agencies have suspended their Vietnam tour services.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-05/19/c\\_133345066.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-05/19/c_133345066.htm)

### **18 May 2014: Vietnam's prime minister calls for end to anti-China protests ahead of planned rallies**

In a text message to millions of people on Saturday, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung said the Ministry of Public Security and provincial governments had been ordered to "conduct concerted and determined measures not to allow illegal protests that cause security and social order disturbances."

<http://www.newser.com/article/9be6784f28ab4dcfbd12a8cc3cf357ba/vietnams-prime-minister-calls-for-end-to-anti-china-protests-ahead-of-planned-rallies.html>

### **18 May 2014: Vietnam minister regrets harm to Taiwan firms**

Vietnamese minister at a regional meeting in China expressed regret Saturday over the anti-China riots in Vietnam and said he was sorry that Taiwanese businesses have been affected by the incident. During the exchange with Vu, Chang said he asked that Vietnam set up a window to handle compensation for affected Taiwanese companies, in accordance with a Taiwan-Vietnam investment protection agreement. In response, Vu said Vietnam will fully support Taiwan's efforts

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/intl-community/2014/05/18/407986/Vietnam-minister.htm>

### **18 May 2014: China suspends some 'exchange plans' with Vietnam**

"The Chinese side as of today... suspended part of its bilateral exchange plans," Hong said, without specifying what the plans entailed.

"China will see how the situation develops and look into taking further steps," he said.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/603106/china-suspends-some-exchange-plans-with-vietnam>

### **18 May 2014: More than 3,000 Chinese evacuated from Vietnam: Xinhua**

China is to send five ships to Vietnam today to evacuate more Chinese nationals, Xinhua said, citing the transport ministry in Beijing.

<http://www.todayonline.com/chinaindia/china/more-3000-chinese-evacuated-vietnam-xinhua>

**16 May 2014: South China Sea oil drilling will continue, China says**

Chinese People's Liberation Army Chief of General Staff, visiting Washington, said China could not "afford to lose an inch" of territory in the sea, contested by China, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam. He also blamed Hanoi for inciting violence and warned the United States that its efforts to focus on Asia were fueling hostilities.

[http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2014/05/16/South-China-Sea-oil-drilling-will-continue-despite-Vietnam-riots-China-says/1701400260543/#ixzz328Q2sUe4](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2014/05/16/South-China-Sea-oil-drilling-will-continue-despite-Vietnam-riots-China-says/1701400260543/#ixzz328Q2sUe4)

**15 May 2014: Taiwan Will Not Cooperate With China in South China Sea**

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said Taipei will not cooperate with Beijing to advance maritime territorial claims

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/taiwan-will-not-cooperate-with-china-in-south-china-sea/>

**15 May 2014: Philippines Releases Photos of China's Construction in Disputed South China Sea**

On Thursday Manila published photos purportedly showing China's construction on the disputed Johnson Reef.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/philippines-releases-photos-of-chinas-construction-in-disputed-south-china-sea/>

**14 May 2014: Chinese FM discusses South China Sea friction with Indonesian counterpart**

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Wednesday held a phone conversation with his Indonesian counterpart Marty Natalegawa on China's current tensions with Vietnam in the South China Sea.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/8627440.html>

**14 May 2014: Protestors torch factories in southern Vietnam as China protests escalate**

Anti-Chinese protests in Vietnam have turned violent with demonstrators setting on fire a number of factories in a southern Vietnamese industrial park.

[http://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/14/world/asia/south-china-sea-drilling-duplicate-2/?hpt=hp\\_t3](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/05/14/world/asia/south-china-sea-drilling-duplicate-2/?hpt=hp_t3)

**12 May 2014: Philippines Offers Energy Exploration Contracts in Disputed Areas of South China Sea**

Manila Says If Other Countries Protest, the Matter Will Be Referred to U.N.

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304655304579553383486139164>

**8 May 2014: China calls on Vietnam to withdraw ships from South China Sea**

China on Thursday demanded that Vietnam withdraw its ships from a part of the disputed South China Sea, saying that Vietnamese ships intentionally collided with Chinese vessels in the area.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/08/us-china-vietnam-seas-idUSBREA4708X20140508>

**7 May 2014: Tensions rise in South China Sea as Vietnamese boats come under attack**

Chinese ships have been ramming into and firing water cannons at Vietnamese vessels trying to stop Beijing from putting an oil rig in the South China Sea. Hanoi, which has no hope of competing with China militarily, said it wants a peaceful solution and – unlike China – hadn't sent any navy ships to areas close to the \$1bn deep sea rig near the Paracel Islands. But a top official warned that "all restraint had a limit."

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/07/chinese-vietnamese-vessels-clash-south-china-sea>

**7 May 2014: Taiwan Holds Largest South China Sea Military Drill Since 2000**

The task force involved in the exercise included two marine companies who stormed the island using more than 20 amphibious assault vehicles. The marines were armed with mortars and anti-tank rockets.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/taiwan-holds-largest-south-china-sea-military-drill-since-2000/>

**7 May 2014: Vietnamese Navy Confronts Chinese Ships in Oil Rig Dispute**

Tensions in the South China Sea intensified Wednesday as Vietnamese naval vessels confronted Chinese ships that were working to place an oil rig off Vietnam's coast, and Vietnamese officials claimed that their ships had been rammed by the Chinese craft.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/08/world/asia/philippines-detains-crew-of-chinese-fishing-vessel.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>

**7 May 2014: Philippines seizes Chinese boat in South China Sea**

Philippine police have seized a Chinese fishing boat and detained its 11 crew in disputed South China Sea waters.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-27293314>

**6 May 2014: Vietnam escalates dispute with China over oil rig**

Vietnam warned China on Tuesday that it would take all necessary measures to defend its interests in the South China Sea if Beijing does not remove a large oil rig from waters claimed by both countries.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/vietnam-escalates-dispute-with-china-over-oil-rig/2014/05/06/2042b2ac-d529-11e3-8f7d-7786660fff7c\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/vietnam-escalates-dispute-with-china-over-oil-rig/2014/05/06/2042b2ac-d529-11e3-8f7d-7786660fff7c_story.html)

**5 May 2014: Oil Dispute Erupts In The South China Sea**

Vietnam demanded China stop oil drilling operations in a disputed patch of the South China Sea, saying on Monday that Beijing's decision to deploy a deep sea rig over the weekend was illegal. Asked about Vietnam's objections, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the drilling was taking place in Chinese waters.

<http://www.chem.info/news/2014/05/oil-dispute-erupts-south-china-sea>

**5 May 2014: China deployed HD-981 at 15° 29'58" north latitude and 111° 12'06" east longitude, Vietnam responded**

Binh made the statement in response to reporters' questions on a maritime notice issued by the China Maritime Safety Administration on May 3 saying that drilling rig HD-981 is operating at 15° 29'58" north latitude and 111° 12'06" east longitude from May 2 until August 15.

<http://en.nhandan.org.vn/politics/external-relations/item/2482902-vietnam-opposes-illegal-foreign-activities-in-its-waters.html>

<http://www.platts.com/latest-news/oil/singapore/vietnam-protests-against-chinas-cnooc-drilling-21574339>

**5 May 2014: China begins drilling for oil in disputed sea**

The China Maritime Safety Administration posted a navigational warning on its website advising that the CNOOC 981 rig would be drilling in the South China Sea from May 4 to Aug. 15, in an area close to the Paracel Islands, which are controlled by China but Vietnam claims as their own. It said ships entering a 3-mile (4.8-kilometers) radius around the area are prohibited.

<http://www.philstar.com/world/2014/05/05/1319624/china-begins-drilling-oil-disputed-sea>

**4 May 2014: PLA may build airfield on disputed South China Sea island**

Citing military experts, Duowei said that China may soon construct a new airfield on Johnson South Reef to increase its force projection ability over the South China Sea region.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20140504000058&cid=1101>

**ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**

**19 May 2014: Intensive communication necessary to resolve South China Sea dispute: Marty Natalegawa**

On May 16, 2014, Indonesia through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs had submitted an official statement about the escalated crisis between Vietnam and China related to the South China Sea.

<http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/94118/intensive-communication-necessary-to-resolve-south-china-sea-dispute-marty-natalegawa>

**12 May 2014: Malaysia cautious in dealing with dispute in South China Sea - Hishammuddin**

"It is important for the Asean leadership to ensure that there is no miscalculation involved in the geopolitical powers. We must decide our destiny so that it will be easier for us to avoid interference by any third party," Defence Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein told reporters after receiving a courtesy call from the Australian Navy Chief, Vice Admiral Ray Griggs at Wisma Pertahanan, here today.

<http://www.mysinchew.com/node/98185?tid=4>

**11 May 2014: China tops Asean agenda**

President Benigno Aquino III on Saturday vowed to press anew for the rule of law in resolving territorial conflicts at the annual gathering of Southeast Asian leaders, which opens here Sunday amid a surge of tensions in the South China Sea.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/104107/china-tops-asean-agenda#ixzz31VRbPFmQ>

**11 May 2014: South China Sea incidents a 'wake up call' for Code of Conduct: PM Lee**

Recent incidents in the South China Sea are a wake up call that a code of conduct is urgently needed to guide claimants' actions in the disputed resource-rich waters, said Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on Sunday.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/news/asia/south-east-asia/story/south-china-sea-incidents-wake-call-code-conduct-pm-lee-20140511#sthash.V9AlXyEH.dpuf>

**11 May 2014: Foreign ministers' issue joint statement after week of flare ups**

Urging relevant parties to act in accordance with principles of international law, the foreign ministers reiterated the importance of maintaining stability and maritime security in the region.

<http://www.todayonline.com/world/asean-urges-restraint-south-china-sea-disputes>

**11 May 2014: ASEAN must be neutral in South China Sea row: PM Lee**

Speaking at the 24th ASEAN Summit in Myanmar, Mr Lee echoed the sentiments of foreign ministers that ASEAN should have a common position on the issue. He also stressed the urgency of coming up with an early conclusion to a South China Sea Code of Conduct and urged leaders to give strong political support to the process.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/asean-must-play/1102242.html>

**9 May 2014: ASEAN Leaders Summit to Take Place Amid South China Sea Concerns**

The timing of the summit could encourage both the Philippines and Vietnam, and the remaining ASEAN countries, to revisit the regional organization's bid to develop effective multilateral means to manage the various disputes in the South China Sea.

**7 May 2014: S'pore calls for self-restraint in South China Sea dispute**

A statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday said Singapore is concerned about recent developments in the South China Sea. The ministry said Singapore urges all parties to fully abide by the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. The parties also need to manage disputes peacefully in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). MFA added that Singapore continues to urge ASEAN and China to work towards an early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/s-pore-calls-for-self/1098182.html>

**MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**

**24 May 2014: China warns Japan**

China warned Japan on Friday to stay out of a growing dispute with its neighbours over the South China Sea, as the Philippines implicitly accused Beijing of delaying talks aimed at a solution.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-1-251916-China-warns-Japan>

**22 May 2014: US Supports Legal Actions to Resolve China Vietnam Dispute**

The White House said on Thursday it would support the use of legal action by Vietnam against China to resolve a dispute after the deployment of a Chinese oil rig to disputed waters in the South China Sea.

<http://news.yahoo.com/white-house-supports-legal-action-resolve-china-vietnam-153321250.html>

**15 May 2014: Stop provoking us on South China Sea: China to US**

The war of words between China and the US over territorial disputes in the South China Sea continued on Tuesday with Beijing accusing Washington of fomenting tension in the region by making unfounded comments.

<http://www.onlinenews.com.pk/details.php?newsid=261023&catname=World>

**14 May 2014: Kerry: China's Oil Rig in South China Sea 'Provocative'**

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Kerry told Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in a phone call the move was "provocative" and "aggressive."

<http://www.voanews.com/content/kerry-chinas-oil-rig-in-south-china-sea-provocative/1913329.html>

**12 May 2014: UK speaks in support of EU statement on tensions in South China Sea**

The installation of a Chinese oil rig in disputed waters this week has led to increased tensions in the South China Sea. The UK supports the EU statement issued on 8 May, and has raised the issue with the Chinese government at Ministerial level. We urge all parties to exercise restraint and seek to de-escalate the situation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-speaks-in-support-of-eu-statement-on-tensions-in-south-china-sea>

**9 May 2014: China Tests American Resolve: More Trouble in the South China Sea**

From a strategic point of view, however, China took advantage of the fact that Vietnam has no enduring treaty alliance with a regional or international power, but instead relies on a flexible network of strategic partnerships with the likes of Russia, India, Japan, and the U.S.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-javad-heydarian/china-tests-american-reso\\_b\\_5294735.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-javad-heydarian/china-tests-american-reso_b_5294735.html)

**9 May 2014: China Blames US for Vietnam and Philippines Clashes in South China Sea**

The foreign ministry in Beijing accused the US of fuelling long-standing tensions by encouraging its allies to engage in dangerous behaviour.

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/china-blames-us-vietnam-philippines-clashes-south-china-sea-1447933>

**8 May 2014: EU expresses concerns about unilateral actions in South China Sea**

In particular, the EU is concerned that unilateral actions could affect the security environment in the region, as evidenced by reports about the recent collision of Vietnamese and Chinese vessels.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-speaks-in-support-of-eu-statement-on-tensions-in-south-china-sea>

**7 May 2014: U.S. says concerned about China-Vietnam incident in South China Sea**

The United States said on Wednesday it was concerned about dangerous conduct and intimidation in the South China Sea after reports of a Chinese vessel ramming Vietnamese ships. It called for restraint on all sides.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/07/us-china-seas-usa-idUSBREA460ST20140507>

**7 May 2014: Abe blasts China in NATO speech**

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe criticized China's military expansion and provocations in East Asia, calling them issues of concern for the international community.

<http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0001261850>

**6 May 2014: Japanese parliamentarians laud PH's latest defense pact with US**

Japanese parliamentarians have expressed support for the country's arbitration bid against China over disputes in the South China Sea and Manila's newest defense agreement with Washington D.C.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/103643/japanese-parliamentarians-laud-phs-latest-defense-pact-with-us#ixzz310xDABUY>

**6 May 2014: U.S. criticizes Chinese oil rig move amid Vietnam protests**

The United States on Tuesday sharply criticized the movement of a huge Chinese oil rig that Vietnam says has entered its waters, the latest show of Beijing's growing assertiveness to raise alarm among smaller countries in the region.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/06/us-china-vietnam-usa-idUSBREA450WL20140506>

**1 May 2014: US obligated to help in case of attack: Manila**

The United States has a treaty obligation to help the Philippines in case of an attack on its territory or armed forces in the South China Sea, the Philippine foreign minister said yesterday, rejecting questioning of a security pact.

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/news/asia/281916/us-obligated-to-help-in-case-of-attack-manila>

