

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE – JULY 2014

PHILIPPINES V. CHINA

25 July 2014: DFA: Arbitration about rights, not 'who owns what'

"It is not about determining who owns what in the territories in the South China Sea. That is not our case. Our case is a interpretation of the law, clarification, and validation... Our aim is for the tribunal to say that the nine-dash line is without basis under UNCLOS," DFA spokesman Charles Jose said in a forum at the University of the Philippines.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/372136/news/nation/dfa-west-phl-sea-arbitration-about-rights-not-who-owns-what>

19 July 2014: Philippines sees ruling on China case by 2016

The Philippines' lead counsel in the case said the Philippines is anticipating the final judgment of the arbitral tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration "in January 2016 or sometime between January and March 2016." The Philippines' submission will be followed by oral hearings "between the 7th and 18th of July 2015" and arbitral awards "are issued within 6 to 8 months of the conclusion of the oral hearings." Reichler said.

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/63735-philippines-china-case-ruling-2016-reichler>

ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

31 July 2014: Philippines unveils triple-action plan for S. China Sea

The Philippines will propose a freeze on all activity that raises tension in disputed waters in the South China Sea as part of a three-part plan at a regional security meeting next month.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/the-big-story/asia-report/south-china-sea/story/philippines-unveils-triple-action-plan-s-china-sea-2#sthash.JwjivGao.dpuf>

28 July 2014: China conducts mine-clearance drill in S China Sea

The Chinese navy has conducted a mine clearance drill in formation in the South China Sea for the first time, according to a navy's statement.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2014-07/28/c_133516100.htm

27 July 2014: Chinese fishing boats provided with satellite navigation system, fuel subsidies

China's homegrown Beidou satellite system had been installed on more than 50,000 Chinese fishing boats. Boat captains have paid no more than 10 percent of the cost. The government has paid the rest.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/27/us-southchinasea-china-fishing-insight-idUSKBN0FW0QP20140727>

25 July 2014: Vietnam slams China dredging project

Vietnam has condemned China for dredging channels around Drummond Island, a small part of Vietnam's Hoang Sa archipelago (Paracel Islands).

<http://ann-srv.asianewsnet.net/Vietnam-slams-China-dredging-project-62769.html>

24 July 2014: China dredges channels near disputed islands as Beijing 'asserts stance on South China Sea'

Beijing clearing channels around Drummond Island in disputed chain to ease access for fishermen and supply boats, Xinhua says.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1557769/china-dredging-channels-disputed-paracels-xinhua-reports>

24 July 2014: Filipino protesters denounce China's 'bullying'

About 100 Filipinos carrying mock missiles marched to the Chinese consulate in Manila to protest actions they call "bullying" in the South China Sea.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/world/asia/filipino-protesters-denounce-chinas-bullying/>

24 July 2014: China started construction of the first school in Sansha

China started construction of the first school in Sansha.

<http://english.cntv.cn/2014/07/24/VIDE1406151001503237.shtml>

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1557769/china-dredging-channels-disputed-paracels-xinhua-reports>

18 July 2014: Aquino: Beefing up military not meant to heighten South China Sea tensions

" Our efforts ... to modernize the capabilities of our security sector is to address the needs in human disaster response arenas and for our own internal defense," Aquino said.

<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/91376/beefing-up-afp-not-meant-to-heighten-south-china-sea-tensions---aquino>

17 July 2014: China studies floating gas plants for South China Sea

CNOOC is studying the possibility of building a multi-billion-dollar floating liquefied natural gas (FLNG) vessel, as-yet untried technology that would likely be used to produce gas from the deep waters of the South China Sea.

<http://www.cnbc.com/id/101843143#>

16 July 2014: China Withdraws Oil Rig from Waters Contested by Vietnam

State-owned China National Petroleum Corporation, or CNPC, said in a statement that a rig it had moved to a disputed region of the South China Sea in May, has "smoothly completed" its drilling after finding signs of oil and gas.

<http://www.ibtimes.com/china-finishes-drilling-operations-disputed-region-south-china-sea-near-vietnam-1629492>

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/rig-07162014191748.html>

14 July 2014: PHL rebuffs China over Reed Bank oil exploration

"The Philippines has the exclusive sovereign rights over the Reed bank. No other state is lawfully entitled to assert sovereignty or sovereign rights over the said area," Foreign Affairs spokesman said.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/370176/economy/agricultureandmining/phl-rebuffs-china-over-reed-bank-oil-exploration>

14 July 2014: Vietnam concerned about Taiwan's work on Taiping island

Vietnam has repeatedly asked Taiwan to stop its improvements to Taiping's runway and pier to prevent the situation in the South China Sea from becoming more complex, the reports said.

<http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201407140034.aspx>

14 July 2014: China looks for UNESCO approval in disputed S China Sea waters

As China attempts to register the Maritime Silk Road with UNESCO, the protection of archeological sites in the disputed South China Sea is underway.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20140713000022&cid=1104>

14 July 2014: The Philippines offer US\$1.5bn to modernize its armed forces

The Philippines has offered a US\$1.5 billion budget to defense contractors around the world for phase one of its three-tier armed forces modernization program. It wishes to strengthen its bargaining chips in the dispute over the South China Sea's disputed territories, reports the US Defense News Weekly.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?cid=1101&MainCatID=11&id=20140713000038>

13 July 2014: China bars oil drill in WP sea

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Hong Lei slammed a report that a London-listed Forum Energy Plc has obtained approval from the Philippine government to extend by one year its drilling plan for a natural gas project in the disputed Reed Bank in the West Philippine Sea.

<http://manilastandardtoday.com/2014/07/13/china-bars-oil-drill-in-wp-sea/>

12 July 2014: Taiwan: Spratly Islands pier may be completed ahead of schedule

A pier currently being built by Taiwan on Taiping Island, the largest of the Spratly Islands in the disputed South China Sea, is likely to be completed before the scheduled date in late 2015, a source said Saturday.

<http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201407120023.aspx>

12 July 2014: Taiwan renews call for peaceful resolution of South China Sea disputes

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed Taiwan's sovereignty over four island groups in the South China Sea, while urging neighboring countries and territories involved in territorial disputes in the area to resolve their differences through dialogue and negotiation.

<http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aipl/201407120026.aspx>

11 July 2014: PH, Brunei vow to tackle sea row

In a statement, the Foreign Affairs Department said that Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario and Brunei Foreign Affairs and Trade Prince Mohamed Bolkiah also agreed to find ways to resolve the conflict through peaceful means in accordance with UNCLOS.

<http://manilastandardtoday.com/2014/07/11/ph-brunei-vow-to-tackle-sea-row/>

10 July 2014: Philippines, U.S. to hold naval drills near disputed shoal in South China Sea

Philippine and American troops are set to hold naval exercises this month near a disputed shoal, which will almost certainly anger China with tension already high in the South China Sea.

<http://www.bayoubuzz.com/us-news/item/703412-philippines-us-to-hold-naval-drills-near-disputed-shoal-in-south-china-sea>

8 July 2014: DFA studying new Chinese law

DFA spokesman and Assistant Foreign Secretary Charles Jose on Monday said the DFA was studying the implications of the new Chinese law to the Philippines.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/107672/dfa-studying-new-chinese-law>

7 July 2014: China adopts New law to boost military security in claimed waters

The Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress has enacted the Law of People's Republic of China on the Protection of Military Installations, which is expected to be implemented on August 1.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/07/07/1343468/new-law-boost-military-security-china-claimed-waters-report>

http://eng.mod.gov.cn/TopNews/2013-12/24/content_4480554.htm

4 July 2014: PH, Vietnam seek closer ties amid sea dispute

The Philippines and Vietnam have agreed to "advance partnership to a higher level". This involves the establishment of a Joint Commission headed by the two ministers to formulate a road map in working towards a strategic partnership. The two ministers also agreed to further promote cooperation in areas of fisheries, ocean and maritime, defense and security, and trade and investment.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/07/03/14/ph-vietnam-seek-closer-ties-amid-sea-dispute>

1 July 2014: Court defers pre-trial of Chinese fishermen arrested for poaching

State Prosecutor Allen Ross Rodriguez said yesterday that the pre-trial, which was scheduled for July 1, has been postponed by the Puerto Princesa City Regional Trial Court in the western Philippine province of Palawan. A new schedule has yet to be announced by the court.

<http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Nation&title=Court-defers-pre-trial-of-Chinese-fishermen-arrested-for-poaching&id=90106>

1 July 2014: China slams Philippines for 'non-stop' talk on rule of law

"Since some countries are so fond of the 'rule of law,' then I wonder what on earth is the 'rule of law' that they keep talking about?" Qin asked. "Certain countries infringe upon the legitimate rights and interests of other countries under the cloak of 'the rule of law' and disguise their illegal actions as 'legal'. I'd like to advise these countries to check their own doings against international laws and the basic norms governing international relations," Qin said.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/06/30/1340815/china-slams-philippines-non-stop-talk-rule-law>

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

29 July 2014: Phl to pursue moratorium on provocative acts in sea row

The DFA said the proposed moratorium should be pursued while concerned countries work on the expeditious conclusion of a legally binding Code of Conduct (COC) in the disputed waters. The moratorium could be brought up in a special ASEAN ministerial meeting proposed by Indonesia.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/07/28/1351132/phl-pursue-moratorium-provocative-acts-sea-row>

28 July 2014: Mutual trust key to strong S'pore-China, China-ASEAN relations: DPM Teo

In an op-ed, Mr Teo Chee Hean urged the continued strengthening of Singapore and China's "unique friendship", noting that an expeditiously concluded Code of Conduct in the South China Sea would help pave the way for "another Golden Decade" in ASEAN-China relations.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/mutual-trust-key-to/1285954.html>

19 July 2014: Manila urges unity for South East Asian nations in China sea dispute

The Philippines is pushing for a meeting among four Southeast Asian nations with conflicting claims to waters in the South China Sea so that they can hammer out a common stand in dealings with China, Manila's foreign minister said on Friday.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/18/us-philippines-southchinasea-idUSKBN0FNOSF20140718>

19 July 2014: Thailand supports using arbitration to resolve maritime dispute

"What is important is the need for self-restraint on the part of all parties, commitment to peaceful resolution, we see arbitration as a means for peaceful resolution," Sihasak

said. <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/370954/news/nation/phl-thailand-call-for-peaceful-resolution-of-south-china-sea-disputes>

18 July 2014: PH, Indonesia foreign ministers tackle maritime row with China

Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Secretary Albert Del Rosario visited Jakarta last July 15 and met with Indonesian Foreign Minister Dr. R.M. Marty Natalegawa where the issue of China's aggressive territorial claims in the South China Sea was discussed.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/108062/ph-indonesia-foreign-ministers-tackle-maritime-row-with-china#ixzz37o5y1UNE>

9 July 2014: Indonesia: A Bigger Role in the South China Sea?

As Indonesia goes to the polls, the expectations of its international partners are growing.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/07/indonesia-a-bigger-role-in-the-south-china-sea/>

3 July 2014: PH, Vietnam want Code of Conduct in South China Sea concluded ASAP

In the midst of rising tension due to territorial disputes involving China, the Philippines and Vietnam agreed that the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea must be concluded "expeditiously without undue delay," the Department of Foreign Affairs said in a news release Thursday.

<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/90422/ph-vietnam-want-code-of-conduct-in-south-china-sea-concluded-asap>

1 July 2014: Singapore Minister for Foreign Affairs K Shanmugam's Q&A Session on SCS

"From the Singapore's perspective or a non-claimant perspective, it doesn't matter who owns which islands, but where there are disputes, we want it to be dealt with in a way that doesn't lead to ships confronting each other, shots being fired, increasing kinetic conflict."

http://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/mfa/media_centre/press_room/pr/2014/201407/press_20140701.printable.html?status=1

MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

30 July 2014: Singapore, US kick off joint military exercise in South China Sea

The naval forces of Singapore and United States will carry out joint exercises in the South China Sea as part of this year's Exercise CARAT, which begins on July 29.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/singapore-us-kick-off/1287056.html>

26 July 2014: Bill Clinton Slams Beijing on South China Sea

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton used a trip to China on Friday to criticize Beijing over its territorial disputes with smaller countries in the South China Sea.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/07/bill-clinton-slams-beijing-on-south-china-sea/>

25 July 2014: Japan, Australia firm up defense against China

The agreement was signed at a time when the Philippines was embroiled in a territorial dispute with China in the South China Sea.

<http://opinion.inquirer.net/76839/japan-australia-firm-up-defense-ties-against-china>

25 July 2014: Philippines called EU and ASEAN to back rules-based approach in maritime disputes

The Philippines has called on the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) to join efforts to promote a rules-based approach in the settlement of maritime disputes.

<http://www.businessmirror.com.ph/index.php/en/news/nation/36052-del-rosario-calls-on-eu-asean-to-back-rules-based-approach-in-maritime-disputes>

19 July 2014: Russia negotiating military deal with PH

"We fully understand the problems Philippines has to face with its huge maritime border," the visiting Deputy Director of Russia's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation, Konstantin Biryulin, told Manila Bulletin in an exclusive interview Friday. "We have a proposal regarding equipments which could help in controlling those areas."

<http://www.tempo.com.ph/2014/07/russia-negotiating-military-deal-with-ph/>

16 July 2014: China tells US: Stay out of sea dispute

China told the United States to stay out of disputes over the South China Sea and leave countries in the region to resolve problems themselves, after Washington said it wanted a freeze on stoking tension.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/focus/07/15/14/china-tells-us-stay-out-sea-dispute>

12 July 2014: U.S. wants freeze on acts stoking South China Sea tensions

The United States said on Friday it wants Beijing and rival countries to clamp a voluntary freeze on actions aggravating territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/07/11/usa-china-asean-idUSL2N0PM0S620140711>

11 July 2014: Kerry Presses China to Abide by Maritime Laws to Ease Tensions

Mr. Kerry called on China to support the creation of a legally binding code of conduct that other Asian nations are considering to enforce rules of navigation and inhibit unilateral actions in the South China and East China Seas, said the official, who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity under standard protocol.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/10/world/asia/kerry-urges-china-to-reduce-tensions-in-nearby-seas.html>

1 July 2014: Australia Calls Beijing's Policy 'Counterproductive'

In a blunt assessment of Chinese territorial claims in the East and South China seas, Australian cabinet minister Malcolm Turnbull — a key lieutenant of Prime Minister Tony Abbott — said Beijing's recent tussles with Vietnam and the Philippines were "singularly unhelpful" to regional security confidence.

<http://online.wsj.com/articles/chinese-territorial-claims-driving-asia-closer-to-u-s-1404113954?tesla=y&mg=reno64->

[wsj&url=http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304344504580000340080881592.html](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304344504580000340080881592.html)

1 July 2014: US not behind South China Sea row, China told

The speculation that the United States wants to stir trouble for China over the latter's territorial disputes with neighbors is merely a "conspiracy theory," a former ranking US security official said in Beijing.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/06/30/1340816/us-not-behind-south-china-sea-row-china-told>