

**SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE  
DECEMBER 2014**

**PHILIPPINES V. CHINA**

**20 December 2014: Philippines lawyer: China 'felt pressured' to respond**

Manila's counsel said that the Position Paper "made it easier for both the arbitral tribunal and the Philippines to do their jobs."

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/78454-paul-reichler-china-paper>

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/78464-reichler-statement-scs-developments>

**17 December 2014: The Arbitral Tribunal Requests Further Written Argument from the Philippines**

The Philippines has until 15 March 2015 to file a supplemental written submission and China will have until 16 June 2015 to provide comments. The Tribunal is consulting with the Parties on the Statement of Viet Nam received by the Registry for the attention of the Arbitral Tribunal on 5 December 2014.

[http://www.pca-cpa.org/showfile.asp?fil\\_id=2846](http://www.pca-cpa.org/showfile.asp?fil_id=2846)

**13 December 2014: PHL welcomes Vietnamese position on South China Sea arbitration**

The Philippine government welcomes the statement as it was largely in accord with its position.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/392464/news/nation/phl-welcomes-vietnamese-position-on-south-china-sea-arbitration>

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/blogs/opinions/12/14/14/vietnam-delivered-when-philippines-needed-it-most>

**13 December 2014: China Rejects Vietnam's Legal Challenge on South China Sea**

Reacting to Vietnam's statement, China's Spokesperson Hong Lei said, "China urges Vietnam to earnestly respect China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, work with China to resolve relevant disputes through consultation and negotiation on the basis of respecting historical facts and international law so as to jointly safeguard peace and stability."

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/focus/12/13/14/vietnam-supports-ph-position-south-china-sea-dispute>

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1661364/china-rejects-vietnam-claims-arbitration-submission-over-south-china-sea>

**7 December 2014: China denounces Philippine 'pressure' over sea dispute arbitration**

Xu Hong, head of the ministry's legal and treaties department, said the timing of the paper had nothing to do with the deadline, and it had taken time to prepare China's arguments for why it was not participating in arbitration.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/07/us-southchinasea-china-philippines-idUSKBN0JL03X20141207>

**7 December 2014: China releases Position Paper on the Tribunal's Jurisdiction**

The Chinese foreign ministry released a position paper of the government on the matter of jurisdiction in the South China Sea arbitration initiated by the Republic of the Philippines.

[http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1217147.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1217147.shtml)

[http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/t1217150.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1217150.shtml)

**6 December 2014: Vietnam Files Statement against China at UN Arbitral Tribunal**

Vietnam's statement was submitted on December 4. ASEAN diplomats were briefed on December 5.

[http://www.mofa.gov.vn/en/tt\\_baochi/pbnfn/ns141212143709](http://www.mofa.gov.vn/en/tt_baochi/pbnfn/ns141212143709)

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/blogs/opinions/12/14/14/vietnam-delivered-when-philippines-needed-it-most>

## **ACTS OF CLAIMANTS**

### **29 December 2014: China, Vietnam to address maritime disputes without using 'megaphone diplomacy'**

Senior Chinese and Vietnamese officials have agreed to settle their maritime disputes without resorting to "megaphone diplomacy", the official Xinhua news service said on Saturday.

<http://www.bt.com.bn/news-asia/2014/12/29/china-vietnam-address-maritime-disputes-without-using-%E2%80%98megaphone-diplomacy%E2%80%99>

### **27 December 2014: China Plans to Build Modern Command Headquarters**

Xi has been recently pressing for the strengthening of the country's 2.3-million strong army, even as they expand their reach over the disputed waters of the South China Sea and the East Sea.

<http://en.yibada.com/news/china-plans-to-build-modern-command-headquarters-8885>

### **26 December 2014: Land reclamation project boosts Woody Island's size by 40%**

The size of disputed Woody Island has increased by 40%. Rocky Island has now merged with Woody island. The airstrip in the island's airport has increased its length to 3 km.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20141226000136&cid=1101>

### **25 December 2014: Chinese Leader: Vietnam Ties Need "Correct Path"**

Yu Zhengsheng made the remarks during a meeting in Hanoi with Le Hong Anh, a member of the Vietnamese Communist Party's politburo, Chinese state media said late on Thursday.

<http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/chinese-leader-vietnam-ties-need-correct-path>

### **25 December 2014: Taiwan's report shows China and Vietnam's increased military presence in the South China Sea**

Ministry of National Defense report pointed to the increased buildup of troops and weapons by China and Vietnam on their island bases near the military outpost on Itu Aba Island.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2014/12/26/2003607646>

### **25 December 2014: Philippines beefing up sea patrol assets**

Amid a festering dispute in the South China Sea, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) will be getting new assets in water, air and land transport for better mobility and capability in search and rescue operations.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/12/25/1406408/phl-beefing-sea-patrol-assets>

### **24 December 2014: Malaysia, China Begin First Joint Military Exercise**

The joint table top exercise, dubbed "Peace and Friendship 2014," was launched by MAF and PLA at the Malaysian Armed Forces Joint Warfare Center.

<http://thediomat.com/2014/12/malaysia-china-begin-first-joint-military-exercise/>

### **22 December 2014: Taiwan to build Lighthouse on Itu Aba Island**

"The light it provides will launch the South China Sea Peace Initiative," an official familiar with Taiwan's South China Sea policies said.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2014/12/21/2003607230>

### **22 December 2014: Beijing set up South China Sea ADIZ in secret**

China secretly set up an ADIZ over the disputed South China Sea, according to Kanwa Defense Review, a Chinese-language military magazine based in Canada.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20141222000014&cid=1101>

### **21 December 2014: China's Top Leader to Visit Vietnam amid SCS Dispute**

Yu's visit was at the invitation of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Xinhua quoted a spokesman of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

<http://www.bernama.com.my/bernama/v7/ge/newsgeneral.php?id=1095419>

### **20 December 2014: Philippines: House approves proposed PH Maritime Zones Act**

House of Representatives passed the Philippine Maritime Zones Act, a measure intended to define maritime zones under Philippine jurisdiction.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/12/19/14/house-approves-proposed-ph-maritime-zones-act>

**19 December 2014: Taiwan to buy missile frigates amid South China Sea spats**

The White House's sign-off Thursday on the Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2013 act, authorizing sales of four ships, prompted a formal protest from Beijing.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2014/1219/Taiwan-ready-to-buy-US-missile-frigates-amid-South-China-Sea-spats>

**17 December 2014: Philippines to Upgrade Navy in S. China Sea**

Navy Rear Admiral Caesar Taccad said Manila will purchase two frigates, two helicopters, and three gunboats as part of the upgrade.

<http://www.voanews.com/content/philippines-to-upgrade-navy-south-china-sea/2562304.html>

**13 December 2014: PLA deploys frigate to S China Sea**

The Chinese warship in the picture is the Cangzhou, a Type 053 guided missile frigate. It was sent to the disputed waters to confront the Dinh Tien Hoang, a Vietnamese Gepard-class stealth frigate in the waters of Johnson South Reef.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?cid=1101&MainCatID=11&id=20141213000002>

**11 December 2014: CNOOC, KUFPEC sign PSCs for offshore blocks in South China Sea**

CNOOC has signed three production sharing contracts (PSCs) with KUFPEC (China) Inc. for blocks 52/22, 52/26, and 63/13 in the South China Sea. The three blocks are located in the Yinggehai Basin of the South China Sea.

<http://www.pennenergy.com/articles/ogfj/2014/12/cnooc-kufpec-sign-pscs-for-offshore-blocks-in-south-china-sea.html>

**10 December 2014: China sent Letter to UN on Paracels dispute**

The letter was sent in response to Vietnam's position paper of 22 August 2014 on the operation of China's oil rig in the EEZ of Vietnam.

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A%2F69%2F645&Submit=Search&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A%2F69%2F645&Submit=Search&Lang=E)

**2 December 2014: Vietnamese and Chinese vessels clash again in South China Sea**

Vietnamese fishing boats clashed again with Chinese coast guard vessels in the disputed South China Sea on Nov. 26, four months after China withdrew its oil rig, reports overseas Chinese-language newspaper Duowei News.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?cid=1101&MainCatID=11&id=20141202000111>

**2 December 2014: Southeast Asia to Arm Itself as China Backfills a Disputed Sea**

"I believe on the part of our government, the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization is a concrete example of a response to these challenges," says Jonathan Ravelas, chief market strategist in Manila.

<http://www.thestreet.com/story/12970880/1/southeast-asia-to-arm-itself-as-china-backfills-a-disputed-sea.html>

**2 December 2014: CNOOC switches on second independent South China Sea gas field in a week**

CNOOC has commenced natural gas production today from its Panyu 34-1/35-1/35-2 project in the South China Sea, a week after it launched production from its nearby Huizhou 25-8 Oilfield/Xijiang 24-3 Oilfield Xijiang 24-1 District Joint Development Project.

<http://www.oilandgastechology.net/upstream-news/cnooc-switches-second-independent-south-china-sea-gas-field-week>

**1 December 2014: China leader vows to protect sovereign territory**

"We should firmly uphold China's territorial sovereignty, maritime rights and interests and national unity," Xi Jinping said in a key foreign policy speech at a Communist Party meeting held on Friday and Saturday, according to excerpts of his speech carried by the Xinhua news agency on Sunday.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/11/30/388128/china-vows-to-protect-sovereignty/>

## **ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**

### **23 December 2014: Indonesian Military commander: RI a big brother in ASEAN**

Moeldoko said that the meeting also discussed the South China Sea dispute, adding that Indonesia hoped to be a pioneer in maintaining stability in the area by carrying out diplomacy with China and the US.

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/12/23/ri-a-big-brother-asean.html>

### **13 December 2014: Malaysia keen to play role in solving South China Sea issue**

Malaysia, assuming rotating chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2015, is to play a positive role on the South China Sea issue, a Malaysian observer said in Hong Kong on Saturday.

[http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2014-12/13/content\\_19080986.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2014-12/13/content_19080986.htm)

### **10 December 2014: ASEAN splits on South China Sea dispute**

The 10-nation ASEAN summit could agree only on a loosely worded expression of concerns.

[http://apdforum.com/en\\_GB/article/rmiap/articles/online/features/2014/12/10/asean-sea-split](http://apdforum.com/en_GB/article/rmiap/articles/online/features/2014/12/10/asean-sea-split)

### **3 December 2014: China and Indonesia's Maritime Agendas Closely Aligned**

"I can see three areas where our own maritime development agenda actually fills in or overlaps with the Maritime Silk Road ideas of President Xi Jinping," Rizal Sukma, the presidential adviser for foreign policy, said. "Both ideas or doctrines, if you like, are about connectivity, safety and diplomacy. They are not about power supremacy," he says.

<http://thejakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/news/china-and-indonesias-maritime-agendas-closely-aligned/>

## **MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**

### **26 December 2014: White House responds to South China Sea petition vs China**

"We have expressed our concerns over China's actions, including its deployment of the HD-981 drilling operation, to Chinese leaders at the highest levels," the statement said.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2014/12/26/1406694/white-house-responds-south-china-sea-petition-vs-china>

### **21 December 2014: US responds to petition on Taiwanese fisherman**

"The United States continues to support the ongoing negotiations between Taiwan authorities and the Philippines on a fisheries agreement that will institute measures to make such confrontations less likely in the future."

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/intl-community/2014/12/21/424553/US-responds.htm>

### **20 December 2014: India to Sell Warships to Vietnam, Increase Footprints in South China Sea**

"The sale of at least four patrol vessels comes as part of the \$100 million credit line for military extended to Vietnam by India," Rear Admiral AK Verma (retd) Chairman and Managing Director of GRSE said.

<http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/india-to-sell-warships-to-vietnam-increase-footprints-in-south-china-sea-636681>

### **18 December 2014: Top US diplomat questions China's construction in disputed sea**

"Is the construction of large-scale man-made outposts and continual encroachment by ships, planes and oil-drilling rigs going to be the way that Asians resolve maritime boundaries?" Russel asked.

<http://m.philstar.com/314190/show/f2e247d516f332cb16b7eb13d94700cd/?>

### **17 December 2014: Philippines, South Korea Eye Stronger Partnership amid Chinese Protest**

Reports had surfaced that Beijing had asked Seoul several times not to sell the jets to the Philippines. South Korea has officially denied the claim but officials privately admit that the reports are accurate, saying that it had to do with competing claims in the South China Sea.

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/12/philippines-south-korea-eye-stronger-partnership-amid-chinese-protests/>

### **9 December 2014: China slammed the U.S. on the report on maritime claims in the South China Sea**

“The United States has violated its commitment of not holding position and not taking sides in the South China Sea issue. Such a move is inconducive to the resolution of the South China Sea disputes and the peace and stability of the South China Sea,” Hong said.

<http://thebricspost.com/china-tells-us-to-speak-and-act-cautiously-on-maritime-dispute/#.VI4x-jGUePs>

**6 December 2014: US State Department assesses China’s nine-dashed line**

US Department of State released a study analyzing the maritime claims of China in the Sout China Sea, specifically its “dashed – line”.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/234936.pdf>

<http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2014/12/08/US-State-Department-assesses-Chinas-nine-dashed-line.aspx?COLLCC=4247674176&COLLCC=3267055645&>

**5 December 2014: US House resolution urges China to refrain from 'provocative actions' in East Sea**

The resolution, coded H. Res-174, is the first of its kind and its adoption shows deep concern of US lawmakers about the increasingly complicated developments in the region.

<http://www.thanhniennews.com/politics/us-house-resolution-urges-china-to-refrain-from-provocative-actions-in-east-sea-34895.html>

**3 December 2014: Obama Offers Blunt Assessment of US Ties with China, Russia**

Obama said Xi "taps into a nationalism that worries his neighbors," including maritime disputes in the South China Sea.

<http://www.voanews.com/content/obama-offers-blunt-assessment-of-us-ties-with-china-and-russia/2544872.html>