

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE No. 28
July 2015

PHILIPPINES V. CHINA

14 July 2015: Arbitral Tribunal Issues Press Release on the Conclusion of its Hearings on Jurisdiction and Admissibility

The Arbitral Tribunal now enters its deliberations. It will issue a decision on issues of Jurisdiction and Admissibility before the end of the year.

http://www.pca-cpa.org/showproj.asp?pag_id=1529

14 July 2015: China urges Philippines to ditch its South China Sea case

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said China "will never accept the unilateral attempts to turn to a third party to solve the disputes."

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/china-urges-philippines-ditch-south-china-sea-case-055805615.html>

13 July 2015: UN tribunal ends hearings

The court gave the Philippines until July 23 to submit written amplified answers to the questions posed further on Monday by members of the five-person PCA

<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/114101/unclos-has-provisional-remedy-to-ask-china-to-stop-reclamation-in-spratlys---valte>

13 July 2015: PHL sees UN court ruling on case vs. China in 3 months

The Department of Foreign Affairs expects the tribunal to reach a decision in three months on whether it has jurisdiction over the Philippines' case questioning China's massive claim in the South China Sea.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/521230/news/nation/phl-sees-un-court-ruling-on-case-vs-china-in-3-months>

13 July 2015: PHL ready to answer UN panel's questions on China sea dispute

The Philippines is prepared to answer additional questions from the arbitration tribunal handling the case filed by the country challenging China's massive claims on the South China Sea.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/521146/news/nation/phl-ready-to-answer-un-panel-s-questions-on-china-sea-dispute>

12 July 2015: Manila eyes temporary restraint on Chinese reclamation

The Philippine government may seek provisional measures against Beijing's reclamation activities once the Tribunal decides that it has jurisdiction over the case.

<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/114040/with-fingers-crossed-on-pca-jurisdiction-manila-eyes-temporary-restraint-on-chinese-reclamation>

11 July 2015: Arbitral Tribunal to hold 2nd round of arguments on South China Sea case on July 13

The Tribunal has decided to hold a second round of arguments on jurisdiction and admissibility of Manila's complaint over the South China Sea.

<http://www.interaksyon.com/article/113966/arbitral-tribunal-to-hold-2nd-round-of-arguments-on-south-china-sea-case-on-july-13>

8 July 2015: Hearing on South China Sea spat begins

Mr Paul Reichler began presenting arguments to show that the Tribunal has jurisdiction over Manila's case against China.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/hearing-on-south-china-sea-spat-begins>

<http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2015/07/08/day-1-philippine-arguments-the-hague-arbitral-tribunal.html>

7 July 2015: Philippines asks Tribunal to settle dispute with China over South China Sea

The Philippines released its Statement before the tribunal on 7 July 2015.

<http://www.gov.ph/2015/07/07/statement-of-secretary-albert-del-rosario-before-the-permanent-court-of-arbitration-peace-palace-the-hague-netherlands/>

7 July 2015: China voices opposition to Philippines' move on South China Sea arbitration

Hua said the Philippines' moves are in breach of the agreement that has been repeatedly reaffirmed with China as well as the Philippines' undertakings in the DOC.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-07/07/c_134390367.htm

6 July 2015: China to snub arbitration hearing on feud with Philippines over South China Sea

Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jianhua told reporters that his government would stick to its decision not to participate in the arbitration.

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/47959868.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

4 July 2015: China lobbies hard ahead of Manila's South China Sea arbitration case

Chinese diplomats and legal experts have been following developments closely and taking outside opinions, according to sources with knowledge of Beijing's approach to the case. Some of that work has been handled by the Chinese embassy at The Hague, which has established a formal line of communication with the tribunal, they said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/04/us-southchinasea-arbitration-idUSKCN0PE0VK20150704>

3 July 2015: Philippines sends top execs to South China Sea arbitration

Valte said the officials include Senate President Franklin Drilon, House Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr., Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert Del Rosario, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and Justice Secretary Leila De Lima.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2015/07/03/1472862/philippines-sends-top-exec-south-china-sea-arbitration>

ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

29 July 2015: China conducts 'live firing drill' in disputed South China Sea

The exercise involved at least 100 naval vessels, dozens of aircraft, missile launch battalions of the Second Artillery Corps and information warfare troops, Xinhua news agency said, citing navy sources.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/126675/china-conducts-live-firing-drill-in-disputed-south-china-sea#ixzz3hNubw3Gf>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/28/us-southchinasea-china-military-idUSKCN0Q218S20150728>

29 July 2015: AFP seeks almost triple defense spending amid China dispute

The Armed Forces of the Philippines on Wednesday asked Congress to almost triple the annual defense spending over the next five years to upgrade equipment amid an escalating marine dispute with giant neighbor China.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/530738/news/nation/afp-seeks-almost-triple-defense-spending-amid-china-dispute#sthash.17Qpr0nt.dpuf>

28 July 2015: China: New oil platform under construction for disputed South China Sea

After redeploying its Haiyang Shiyou 981 oil rig in the disputed South China Sea, Beijing-based China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation announced that it had begun construction of the Haiyang Shiyou 982.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150728000071&cid=1101>

28 July 2015: China building runway on Subi reef

China has finished dredging sand and coral on a reef in the South China Sea, and is now laying concrete for a 3km runway.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/china-building-runway-on-subi-reef>

27 July 2015: China eyes new cruise link to disputed South China Sea islands

Chinese authorities plan to start a second cruise ship link to the disputed Paracel Islands, state media reported, in a move that may irk Vietnam, which also claims the islets.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/27/us-china-southchinasea-vietnam-idUSKCN0Q10BQ20150727>

27 July 2015: Vietnam Slams Chinese Naval Drill in South China Sea

The Vietnamese foreign ministry issued a statement demanding that the PLAN exercise be halted immediately. Vietnam and China both claim sovereignty over the Paracel Islands.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/vietnam-slams-chinese-naval-drill-in-south-china-sea/>

26 July 2015: Chinese navy plays down South China Sea exercises

"Holding sea drills is a common practice for navies with various countries. The annual drill by the Chinese navy aims to test the troops' real combat abilities, boost their manoeuvrability, search and rescue power and the abilities to fulfil diversified military missions," Xinhua quoted Chinese navy spokesperson Liang Yang saying.

<http://www.financialexpress.com/article/miscellaneous/chinese-navy-plays-down-south-china-sea-exercises-xinhua/107668/>

24 July 2015: Vietnam condemns Chinese naval drill in South China Sea

A Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokesman says China's naval drill off the disputed Paracel Islands in the South China Sea violates Vietnam's sovereignty over the island chain.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/vietnam-condemns-chinese/2005594.html>

23 July 2015: China starts naval drills in disputed South China Sea

The Chinese navy kicked off 10-day military exercises in the disputed South China Sea amid heightened tensions in the region, especially with the US.

<http://www.deccanherald.com/content/490983/china-starts-naval-drills-disputed.html>

22 July 2015: China urges Philippines to return to bilateral talks on disputed sea

"I certainly hope so, the Philippine side will sit together with us for a peaceful negotiation," China's ambassador to the Philippines, Zhao Jianhua, told reporters when asked if the Philippines should withdraw its case in The Hague.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/22/us-southchinasea-philippines-idUSKCN0PW0SW20150722>

19 July 2015: Philippines cheers growing outcry over South China Sea

Herminio Coloma said that many nations agreed that the dispute "must go through legal process as signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea".

<http://news.yahoo.com/philippines-cheers-growing-outcry-over-south-china-sea-105253413.html#>

18 July 2015: Taiwan Promotes Its Island Claim in South China Sea

"When the situation gets tense, our country's stance is to take a novel approach. Can't we put aside the dispute?" Wang said.

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/taiwan-promotes-island-claim-south-china-sea-32533805>

17 July 2015: China Deploys Semi-submersible 'Donghaidao' to South China Sea Fleet

With tensions increasing between China and neighboring countries over territorial disputes in the South China Sea, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) have added a domestically developed semi-submersible ship named "Donghaidao" to the South China Sea Fleet,

<http://en.yibada.com/articles/46106/20150717/semi-submersible-donghaidao-deployed-south-china-sea-fleet.htm#ixzz3gELrc98b>

16 July 2015: Philippines reopens Subic Bay as military base to cover South China Sea

Using Subic Bay would allowing the Philippine air force and navy to respond more effectively to Chinese moves in the disputed South China Sea, security experts said.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/16/philippines-reopens-subic-bay-as-military-base-to-cover-south-china-sea>

15 July 2015: China warns Philippines over repairs to ship on South China Sea reef

China's Foreign Ministry said it was "extremely dissatisfied with and resolutely opposed to" the repairs.

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/48083096.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

14 July 2015: Philippines reinforces its claim to South China Sea outpost

The Philippine Navy is quietly renovating a rusting ship that it uses as a foothold on one of the reefs in Spratly Islands - territory that is disputed with China.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/14/philippines-reinforces-its-claim-to-south-china-sea-outpost-according-to-reports>

13 July 2015: DFA backs call for Google to stop using Chinese names of disputed areas

The Philippine government supported calls for Google to remove Chinese references for disputed parts of the South China Sea and replace it with neutral names.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/521354/news/nation/dfa-backs-call-for-google-to-stop-using-chinese-names-of-disputed-areas>

13 July 2015: Senior Chinese Official to Visit Vietnam

Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli will visit Vietnam in mid-July amid tension over territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

<http://www.euronews.com/newswires/3036332-senior-chinese-official-to-visit-vietnam/>

13 July 2015: China's Xi Jinping may boycott Manila APEC meet

The source said the reason for Xi's change of mind about attending this year's APEC summit was the remarks of President Aquino last month during his visit to Japan comparing China's activities in South China Sea to Nazi Germany's expansionism which led to World War II.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/blogs/opinions/07/12/15/china-s-xi-jinping-may-boycott-manila-apec-meet>

9 July 2015: China's Navy Got Better at Detecting and Taking Out Submarines

After years of development, China's Gaoxin-6, a four-engine, fixed-wing, anti-submarine patrol aircraft, was commissioned into the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) North Sea Fleet. The aircraft will be a major boon to the PLAN's anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities, a neglected area despite China's broader naval modernization.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/chinas-navy-just-got-better-at-detecting-and-taking-out-submarines/>

8 July 2015: Both China and Taiwan have South China Sea obligations, says Beijing

Asked about the Taiwan comments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that after World War Two, the then Nationalist government of China had made "positive efforts" to protect the country's claims in the South China Sea. This was something the Communist government carried on, she added.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/08/us-southchinasea-china-taiwan-idUSKCN0PI1C220150708>

8 July 2015: Taiwan Vows to Defend South China Sea Claims as Philippines Case Begins Against China

"The ROC government will staunchly defend its sovereignty over Taiping and every right held by the country under international law," Ma said in speech at an international conference in Taipei commemorating the 70th anniversary of Chinese nationalist forces' victory in the war against Japan.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/taiwan-vows-to-defend-south-china-sea-claims-as-philippines-case-begins-against-china/>

7 July 2015: Taiwan issues statement on South China Sea

"From legal, economic, and geographic perspectives, Taiping Island (Itu Aba) indisputably qualifies as an "island" according to the specifications of Article 121 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and can sustain human habitation and economic life of its own; it is thus categorically not a "rock." The ROC government will firmly defend this fact. Any claims by other countries which aim to deny this fact will not impair the legal status of Taiping Island (Itu Aba) and its maritime rights based on UNCLOS."

<http://focustaiwan.tw/news/aip/201507070017.aspx>

7 July 2015: Palace responds to China: Still no to bilateral talks in sea row

Coloma reiterated that the South China Sea dispute should be resolved multilaterally because it involves other members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2015/07/07/1474296/palace-responds-china-still-no-bilateral-talks-sea-row>

7 July 2015: Philippine navy describes mysterious buoys with Chinese markings in South China Sea

The Philippine navy recently found a large steel marker bearing Chinese inscriptions and hundreds of yellow buoys in waters near the Reed Bank, an area of the South China Sea where Manila has long explored for oil and gas, Philippine naval sources said.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/1834034/philippine-navy-describes-mysterious-buoys-chinese-markings>

4 July 2015: Vietnam PM seeks Japan support on sea dispute

Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung on Friday sought Japan's continued support for Southeast Asian countries' efforts to ensure that rows over China's forceful assertion of its claims to ownership of disputed islands and reefs in the South China Sea are resolved peacefully.

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/global-filipino/world/07/03/15/vietnam-pm-seeks-japan-support-sea-dispute>

1 July 2015: China says some South China Sea land reclamation projects completed

China has completed some of its land reclamation on the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday, raising the stakes in Beijing's territorial dispute with its Asian neighbors.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/06/30/asia-pacific/china-says-some-south-china-sea-land-reclamation-projects-completed/#.VZfISPmqgko>

1 July 2015: China's PLA Navy sends new surveillance planes on submarine hunt in disputed waters

The navy has deployed several new advanced surveillance aircraft to its North Sea Fleet to hunt down submarines in the East and South China seas.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/1830431/chinas-pla-navy-sends-new-surveillance-planes-submarine>

1 July 2015: Beijing states its case in South China Sea dispute with Philippines

"The root of the China-Philippines dispute on South China Sea lies in the illegal territorial claims the Philippine side made on part of the Nansha (Spratly) Islands and its occupation of some of the islands," Hua said.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150630000129&cid=1101>

1 July 2015: Manila delays joining AIIB amid South China Sea tensions

The Philippines has delayed officially joining the Beijing-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) amid ongoing tensions over disputed islands in the South China Sea.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150630000090&cid=1101&MainCatID=11>

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

27 July 2015: Jokowi Urges Dialogue to End Sea Disputes

"Now is the time to discuss the contents of the Code of Conduct," he added, noting that leaders of the region had been discussing the binding Code for years.

<http://malaysiandigest.com/world/562947-jokowi-urges-dialogue-to-end-sea-disputes.html>

22 July 2015: Cambodia Seeks Role as Mediator between ASEAN, China

"Cambodia wants to mediate in order to reduce the tense atmosphere between ASEAN and China because we discern that no solution can be found without talking to each other," Hor Namhong said.

<http://www.voacambodia.com/content/cambodia-seeks-role-as-mediator-between-asean-china/2873352.html>

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/cambodia-a-new-south-china-sea-mediator-between-china-and-asean/>

14 July 2015: Indonesia blasts China's 9-dash line

"Indonesia is dismayed...that China has included parts of the Natuna islands within the nine-dash line, thus apparently claiming a segment of Indonesia's Riau islands province as its territory," General Moeldoko, commander in chief of the Indonesian National Armed Forces, wrote.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150714000004&cid=1101>

11 July 2015: Indonesia Govt to build military base near South China Sea

The Indonesian government announced on Friday a plan to construct a new military base to guard border areas near South China Sea. So far, the options referred to were areas in Sambas, West Kalimantan; Natuna Islands, Riau Islands and Tarakan, North Kalimantan.

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/07/10/govt-build-military-base-near-south-china-sea.html#sthash.YVqSjEBP.dpuf>

4 July 2015: China – Thailand Relationship Deepens With Submarine Purchase

The Royal Thai Navy (RTN) is set to receive three Type 039B Yuan-class submarines from China at a total cost of US\$1.1 billion.

<http://www.valuewalk.com/2015/07/china-thailand-submarine-purchase/>

MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

26 July 2015: China Doesn't Like US' Comments On South China Sea Case

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lu Kang said, "Attempting to push forward the arbitration unilaterally initiated by the Philippines, the US side just acts like an "arbitrator outside the tribunal", designating the direction for the arbitral tribunal established at the request of the Philippines. This is inconsistent with the position the US side claims to uphold on issues concerning the South China Sea disputes. Being not a party concerned to the South China Sea issue, the US side should live up to its pledge of not taking sides and refrain from actions that go against regional peace and stability."

<http://www.valuewalk.com/2015/07/china-vs-philippines-us-comments/>

25 July 2015: China says U.S. trying to influence Philippines' sea case

China's Foreign Ministry said the United States was trying to influence a South China Sea arbitration case filed by the Philippines after a senior U.S. official said China would be obligated to abide by the tribunal's decision.

<http://news.yahoo.com/china-says-u-trying-influence-philippines-sea-case-105908838.html>

22 July 2015: U.S. commander: Patrols over South China Sea islands to continue

"Where there are disputed claims, we don't take a position," said Adm. Scott Swift, who took over as commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet in May. "But we will continue to exercise the rights of the United States and any nation to conduct operations in international waters."

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/07/21/us-commander-patrols-over-south-china-sea-islands-continue/30456487/>

21 July 2015: Japan Ratchets Up Criticism of China in Revised Defense Paper

For the first time, the report included satellite images of Chinese man-made islands in the South China Sea. "China has rapidly moved ahead with land reclamation on seven reefs in the Spratly Islands and on some is building infrastructure including runways and harbors. Beginning with the U.S., this is a concern for the international community," it said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/21/us-japan-defence-idUSKCN0PV04420150721>

21 July 2015: Beijing Chides US over SCS Flight

China's defence ministry responded by calling on the US to "take more actions to promote regional peace and stability, and not the opposite". "We hope the US will abide by its promise not to take sides over South China Sea issues," it added in a statement reported by the Global Times newspaper.

<http://malaysiandigest.com/frontpage/29-4-tile/562220-beijing-chides-us-over-south-china-sea-flight.html>

20 July 2015: U.S. Admiral says his South China Sea surveillance flight 'routine'

"We have forces deployed throughout the region to demonstrate the United States commitment to freedom of navigation," said Swift, adding the flight allowed him to see "first-hand" new operational capabilities in the fleet. Swift said communications with China at sea were "positive and structured". "They're normalized, if you will," he said.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/u-admiral-says-south-china-sea-surveillance-flight-043047389.html>

19 July 2015: US Pacific Fleet chief joins surveillance of South China Sea

In a move likely to irk China, the new U.S. commander of the Pacific Fleet joined a seven-hour surveillance flight over the disputed South China Sea over the weekend on board one of America's

newest spy planes.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/us-pacific-fleet-chief-joins-surveillance-of-south-china-sea/2015/07/19/014d54c4-2e01-11e5-bf54-9c6cf6a79573_story.html

17 July 2015: US Ready to Take Military Action in South China Sea

"We are ready and prepared to respond to any contingency that the president may suggest would be necessary," explained Admiral Scott Swift, the new head of the U.S. fleet.

<http://www.telesur.tv/english/news/US-Ready-to-Take-Military-Action-in-South-China-Sea-20150717-0029.html>

17 July 2015: China not a threat, Dr M says despite expansion push in Southeast Asia

Former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he does not view China as a threat to Malaysia despite the Asian superpower's aggressive expansion in the South China Sea. - See more at:

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/china-not-a-threat-dr-m-says-despite-expansion-push-in-southeast-asia#sthash.kdQoS9wG.dpuf>

16 July 2015: Japan military chief says South China Sea surveillance possible

"But our position on this is that we consider this as a potential future issue to be considered depending on how things pan out," Japan's top military commander, Admiral Katsutoshi Kawano told the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/16/us-japan-china-southchinasea-idUSKCN0PQ2T020150716>

16 July 2015: China warns Japan over laws to allow its troops to fight abroad

China has warned Japan against "crippling regional peace and security" after the lower house of parliament in Tokyo passed bills to allow Japanese troops to fight abroad for the first time since the second world war.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/16/china-warns-japan-over-laws-to-allow-its-troops-to-fight-abroad>

16 July 2015: Abe Makes Progress on Plan to Expand Military

The security legislation would bolster Japan's ability to aid U.S. forces in the event of a U.S.-China conflict in Asian waters — even through direct participation in the fighting, if Japan judged that its own territory was under grave threat.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/abe-pushes-security-bills-through-japans-lower-house-1437023839>

10 July 2015: China gains semi-submersible ship for South China Sea fleet

China has added a semi-submersible ship to its naval fleet to strengthen the country's presence in the disputed South China Sea, state television reported on Friday.

<http://news.yahoo.com/china-gains-semi-submersible-ship-south-china-sea-110647062.html>

7 July 2015: Obama, Vietnam leader discuss South China Sea in landmark meeting

In a nod to Vietnam's concern about China, Obama said the South China Sea dispute needed to be resolved using international rules.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/07/us-vietnam-usa-sea-idUSKCN0PH1YY20150707>

6 July 2015: China urges Japan not to obstruct peace on South China Sea

"We noticed that Japan recently has been hyping the tense situation on the South China Sea, kidnapping and instigating relations between regional countries, and obstructing efforts made by China and southeast Asian nations to maintain peace on the South China Sea," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying at a daily press briefing.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-07/06/c_134386926.htm

5 July 2015: Japan joins US-Australia war games amid China tensions

The United States and Australia kicked off a massive joint biennial military exercise on Sunday, with Japan taking part for the first time as tensions with China over territorial rows loom over the drills.

<https://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/japan-joins-us-australia-war-games-amid-china-011131755.html>

4 July 2015: Beijing slams new US military strategy over South China Sea

China has expressed outrage over the recently updated US National Military Strategy, which called Chinese claims in the South China Sea "worrisome" and "inconsistent with international law."

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/foreign/04-Jul-2015/beijing-slams-new-us-military-strategy-over-south-china-sea>

4 July 2015: Japan concerned over land reclamation in S China Sea

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he has shared deep concern with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung over land reclamation work in the South China Sea, taking aim at China's attempts to change the status quo.

<http://www.todayonline.com/world/asia/japan-vietnam-concerned-over-land-reclamation-s-china-sea>

3 July 2015: Vietnam Communist Party chief to make first US visit

Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong said Friday he hopes to build trust and create more opportunities to improve relations between one-time foes as they mark the 20th anniversary of normalized diplomatic ties. They are also being brought closer together by shared concerns over China's territorial claims in the South China Sea.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/vietnam-communist-party-chief-to-make-first-us-visit/2015/07/03/ddd5cafe-21e3-11e5-a135-935065bc30d0_story.html