

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE No. 42
September 2016

ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

30 September 2016: PHL, Vietnam call for peaceful resolution of South China Sea disputes

"The two Presidents also reaffirmed their support for the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and work expeditiously for the early adoption of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea as well as their position on the Award by the Tribunal in the South China Sea Arbitration," the statement said.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/583327/news/nation/phl-vietnam-call-for-peaceful-resolution-of-south-china-sea-disputes#sthash.kXpkHrki.dpuf>

29 September 2016: Duterte: PH to push for cooperation, not conflict in South China Sea

"As maritime nations with rapidly developing economies, we acknowledge the convergence of our strategic interests. Broadening cooperation and collaboration between the Philippines and Vietnam is the way forward," Duterte stated.

<http://www.mb.com.ph/ph-to-push-for-cooperation-not-conflict-in-south-china-sea/#Su3gkDkLOkpmzBGo.99>

28 September 2016: Mainland urges Taiwan to safeguard South China Sea

Ma Ying-jeou said that the Diaoyu Islands and islands in the South China Sea are China's inherent territory.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2016-09/28/content_26928206.htm

27 September 2016: Trip to China by Philippine special envoy Ramos canceled

Ramos would still go to Beijing, but at an appropriate time, according to the aide, who confirmed that a planned gathering of Philippine citizens with Ramos had been canceled.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/09/27/asia-pacific/trip-china-philippine-special-south-china-sea-envoy-ramos-canceled/#.V-zG8fI96Uk>

27 September 2016: Yasay: Legal basis of our claim has been further strengthened

"They were concerned about the fact that maybe perhaps that we were going to erode whatever gains that we have achieved insofar as the arbitral tribunal ruling is concerned," Yasay said at a press briefing following his trip to the US. "And I assured them that no, in fact that our president has made it very clear that because of the ruling of the arbitral tribunal, the legal basis of our claim has been further strengthened," he added.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/582951/news/nation/yasay-assures-us-execs-of-phl-friendship-despite-duterte-s-recent-remarks>

26 September 2016: Philippines' Duterte wants to 'open alliances' with Russia, China

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said he would visit Russia and China this year to chart an independent foreign policy and "open alliances" with two powers with historic rivalries with the United States.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-politics-duterte-idUSKCN11W17T>

25 September 2016: China expects Philippine president's early visit

Arrangements for the visit are now being threshed out by the two countries, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

<http://www.philstar.com/opinion/2016/09/25/1627130/china-expects-philippine-presidents-early-visit>

25 September 2016: Vietnam calls for self-restraint

Pham, addressing the United Nations General Assembly during its annual ministerial meeting on Saturday, said parties should abide by international law, including UNCLOS, and respect diplomatic and legal processes.

<http://asiamaritime.net/vietnam-calls-for-self-restraint-peaceful-solution-to-lingering-sea-dispute/>

24 September 2016: China to fly drones over South China Sea

"China has designed drones to handle such complicated surveying, including the ZC-5B and Zc-10 unmanned aircraft systems (UAS)," Li said

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/54497115.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

23 September 2016: China: Air force to conduct regular patrols over islands

Patrols in the South China Sea by Chinese Air Force jets have become a "regular" practice to improve their combat readiness, an air force spokesperson said.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1007821.shtml>

22 September 2016: Vietnam calls for peace maintenance as Russia joins China in military drill

"Vietnam hopes that all countries contribute positively to the maintenance of peace and stability, and ensure air and maritime safety and security in the East Sea as well as the whole Asia-Pacific region," Binh said.

<http://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/vietnam-calls-for-peace-maintenance-as-russia-joins-china-in-military-drill-in-s-china-sea-3472572.html>

22 September 2016: Taiwan asks Google to blur images showing new South China Sea facilities

The images show four three-pronged structures sitting in a semi-circle just off Itu Aba, across from an upgraded airstrip and recently constructed port that can dock 3,000-ton frigates.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-taiwan-idUSKCN11R109>

21 September 2016: CNNOC Starts Production From Offshore Field In South China Sea

CNNOC Ltd. commenced production from an oil field in the South China Sea, the company said Sept.

<http://www.epmag.com/cnnoc-starts-production-offshore-field-south-china-sea-1364321>

20 September 2016: Taiwan builds anti-aircraft gun towers in South China Sea

Satellite images show the Taiwan-occupied island now includes new construction that includes what appears to be anti-aircraft gun blockhouse towers.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2016/09/20/Report-Taiwan-building-anti-aircraft-gun-towers-in-South-China-Sea/8211474395968/

16 September 2016: Yasay: Philippines not ready for bilateral talks with China

"To begin with, we cannot proceed on engaging China in bilateral talks where China says that we can only talk outside of the framework of the arbitral tribunal's decision," Yasay said.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2016/09/16/1624399/yasay-philippines-not-ready-bilateral-talks-china>

16 September 2016: Philippines to Deepen China Talks Despite South China Sea Differences

"The next step should be now to undertake this on an official basis a special envoy with respect to the areas of concern that relate to what we should promote as in our relationship to China," Yasay said.

<http://thediplomat.com/2016/09/philippines-to-deepen-china-talks-despite-south-china-sea-differences/>

14 September 2016: PH to keep status quo in West Philippine Sea — defense chief

"We don't have any assets to confront the other claimants in the area," Lorenzana added.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/144836/ph-to-keep-status-quo-in-west-philippine-sea-defense-chief#ixzz4KLGgyzZ8>

13 September 2016: Xi urges China, Vietnam to solve South China Sea issue through consultation

Both sides should use the current negotiation mechanisms, such as border talks between governments, to actively push forward joint exploration of waters outside the Beibu Gulf, Xi said.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-09/13/c_135685466.htm

13 September 2016: Duterte Seeks Arms From China

Duterte said that two countries had agreed to give the Philippines a 25-year soft loan to buy military equipment. Later, he said that Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and "technical people" in the armed forces would visit China and Russia "and see what's best."

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-09-13/duterte-courts-china-for-weapons-ends-joint-patrols-with-u-s>

13 September 2016: Philippines' Duterte: No Patrols Challenging China in South China Sea

"We will not join any expedition or patrolling the sea. I will not allow it because I do not want my country to be involved in a hostile act," Duterte said.

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2016/09/13/duterte-withdraws-south-china-sea/>

12 September 2016: Vietnam PM pays first China visit

Nguyen said that Vietnam and China share a friendly and brotherly traditional friendship, expressing the hope that the two countries can further enhance exchanges of high-level visits and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1005952.shtml>

7 September 2016: Malaysia: South China Sea concerns must be tackled through negotiations

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak pointed out that Malaysia holds the stand that issues concerning security in the South China Sea must be tackled through negotiations.

<http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/pm-south-china-sea-concerns-must-be-tackled-through-negotiations#sthash.Gd5PDZLV.dpuf>

7 September 2016: Philippines in Talks on China Boats Near Disputed South China Sea Shoal

The Philippines said it is using a back channel with China to find out why at least 10 Chinese vessels have gathered near the contested Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-09-07/philippines-engaged-in-talks-on-china-boats-near-disputed-shoal>

5 September 2016: China tamps down South China Sea talk at summits

China opposes raising its maritime disputes at international meetings.

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2016/09/05/china-tamps-down-south-china-sea-talk-at-summits.html>

5 September 2016: Philippines 'Gravely Concerned' China is Starting to Invade Scarborough Shoal

The Philippines demanded an explanation from China's ambassador over the "increasing number" of Chinese military vessels near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea.

<http://sputniknews.com/asia/20160905/1044963591/china-philippines-scarborough-shoal-conflict.html>

5 September 2016: New Chinese Vessels Seen Near Disputed Reef in South China Sea

The Philippine Defense Department has photographs of four Chinese Coast Guard ships, and six other vessels, less than a mile from Scarborough Shoal, which is claimed by the Philippines and China, the defense minister, Delfin Lorenzana, said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/05/world/asia/south-china-sea-philippines-scarborough-shoal.html>

4 September 2016: Xi defiant as Obama presses Chinese leader on South China Sea

Xi said China would continue to safeguard its sovereignty and maritime rights in the South China Sea.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/09/04/asia-pacific/xi-defiant-as-obama-presses-chinese-leader-on-south-china-sea/#.V80rvfl96Uk>

2 September 2016: Philippines' Duterte Says Arbitration Ruling to Be Basis of South China Sea Talks

Duterte said he favors direct negotiations with China and he would insist that an international tribunal's ruling against Beijing be the basis for any talks.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/philippines-duterte-says-arbitration-ruling-to-be-basis-of-south-china-sea-talks-1472822919>

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

28 September 2016: Republic 'does not take sides but has key interests' to protect

Mr Lee said these interests include "freedom of navigation and overflight" in the region. "This also includes a rules-based regional and international order, an order that upholds and protects the rights and privileges of all states and shows full respect for legal and diplomatic processes in the resolution of disputes," he said.

<http://www.todayonline.com/singapore/s-china-sea-dispute-republic-does-not-take-sides-has-key-interests-protect>

28 September 2016: China's foreign ministry joins war of words against Singapore over South China Sea dispute

Without directly naming Singapore, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said an "individual nation" had insisted on including South China Sea issues in the final document of the recent Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit held in Venezuela on September 18.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2023080/china-wades-singaporean-envoys-media-dispute>

27 September 2016: Singapore envoy refutes China report on South China Sea

In his letter, the Singapore envoy said the proposal to update the Southeast Asia paragraphs in the document was not done at the last minute nor by any single Asean country. Laos - as the current Asean chair - had conveyed the group's common position through a formal letter to Iran, the former NAM chairman, in July.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/spore-envoy-refutes-china-report-on-s-china-sea>

21 September 2016: Indonesia Explores Possibility of Obtaining US Aid to Finance Base in SCS

A delegation of five senior Indonesian Navy officers visited the United States to explore the possibility of tapping into Washington's foreign military financing programme to fund upgrades of a naval base in the South China Sea, sources within the service told IHS Jane's

<https://www.oodaloop.com/osint/political-risk/2016/09/21/indonesia-explores-possibility-of-obtaining-us-aid-to-finance-base-in-south-china-sea/>

15 September 2016: ASEAN takes a diffident stance on the South China Sea

Japan and the U.S. urged China to accept an international ruling against its claims in the South China Sea, only to be undercut by a lack of strong statements from countries directly involved.

<http://asia.nikkei.com/magazine/20160915-SOCIAL-REVOLUTION/Politics-Economy/ASEAN-takes-a-diffident-stance-on-the-South-China-Sea?page=2>

9 September 2016: Duterte, Widodo urge respect for rule of law in South China Sea

President Rodrigo Duterte and Indonesian President Joko Widodo onreiterated the call for the respect for the rule of law in the disputed waters of the South China Sea.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/580809/news/nation/duterte-widodo-urge-respect-for-rule-of-law-in-south-china-sea#sthash.0gUw45ja.dpuf>

9 September 2016: World Leaders Try To Avoid South China Sea Tensions At ASEAN Summit

Asian leaders played down tensions over the South China Sea in a carefully worded summit statement.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/world-leaders-try-to-avoid-south-china-sea-tensions-at-asean-summit_us_57d1530ae4b06a74c9f2bca5

8 September 2016: ASEAN, China desire to take 'constructive approach' to South China Sea dispute: PM Lee

"Yesterday, ASEAN and China issued the guidelines for the 24/7 hotline for maritime emergencies and the Joint Statement on the Application of Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea." "Singapore welcomes China's commitment to work with ASEAN on a framework for the COC by mid-2017 and to 'fast-track' negotiations on the COC," said Mr Lee.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/asean-china-desire-to-take-constructive-approach-to-south-china/3111124.html>

8 September 2016: Laos PM hold bilateral talks, discuss South China Sea issue

The two sides shared the same perspective on South China Sea, a foreign ministry spokesperson said.

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/54163331.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

8 September 2016: Malaysia: COC and CUEs to be concluded next year

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said all the countries, including China, had given their commitment to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and the adoption of the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea in the South China Sea which would be summarised next year.

<https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/355150>

8 September 2016: Japan PM Abe, ASEAN leaders exchange views on South China Sea

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and leaders of ASEAN found limited common ground on Japanese concerns about China's expansionary activities in the South China Sea at their summit.

<http://interaksyon.com/article/132237/japan-pm-abe-asean-leaders-exchange-views-on-south-china-sea>

7 September 2016: Asean, China Plan Hotline to Avoid South China Sea Clashes

China and Southeast Asian nations agreed to create a telephone hotline as a fresh step to help avoid accidental military clashes in the South China Sea.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/asean-china-plan-hotline-to-avoid-south-china-sea-clashes-1473260735>

7 September 2016: Malaysia: Asean must handle South China Sea issue with sensitivity

"Yes, it is tricky and sensitive. So, we have to manage it carefully," Najib told reporters after the end of the second day of the ongoing Asean summit in the Laos capital.

<http://www.nst.com.my/news/2016/09/171620/najib-asean-must-handle-south-china-sea-issue-sensitivity>

4 September 2016: Asean to avoid mentioning ruling on South China Sea

"We remain seriously concerned over recent and ongoing developments and took note of the concerns expressed by some leaders on the land reclamations and escalation of activities in the area," according to a draft of the chairman's statement penned by China-leaning Laos, this year's chair of the grouping.

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asean/1078229/asean-to-avoid-mentioning-ruling-on-south-china-sea>

2 September 2016: Philippines' Duterte will not bring up SCS at ASEAN meeting

"It is just an issue between the Philippines and China. I will not (raise it at the Asean meeting) because I do not want any clutters there," Duterte said.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/philippines-duterte-says-arbitration-ruling-to-be-basis-of-south-china-sea-talks-1472822919>

MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

29 September 2016: China warns Japan not to 'play with fire' in S. China Sea

"If Japan wants to conduct any joint patrol or joint exercises in waters administered by China, it is just like playing with fire, and the Chinese military will not sit and watch," ministry spokesman Yang said.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/china-warns-japan-not-play-fire-china-sea-093847293.html>

28 September 2016: Japan's Naval Chief Rules Out Joint-US Freedom of Navigation Patrols

Admiral Takei said this week that although Japan strongly supports U.S. FON operations in the South China Sea, it has no such plans to conduct or join naval patrols in the region.

<http://www.voanews.com/a/japanese-naval-chief-rules-out-joint-us-freedom-of-navigation-patrol/3528783.html>

27 September 2016: Senior official tells Japan not to meddle in South China Sea

"There are people who make a fuss about it, although it originally is not Japan's problem. This causes a new problem," Jiang Jianguo, minister of China's State Council Information Office, said.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2022965/senior-official-tells-japan-not-meddle-south-china-sea>

27 September 2016: US, Vietnam navies work on preventing South China Sea incidents

The Naval Engagement Activity, centered in Da Nang, is a non-combat program, which largely separates it from the named exercises the Navy participates in with several other Southeast Asian nations.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/us-vietnam-navies-work-on-preventing-south-china-sea-incidents-1.431279>

22 September 2016: Biden, Abe Agree to Increase US-Japanese Coordination in South China Sea

US Vice President Joe Biden met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe where they agreed to intensify cooperation on issues related to the South China Sea, the White House said.

<https://sputniknews.com/military/20160922/1045572373/biden-usa-japan-south-china-sea-coordination.html>

19 September 2016: China lashes out at Japan's South China Sea plans

Japan's conduct in the South China Sea "makes one feel disappointed to the point of despair," foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/china-lashes-japans-south-china-sea-plans-110904147.html>

19 September 2016: Philippine foreign secretary says Manila will no longer be US "little brown brother"

"You don't go to the Philippines telling us, I will give you something, I will help you grow, but here is the checklist you have to comply with and we will lecture you on human rights ... We cannot forever be the little brown brothers of America," Yasay said.

<http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2016/09/19/phil-s19.html>

15 September 2016: Minister: Japan to boost South China Sea activity with US training patrols

"Japan will increase its engagement, for example, Maritime Self-Defense Force joint training cruises with the U.S. Navy and bilateral and multilateral exercises with regional navies," Tomomi Inada said.

<http://www.dw.com/en/minister-japan-to-boost-south-china-sea-activity-with-us-training-patrols/a-19555794>

11 September 2016: Beijing and Moscow launch South China Sea naval drills

China and Russia launched eight days of naval drills in the South China Sea which include exercises on "seizing and controlling" islands and shoals, according to Chinese navy spokesman Liang Yang.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/beijing-moscow-launch-south-china-sea-naval-drills-160912132517636.html>

10 September 2016: China hails Putin's backing on South China Sea

China welcomed President Vladimir Putin's remarks that Russian Federation supports Beijing's stance on the issue and opposes any third-party interference.

<http://www.crcconnection.com/2016/09/10/china-hails-putins-backing-on-south-china-sea.html>

9 September 2016: U.S., Japan prod China to comply with South China Sea ruling

The United States and Japan urged China to resolve disputes in line with the arbitration ruling.

<https://www.japantoday.com/category/politics/view/u-s-japan-prod-china-to-comply-with-south-china-sea-ruling>

8 September 2016: At East Asia Summit, Ban expresses concern over tensions in South China Sea

"I have consistently urged all parties to resolve their disputes in the South China Sea in a peaceful and amicable manner, through dialogue and in conformity with international law," Ban Ki-moon said.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=54878#.V9doRFfgAIY>

8 September 2016: 'Threat or use of force' will complicate matters: PM Modi

"India urges all parties to show utmost respect for the UNCLOS," Modi said.

<http://www.firstpost.com/world/threat-or-use-of-force-to-resolve-south-china-sea-dispute-will-complicate-matters-pm-modi-at-2996104.html>

8 September 2016: Obama Puts South China Sea Back on Agenda at Summit

President Barack Obama put the dispute back to the summit agenda as it became clear that most of the other leaders gathered in the Laotian capital were going to let China off with a mild rebuke.

<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/summit-soft-china-sea-dispute-41940227>

8 September 2016: Abe, Turnbull resolute on Chinese territorial issue in South China Sea

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his Australian counterpart, Malcolm Turnbull, called on China to comply with an international tribunal ruling rejecting its claims to much of the waters.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/09/08/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-turnbull-resolute-chinese-territorial-issue-south-china-sea/#.V9KduJN97Vo>

7 September 2016: Abe tells Asian leaders of 'serious concern' with China posturing in SCS

"I hope that both parties to the dispute in the South China Sea will abide by the ruling by the China-Philippines tribunal court," he said.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/09/07/national/abe-tells-asean-that-japan-is-seriously-concerned-by-south-china-sea-tension/#.V9KONZN97Vo>

7 September 2016: Japan backs the Philippines in South China Sea dispute

Japan' Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pledged to support President Rodrigo Duterte's position on a territorial dispute between China and the Philippines in the South China Sea.

<http://asia.nikkei.com/Politics-Economy/International-Relations/Japan-backs-the-Philippines-in-South-China-Sea-dispute>

6 September 2016: India asserts itself on South China Sea issue

"We are committed to and have always advocated freedom of navigation and of unimpeded commerce. All disputes should be resolved peacefully in keeping with international obligations," Preeti Saran said.

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-south-china-sea-vietnam-narendra-modi/1/758278.html>

6 September 2016: US Will Maintain Presence In Region Amid Territorial Dispute, Obama Says

"Across the region, including in the East and South China seas, United States will continue to fly and sail and operate wherever international law allows and support the right of all countries to do the same," Obama said.

<http://www.ibtimes.com/south-china-sea-row-us-will-maintain-presence-region-amid-territorial-dispute-obama-2411796>

6 September 2016: Japan to provide ships, planes for Philippines amid sea dispute with China

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe agreed to provide two large-sized patrol ships and lend up to five used surveillance aircraft to the Philippines.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/world/world-news/south-china-sea-dispute-japan-philippines-china-3016530/>

4 September 2016: Xi urges US to be "constructive" in South China Sea

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Saturday urged the United States to "play a constructive role" in maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1004531.shtml>

4 September 2016: Obama presses China's Xi on South China Sea

After more than four hours of meetings with Xi and his top officials, Obama emphasized the importance for China to "abide by its obligations".

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/world/view/obama-presses-chinas-xi-on-south-china-sea>

3 September 2016: Vietnam top leaders hail India's position on disputed South China Sea

Vietnam's top leaders lauded India's position on the disputed South China Sea (SCS) and sought its participation in oil and gas sectors of the Communist nation.

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/vietnam-top-leaders-hail-india-position-on-disputed-south-china-sea-3011671/>

3 September 2016: India to give US\$500 million 'defence credit' to Vietnam for arms deals

"I am also happy to announce a new defence credit for Vietnam of US\$500 million for facilitating deeper defence cooperation," Modi said.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/2014167/india-give-us500-million-defence-credit-vietnam-arms-deals>

3 September 2016: Pentagon denies Australia under pressure to take sides in dispute

The Pentagon has distanced itself from a US Army Colonel who this week suggested Australia should take a stronger stance against China's military expansion in the South China Sea.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-09-03/south-china-sea-pentagon-denies-australia-under-pressure/7811668>

2 September 2016: Obama urges China to stop flexing muscles over South China Sea

"If you sign a treaty that calls for international arbitration around maritime issues, the fact that you're bigger than the Philippines or Vietnam or other countries ... is not a reason for you to go around and flex your muscles," Obama said. "You've got to abide by international law."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-obama-relations-idUSKCN1182KX>

1 September 2016: US, India urge countries to respect South China Sea ruling

"They [India and the US] urged the utmost respect for international law, as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)," the statement said.

<http://asianjournal.com/news/us-india-urge-countries-to-respect-south-china-sea-ruling/>