

SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS UPDATE No. 43

October 2016

ACTS OF CLAIMANTS

28 October 2016: China: Some countries should "discard their unrealistic stance" over SCS

"If you want to understand the stance of the Philippine government, it would be worth listening to what the Philippine leader said," Lu added.

http://www.china.org.cn/world/2016-10/28/content_39585465.htm

27 October 2016: Philippines rejects China language in Scarborough proposal

China wanted the Philippines to agree to a formal declaration that Beijing was "allowing" Filipino fishermen to return to Scarborough Shoal, but Manila did not agree because the proposal would go against the ruling of an international tribunal that the common fishing ground did not belong to anyone.

<http://globalnation.inquirer.net/148097/philippines-rejects-china-language-in-scarborough-proposal#ixzz4OL92mugy>

27 October 2016: China says latest South China Sea drill was normal search and rescue exercise

China's latest drill in the South China Sea was a normal search and rescue exercise, the defence ministry said.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/china-says-latest-south-china-sea-drill-was-normal-search-and-re/3240348.html>

27 October 2016: Duterte says open to joint patrols with Japan in SCS

Duterte said his country could join naval exercises with Japan in Philippine "territorial waters" in the South China Sea, but repeated there would be no more war games with the US.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/diplomacy/article/2040639/philippines-open-joint-sea-exercises-japan-duterte-says>

26 October 2016: Rodrigo Duterte Calls for U.S. Troops to Exit Philippines in 2 Years

Duterte said that he wanted all foreign troops out of his country within "maybe two years" and that he was willing to revoke base-hosting agreements with the United States.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/27/world/asia/philippines-president-rodrigo-duterte-japan.html>

26 October 2016: China Announces Military Drills in South China Sea

The maritime administration gave coordinates for an area south of the Chinese island province of Hainan and northwest of the Paracel Islands, which are also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-china-idUSKCN12Q125>

26 October 2016: Chinese firm that helped build islands in SCS wins contract with the Philippines

The deal was signed during a China-Philippines business dinner that Duterte attended. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2040256/chinese-firm-helped-build-islands-disputed-area-south>

24 October 2016: China confident on PH commitments

China is confident that President Duterte will adhere to independent foreign policies consistent with the interests of the Philippines and its people.

<http://www.mb.com.ph/china-confident-on-ph-commitments/#2PVOC7tyoJzOeVWI.99>

24 October 2016: Yasay: No backtracking on separating Philippine foreign policy from U.S.

Yasay said the president's intended message is that the Philippines is freeing itself from America's tight grip on many of its affairs.

<http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/10/24/ph-us-foreign-policy-separation.html>

23 October 2016: Rodrigo Duterte hopes Philippines fishermen can return to fish in South China Sea

"Let us just wait for a few more days, maybe we could return to Scarborough Shoal," Duterte said.

<http://www.firstpost.com/world/duterte-hopes-philippine-fishermen-can-return-to-china-controlled-shoal-reuters-3067556.html>

23 October 2016: Chinese Naval Fleet Visits Vietnam Amid South China Sea Tensions

The 23rd Chinese naval escort task force docked at the Vietnamese port of Cam Ranh, the former site of a Cold War-era Soviet military base.

<https://sputniknews.com/asia/201610231046626448-chinese-fleet-vietnam-visit/>

22 October 2016: China: US Navy patrol violated Chinese Law and international law

"Foreign warships must ask for approval of the Chinese government before entering Chinese territorial waters," the spokesperson said.

http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/2535_665405/t1408234.shtml

21 October 2016: Philippines and China closer to jointly developing the Reed Bank

Beijing and Duterte were set to enter into an agreement to explore for energy sources in a part of the South China Sea close to the Philippine coastline.

<http://www.nextbigfuture.com/2016/10/philippines-and-china-closer-to-jointly.html>

21 October 2016: Philippine's Duterte Clarifies He's Not Severing Ties to US

Despite the clarification, Duterte said that he would never travel to America "in this lifetime."

<http://www.voanews.com/a/philippines-president-duterte-not-sever-ties-to-united-states/3561817.html>

21 October 2016: Philippine minister "clarifies" Duterte comments, says trade ties with US to stay

"Let me clarify. The president did not talk about separation," Lopez said. "In terms of economic (ties), we are not stopping trade, investment with America."

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/philippine-minister-clarifies-duterte-comments-says-trade-tie/3224586.html>

20 October 2016: Duterte aligns Philippines with China, says U.S. has lost

"In this venue, I announce my separation from the United States," Duterte said. "Both in military, not maybe social, but economics also. America has lost. There are three of us against the world — China, Philippines and Russia. It's the only way."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-philippines-idUSKCN12K0AS>

20 October 2016: Chinese Warships to Dock in Vietnam

The Chinese warships with 750 sailors on board will visit the base for four days, during which time they will hold exchange activities with Vietnamese navy sailors.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/chinese-warships-to-dock-in-vietnam-1476878216>

20 October 2016: China and Philippines to resume dialogue over South China Sea dispute

China and the Philippines have agreed to resume a dialogue on their dispute over the South China Sea, a senior Chinese diplomat has said after talks between the countries' leaders.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/oct/20/china-philippines-resume-dialogue-south-china-sea-dispute>

19 October 2016: Philippines' Duterte says South China Sea arbitration case to take 'back seat'

The South China Sea arbitration case will "take the back seat" during talks with China, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/philippines-says-lifetime-sea-row-no-barrier-thawing-101432086.html>

19 October 2016: Duterte says award is a piece of paper

The judgement, Duterte said, was "a piece of paper with four corners". "The arbitral award gives us the right. China has the historical right. And they're insisting. In this situation, do we argue, or do we just talk? I would say, let us put it (off) to some other day."

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/philippines-duterte-praises-china-on-beijing-visit/3219034.html>

19 October 2016: Yasay: South China Sea dispute won't be resolved within our lifetime

"I do not have any pretensions or false hopes, that our disputes might take many years perhaps not even in our lifetime to be fully resolved," Yasay said.

<http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/585621/news/nation/yasay-south-china-sea-dispute-won-t-be-resolved-within-our-lifetime>

19 October 2016: South China Sea dispute 'not on agenda' Duterte says after arriving in Beijing

Duterte said the South China Sea dispute was "not on the agenda" as he began his state visit to China, with Beijing praising him for bringing damaged ties back to "the track of dialogue and cooperation".

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2028988/beijing-will-tolerate-duterte-raising-south-china-sea>

18 October 2016: Talks better than war in South China Sea, Duterte says

Philippine president also says he's open to drills with Russia and China, but not the United States.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2028824/talks-better-war-south-china-sea-duterte-says>

18 October 2016: Vietnam gives thumbs-up to U.S. regional role as pivot stumbles

"Vietnam will support the U.S and other partners to intervene in the region as long as it brings peace, stability and prosperity", Vinh said in a statement.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-usa-idUSKCN12I1BR>

17 October 2016: China plays down Duterte's comments on South China Sea arbitration case

Asked about Duterte's remarks, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said that as he is the country's leader, Duterte will make his policy based upon the best interests of his country and people.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/china-plays-down-philippine-leader-rodriigo-dutertes-comments-on-south-china-sea>

17 October 2016: Najib: South China Sea dispute should be resolved through dialogue

The government will not compromise on the sovereignty of the country, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak. He also said Malaysia's stand on the disputes is that problems, differences and rows should be handled and resolved through dialogue and peaceful negotiations.

<http://www.nst.com.my/news/2016/10/180850/najib-south-china-sea-dispute-should-be-resolved-through-dialogue>

16 October 2016: China develops world's smallest nuclear plant to take control of South China Sea

The new reactor, believed to be the smallest ever created for civilian use, had been developed by researchers at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Nuclear Energy Safety Technology. They told the paper they hoped to send the first reactor to the South China Sea in the next five years.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/China-develops-worlds-smallest-nuclear-plant-to-take-control-of-South-China-Sea/articleshow/54876769.cms>

16 October 2016: Philippine leader says will raise SCS arbitration case with Beijing, won't bargain

Duterte said he would raise the ruling with China's leaders, and vowed not to surrender any sovereignty.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/10/16/asia-pacific/philippine-leader-says-will-raise-south-china-sea-arbitration-case-beijing-wont-bargain/#.WASJRvI95hE>

13 October 2016: Duterte determined to stop joint patrols in South China Sea

Presidential spokesperson said Mr. Duterte ordered a stop to joint patrols between the Philippine Navy and the US Navy because he did not want any Philippine action that China might deem hostile.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/824760/duterte-determined-to-stop-joint-patrols-in-south-china-sea>

10 October 2016: Duterte to set aside sea dispute during China trip

"Let's not dwell on the Scarborough issue for now," Duterte said.

<http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2016/10/10/1632233/duterte-set-aside-sea-dispute-during-china-trip>

8 October 2016: Philippines Suspends Patrols With U.S. in South China Sea

The Philippine defense chief said that he had suspended participation in any joint patrols with the U.S. of the SCS. He also said he also would ask a small detachment of American troops providing counterterrorism assistance on the southern island of Mindanao to leave as the president requested.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/philippines-tells-u-s-no-more-joint-patrols-in-south-china-sea-1475826120>

8 October 2016: 'Do not treat us like a doormat, you'll be sorry for it' –Duterte to US

"For as long as I am there, do not treat us like a doormat because you'll be sorry for it," Duterte said. "I will not speak with you. I can always go to China."

<https://www.rt.com/news/362027-philippines-suspend-patrols-us/>

5 October 2016: Duterte names journalist as ambassador to China

President Rodrigo Duterte has named Jose Santiago "Chito" Santa Romana, a journalist who worked in Beijing for decades, as the Philippines' new ambassador to China.

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/148313-duterte-chito-santa-romana-philippines-ambassador-china>

4 October 2016: China Activates First Desalination Plant on Woody Island

The activation of China's first desalination plant on Woody Island improves the island's livability.

<http://thediplomat.com/2016/10/south-china-sea-china-activates-first-desalination-plant-on-woody-island/>

4 October 2016: China, Philippines consider military cooperation

Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Zhao Jianhua said an enhancement of military ties between the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) foes was "something we are looking at."

<http://m.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/oct/4/china-phillippines-consider-military-cooperation/>

ASEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

27 October 2016: Indonesia pushes for code of conduct on South China Sea row

Indonesia will push for a maritime code of conduct for the South China Sea and seek clarification from Manila over its apparent shift in policy toward talks with China on joint maritime exploration in the region, Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi said.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/indonesia-pushes-for-code-of-conduct-on-south-china-sea-row/news-story/8235cec1ec86703f5f45d52bf4b9ad6a>

13 October 2016: Chinese President Xi Jinping visits loyal friend Cambodia

Chinese President Xi Jinping praised the close ties that have seen Cambodia side with Beijing on the South China Sea, and signed dozens of economic agreements.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-cambodia-idUSKCN12D0NV>

7 October 2016: Indonesia Parades Air-Force Arsenal Over South China Sea

Military exercises are over waters where run-ins with Chinese fishing boats are on the rise.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/indonesia-parades-air-force-arsenal-over-south-china-sea-1475751941>

4 October 2016: Jokowi and military commander visit Natuna

Indonesian Military commander Gen. Gatot Nurmantyo, accompanied by Army chief of staff Gen. Mulyono, Air Force chief of staff Air Marshal Agus Supriatna and several other high-ranking military officials, visited Natuna to monitor preparations for the training module held by the Air Force.

<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2016/10/04/jokowi-scheduled-to-visit-natuna-on-thursday.html>

3 October 2016: Indonesia to conduct largest-ever military exercises in South China Sea

The Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) will conduct a series of large scale military exercises that will involve all three service branches in the Natuna Islands region in the South China Sea.

<http://www.janes.com/article/64248/indonesia-to-conduct-largest-ever-military-exercises-in-south-china-sea>

3 October 2016: Singapore worried about non-military clashes in South China Sea

"It may have, in fact, very little to do with military ships" given an agreed code in place for navies, Minister Ng Eng Hen said. "But you may have incidents arising from fishing, you may have incidents arising from white ships," he said.

<http://www.ejinsight.com/20161003-singapore-worried-about-non-military-clashes-in-south-china-sea/>

3 October 2016: Indonesia, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and Britain Plan War Games

The three-week, multinational exercise known as "Exercise Bersama Lima" will include navy, army and air force servicemen from the participating nations. Officials said the event organized by Singapore is aimed at regional security and disaster relief support.

<http://www.ibtimes.com/south-china-sea-conflict-indonesia-new-zealand-australia-malaysia-singapore-britain-2425483>

1 October 2016: Defense ministers discuss defusing South China Sea incidents

Singapore's defense minister said that countries need to look for practical ways to defuse incidents.

<http://wtop.com/government/2016/10/defense-ministers-discuss-defusing-south-china-sea-incidents/>

MAJOR POWERS AND SOUTH CHINA SEA

26 October 2016: Japan and Philippines stress peaceful solution to South China Sea row

The leaders promised to pursue the peaceful settlement of the South China Sea dispute.

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/china-military-drills-south-china-sea-after-us-navy-patrol/>

26 October 2016: Kerry: US, Vietnam committed to rule of law in South China Sea

John Kerry says the U.S. and Vietnam share a commitment to rule of law in the disputed SCS.

<http://www.philstar.com/world/2016/10/26/1637502/kerry-us-vietnam-committed-rule-law-south-china-sea>

25 October 2016: Japan Navy Ships Arrive In PH

The Japanese navy ships ducked at the Manila South Harbor for a five-day goodwill visit.

<http://www.morningledger.com/south-china-sea-news-japan-navy-ships-arrive-in-ph-joining-ph-china-russia-vs-us/13114679/>

23 October 2016: US Warship Warned by Chinese Vessels After South China Sea Patrol

This was the fourth such operation in the past year, and the Decatur was shadowed by three Chinese ships.

<http://thedailycoin.org/2016/10/23/us-warship-warned-chinese-vessels-south-china-sea-patrol/>

23 October 2016: Japan wants India to speak its mind on South China Sea

"We are encouraging India to speak up on issues related to South China Sea because maritime security is important," said Yuki Tamura.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Japan-wants-India-to-speak-its-mind-on-South-China-Sea/articleshow/55018383.cms>

22 October 2016: U.S. destroyer sails through South China Sea to challenge China's claims

The patrol did not cross the 12-mile territorial limit of any of the features, but was intended to challenge claims in the Paracels, one official said — claims the U.S. and neighboring countries have called excessive.

<https://www.navytimes.com/articles/us-destroyer-challenges-chinas-claims-in-the-south-china-sea>

12 October 2016: 'Lot Of Noise', Little Change In Philippine-US Relationship: State

"We've been through a lot worse in our 70-year history," Russel says.

<http://breakingdefense.com/2016/10/lot-of-noise-little-change-in-philippine-us-relationship-state/>

12 October 2016: China urges Australia to be 'cautious' on South China Sea

China "hopes that on the South China Sea issue the Australian side can speak and act cautiously, and that its words and deeds match", China's Defence Ministry said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-china-australia-idUSKCN12D04U>

12 October 2016: China slams New Zealand, Japan over South China Sea involvement

"We hope that countries who are not involved in the disputes respect the countries who are having the disputes to ... work among themselves," Fu Ying said.

<http://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/world-economy/china-slams-new-zealand-japan-over-south-china-sea-involvement/news-story/38274394862f990e40f3a72806633bb8>

10 October 2016: US seals military basing deal with Australia

Washington's push to seal the Australian deal escalated as Duterte threatened to end joint exercises with the US in the South China Sea, and repudiate the agreement signed by his predecessor.

<http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2016/10/10/darw-o10.html>

7 October 2016: US Navy Holds Naval Drill in South China Sea

The drill included anti-submarine and anti-air warfare scenarios and live-fire practices.

<http://thediplomat.com/2016/10/us-navy-holds-naval-drill-in-south-china-sea/>

4 October 2016: U.S. Warships Make First Visit to Vietnam Base in Decades

Two American warships stopped in Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay this week for the first time since the two nations normalized relations 21 years ago, the U.S. Navy said.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-10-04/u-s-warships-make-first-visit-to-vietnam-naval-base-in-21-years>