

**SOUTH CHINA SEA NEWS No.103**  
**February 2022**

**ACTS OF CLAIMANTS**

**27 February 2022: China announces series of military exercises in South China Sea, Yellow Sea**

China's Maritime Safety Administration announced this week that it will hold a series of military exercises in the South China Sea and the Yellow Sea and banned ships from entering those areas. One of the workouts It will be carried out between February 27 and March 1 in the South China Sea, in an area within a radius of 6 nautical miles (about 11 kilometers) in the island province of Hainan, in the south of the country. Other maneuvers they will develop between March 1 and 3 in the Gulf of Tonkin, shared by China and Vietnam.

<https://www.parisbeacon.com/52773/>

**25 February 2022: U.S. is South China Sea "troublemaker": military spokesperson**

A Chinese military spokesperson on Thursday said the United States has become a "troublemaker" and "accident-maker" in the South China Sea, rather than a "defender" of free navigation and overflight as it has claimed. The United States has aggravated tension by blatantly sending military ships and aircraft to the South China Sea, said Tan Kefei, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, at a press conference.

<http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/20220225/5df98b80c03d42c0a3c0ebd5a9aec3be/c.html>

**25 February 2022: China denounces Australia's false remarks regarding South China Sea**

A Chinese defense spokesperson on Thursday denounced recent false remarks by the Australian side regarding China's infrastructure construction and national defense deployment on the South China Sea islands. Tan Kefei, spokesperson for China's Ministry of National Defense, made the remarks at a press conference.

<https://english.news.cn/20220225/8637d2b7d63343a3992db88055f64897/c.html>

**21 February 2022: Replenishment-at-sea conducted in South China Sea**

The amphibious dock landing ship Qilianshan (Hull 985) attached to a landing ship flotilla with the navy under the PLA Southern Theater Command releases jamming shells during a recent drill in waters of the South China Sea

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202202/1252772.shtml>

**18 February 2022: Philippines' Marcos wants military in South China Sea, Pacquiao proposes China 'peace panel'**

Philippine presidential candidate Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he wants his country to have a military presence in the South China Sea, "not to fire upon" vessels but to defend its waters in a long-running dispute with China.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/philippines-marcos-wants-military-presence-to-defend-its-waters-in-south-china-sea>

**17 February 2022: Guangdong holds live-fire drill in archipelago amid crackdowns on trafficking and Covid-19**

The southern Chinese province of Guangdong has staged a live-fire drill in waters off the Pearl River Estuary, according to the maritime authority. The China Maritime Safety Administration's Guangdong bureau announced the exercise in a notice, saying it would take

place between 9am and 6pm on Thursday in the southern Wanshan archipelago, about 100km (62 miles) off Hong Kong.

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/military/article/3167442/southern-chinese-province-holds-live-fire-drill-archipelago>

### **14 February 2022: China did not enter airspace of South China Sea Island: defense ministry**

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense (MND) has denied that Chinese warplanes breached the airspace of the Taiwan-controlled Pratas Islands in the disputed South China Sea. The clarification was made late Sunday after several local news outlets ran reports of an incursion into the Pratas Islands' territorial airspace by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Saturday.

<https://focustaiwan.tw/cross-strait/202202140008>

### **8 February 2022: Philippine presidential election campaign begins: who's running, who's hottest, and what's their South China Sea approach?**

Marcos, whose dictator father established relations with China, is expected to continue Duterte's policy of setting aside a maritime international ruling in favour of closer ties with Beijing, preferring the bilateral approach. Robredo says she is open to joint exploration for oil and gas deposits with China as long as Manila's sovereignty in EEZ (exclusive economic zone) and territorial waters is recognised. She also calls for a multilateral approach to the dispute.

Pacquiao promises to put a stop to China's "bullying" of Filipinos in the South China Sea and proposes "peace talks" with Beijing. Moreno says he is open to the Philippine government awarding Chinese oil exploration companies a service contract in the country's EEZ. But he also says he cannot "blame" China for claiming parts of the Philippine EEZ.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/explained/article/3166293/philippine-presidential-election-campaign-begins-whos-running>

### **5 February 2022: Isko Moreno: Rule of law should be observed on West PH Sea**

Manila mayor and presidential aspirant Isko Moreno Domagoso said he does not consider China as an enemy as far as the West Philippine Sea issue is concerned. But in an interview with broadcaster Korina Sanchez-Roxas that aired Saturday on A2Z and the Kapamilya Channel, Domagoso said China will have to honor the Hague ruling that affirmed Filipinos' rights in the West Philippine Sea. "I cannot blame (China president) Xi Jinping thinking that West Philippines Sea is theirs, but the same thinking should be given to us. It's ours also," said the Manila mayor.

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/02/05/22/isko-moreno-rule-of-law-should-be-observed-on-west-ph-sea>

### **5 February 2022: China Diplomacy: Chinese FM holds talks with visiting dignitaries attending Beijing Winter Olympics**

Following the China-Thai meeting, Wang had talks with his Singaporean counterpart Vivian Balakrishnan who accompanied President Halimah Yacob for the opening ceremonies. This is Balakrishnan's second time as an official attending the Beijing Olympics. He hailed Singapore and China's deeper cooperation on infrastructure projects, pacts on regional trade and digital economy. The two sides also exchanged views on the South China Sea. Foreign Minister Wang Yi expressed Beijing's urge to work with ASEAN countries to reach an early agreement on the proposed Code of Conduct over issues concerning the sea.

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2022-02-05/VHJhbnNjcmlwdDYyNzEz/index.html>

## **ASEAN AND THE SOUTH CHINA SEA**

### **18 February 2022: Press Statement by the Chairman of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat (AMM Retreat), 16-17 February 2022**

27. We reaffirmed our shared commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security, and stability in the region, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We discussed the situation in the South China Sea, during which concerns were expressed by some Ministers on the land reclamations, activities, incidents in the area, including damage to the marine environment, which have eroded trust and confidence, increased tensions, and may undermine peace, security, and stability in the region. We reaffirmed the importance of and commitment to maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety, and freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, as well as to the peaceful resolution of disputes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

28. We emphasised the importance of undertaking confidence building and preventive measures to enhance, among others, trust and confidence, self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea. We underscored the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. We were encouraged by the progress of the substantive negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), consistent with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. We emphasised the need to maintain and promote an environment conducive to the COC negotiations and thus welcomed further practical measures to avoid escalating tensions, the risk of accidents, misunderstandings, and miscalculations that would affect peace and stability. <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2nd-round-consolidated-draft-Press-Statement-final.pdf>

### **18 February 2022: PH seeks early conclusion of South China Sea Code of Conduct**

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. has sought for the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea during the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat. He said the Code of Conduct, which will determine the actions that countries can take in disputed areas of the South China Sea, should be inclusive and not give undue advantage to any nation.

<https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/2/18/South-China-Sea-Code-of-Conduct-ASEAN-Foreign-Ministers--Retreat.html>

### **10 February 2022: South China Sea: China-ASEAN code of conduct unlikely by end of the year, experts say**

The China-ASEAN code of conduct for the disputed South China Sea is unlikely to be concluded by the end of this year, according to a panel of Southeast Asian experts at a forum on Wednesday.

<https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3166421/south-china-sea-china-asean-code-conduct-unlikely-end-year>

## **OTHER STATES AND SOUTH CHINA SEA**

### **26 February 2022: US warship transits sensitive Taiwan Strait in first such sailing for 2022**

A US warship sailed through the sensitive Taiwan Strait on Saturday, as part of what the American military calls routine activity that nonetheless irritates China. The US Navy's 7th Fleet said its Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Ralph Johnson was conducting a "routine" transit through international waters. "The ship's transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," 7th Fleet spokesperson Nicholas Lingo said in a statement. "The United States military flies, sails, and operates anywhere international law allows."

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3168515/us-warship-transits-sensitive-taiwan-strait-first-such-sailing>

### **22 February 2022: USS Charleston concludes extended period in South China Sea**

The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Charleston (LCS 18) arrived in Guam, Feb. 14, following an extended underway period, including 19 straight days in the South China Sea. Charleston and its crew completed their Total Ship Readiness Assessment (TSRA) in Guam in mid-January prior to commencing their most recent time at sea.

<https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/2943176/uss-charleston-concludes-extended-period-in-south-china-sea/>

### **22 February 2022: U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Conduct Joint Exercises with Japan**

The U.S. Navy, the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC), and the Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) combined forces in the South China Sea to test the USMC's new Force Design 2030, a plan that revamps and retools the Marine Corps to counter a revanchist China.

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/us-navy-and-marine-corps-conduct-joint-exercises-japan-200738>

### **20 February 2022: 5 sailors accused of leaking video of Navy carrier jet crash**

Five sailors have been charged with violating military law over leaked video showing an F-35 fighter jet crashing on an aircraft carrier in the South China Sea last month, the Navy said Thursday. An ensign, three chief petty officers and a senior chief petty officer were charged under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the Navy said in a statement to KGTV-TV in San Diego. Their names weren't released.

<https://apnews.com/article/china-san-diego-south-china-sea-bf106063e5309f79d50622a4e04c862d>

### **17 February 2022: Australia and UK deepen security ties amid China worries**

The United Kingdom has pledged 25 million pounds (\$34 million) as part of a commitment to promote "peace and stability" in the Indo-Pacific, as it deepens a security pact with Australia amid continuing concerns about China's power and influence in the region.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/17/australia-and-uk-deepen-security-ties-amid-china-worries>

### **14 February 2022: Biden's Administration Reaffirms Commitment to The Pacific Despite Other Crises**

While President Joe Biden was on the phone Saturday trying to persuade Russia not to invade Ukraine, his top diplomat was wrapping up a weekend trip across the Asia-Pacific region. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visits to Australia, Fiji and a meeting with his South

Korean and Japanese counterparts in Hawaii signaled that the region remains the U.S. administration's foreign policy priority even as crises erupt elsewhere in the world. The White House also released a new Indo-Pacific Strategy Friday that criticized China's efforts to extend its Pacific influence and laid out a broad action plan to strengthen the U.S. presence in the region, including opening new embassies and consulates, expanding the Peace Corps and upping its investment in Pacific islands.

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/02/bidens-administration-reaffirms-commitment-to-the-pacific-despite-other-crises/>

### **13 February 2022: Quad pushes back on Chinese coercion, no compromise on Indo-Pacific security**

External affairs minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar's candid admission that China was discussed at the Melbourne Quad meeting in the neighbourhood context indicates that the democratic group has started to mature into a launchpad for long term strategic and economic partnerships.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/quad-pushes-back-on-chinese-coercion-no-compromise-on-indo-pacific-security-101644727705450.html>

### **11 February 2022: Indonesia Finalizes Major Jet Fighter Purchases From US, France – The Diplomat**

The 2 purchases replicate each the ambition of Indonesia's protection modernization plans and its promiscuous method to procurements. The Biden administration at the moment authorised a \$13.9 billion arms sale to Indonesia, in a bid to stiffen the nation's capacity to carry the road in opposition to current Chinese language assertiveness within the South China Sea.

<https://newsxpres.com/indonesia-finalizes-major-jet-fighter-purchases-from-us-france-the-diplomat/>

### **9 February 2022: US surveillance vessel spotted in area of downed fighter jet**

Ship-tracking data seen by RFA show a U.S. Navy Ocean surveillance vessel in the area believed to be the salvage site for the crashed F-35C fighter jet, an indication that recovery operations may be underway.

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/usa-southchinasea-02092022154533.html>

### **8 February 2022: U.S. Navy Investigates Leaked Video of F-35 Jet Crash in South China Sea**

The Pentagon on Monday confirmed parallel investigations into a recent fighter jet crash in the South China Sea, after an "unauthorized leak" showed multiple angles of last month's accident.

<https://www.newsweek.com/us-navy-investigates-leaked-video-f-35-jet-crash-south-china-sea-1677100>

### **7 February 2022: See leaked footage of fighter jet crashing into South China Sea**

The Pentagon confirms the authenticity of newly leaked footage of a F-35 jet crashing onto the deck of an aircraft carrier off the South China Sea.

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2022/02/07/f-35-crash-south-china-sea-intv-barbara-starr-newsroom-vpx.cnn>

### **7 February 2022: Australia will 'lose next decade' unless it stands up to China: Dutton**

Defence Minister Peter Dutton has warned that Australia and its allies will "lose the next decade" unless it stands up to China in the South China Sea, and revealed he is extremely confident the first Australian nuclear submarine will arrive before 2038. Mr Dutton said the

United States and its allies had previously “acquiesced” to Beijing in the disputed waterway, allowing it to build artificial islands and defence bases out of coral reefs.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/australia-will-lose-next-decade-unless-it-stands-up-to-china-dutton-20220112-p59ntk.html>

### **6 February 2022: Joint Statement between the People’s Republic of China and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**

The Pakistan side expressed its commitment to One-China Policy and support for China on Taiwan, South China Sea, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet. The Chinese side reaffirmed its support for Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty, independence and security, as well as promoting its socio-economic development and prosperity.

[http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zgyw/202202/t20220206\\_10639501.htm](http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zgyw/202202/t20220206_10639501.htm)

### **6 February 2022: Indian Scientists Warn of Imminent Threat to Populations of South China Sea, Bay of Bengal**

A new study carried out by Indian scientists has painted a grim picture for the coastal population of southern India and east Asia as the region could experience waves of up to one metre. A team of scientists led by Athira Krishnan projected different sets of waves at the mid and end-century, depending upon different greenhouse gas emission scenarios forecast by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) called RCP4.5 and RCP8.5. An increase of 40cm in maximum significant wave heights is projected over regions in the North Indian Ocean, north-west Arabian Sea, north-east Bay of Bengal, and the South China Sea.

<https://sputniknews.com/20220204/indian-scientists-warn-of-imminent-threat-to-populations-of-south-china-sea-bay-of-bengal-1092751483.html>