
RIPS *Research Institute for Peace and Security*
Tokyo

Policy Perspectives

May 2016 **No. 24**

*Prospects and Agenda
for Maritime Security Cooperation
in the East and South China Sea
– The Manila Symposium*

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Research Institute for Peace and Security, Tokyo

De La Salle University, Manila

May 2016



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Acknowledgment

The Research Institute for Peace and Security expresses its deep appreciation to De La Salle University, Manila, for co-hosting the Symposium on Maritime Security Cooperation for the East and South China Seas on February 26, 2016. We wish to thank all the participants (panelists) from seven countries in East Asia and the Pacific region for contributing to the symposium with their expertise and insight and, of course, their papers. We also are grateful to the office of Japan's Cabinet Secretariat for its financial support.

Masashi Nishihara

President, Research Institute for Peace and Security
May 2016

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On the Manila Symposium

On February 26, 2016, the Research Institute for Peace and Security (RIPS), Tokyo, and the Department of International Studies of De La Salle University, Manila, convened the Symposium on Maritime Security Cooperation for the East and South China Seas, just a few weeks after the United States conducted its second “freedom of navigation” operation in the South China Sea and after China installed anti-air and anti-surface missiles on Woody Island in the Paracel Islands.

The thirteen participants attending the symposium were from Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Australia, and the United States. Their exchanges of views on how their countries should react to China’s expanding area of influence and military assertion were both intensive and productive. In both closed- and open-door sessions, the participants discussed their governments’ concerns about China’s actions in the East and South China Seas, stressing the need to expand their cooperation. The main points of their discussion are summarized in this report, the responsibility for which rests upon the co-conveners, Masashi Nishihara and Renato De Castro.

1. China's Objectives in Maritime Asia

We began the symposium comparing notes on China's motives for expanding its area of influence. All the participants expressed serious concerns about China's expansionist military claims and its construction of artificial islands in the South China Sea. They generally agreed that China's principal objective was to drive out the United States from maritime Asia and to establish its own regional hegemony in the East and South China Seas. Indeed, China refers to the East and South China Seas as its "core national interest." In this regard, the participants brought up President Xi Jinping's speech in Shanghai in May 2014, in which he called for Asian problems to be solved only by Asians (that is, not by the United States).

As part of his initial presentation, **Patrick Cronin** (United States) noted that China's actions "are part of a larger pattern of challenging a post-World War II regional order built by major stakeholders, including the United States, Japan, and many others." He stated that although figuring out its precise aims is difficult, "China seeks to erode America's preponderant military position that undergirds the regional order." **Alan Dupont** (Australia) likewise pointed out China's conviction that it "can never be number one in Asia unless it overturns the regional order established by Western nations at the end of the Second World War." He argued that China's objective is "pushing the US out of the western Pacific and being able to dominate both the East and South China Seas."

Renato De Castro (Philippines) emphasized that China "no longer focuses on preempting possible US intervention in a Taiwan Straits crisis but on denying the US Navy access to the East China Sea and the South China Sea or inside the First Island Chain." He observed that "China's aggressive pursuit of its territorial claim over the South China Sea has increased in tandem with the expansion of its navy and maritime services." **Roilo Golez** (Philippines) then talked about the implications of a militarized Scarborough Shoal for the Philippines' security: "Under the control of China and once militarized, Scarborough Shoal could be transformed into an unsinkable aircraft carrier permanently parked in our front yard, well within our EEZ." **Dinh Nho Hung** (Vietnam) interjected that "China wants to control strategic choke points in order to always be in an advantageous position to maintain its geostrategic centrality in Asia and, furthermore, to realize the 'Chinese dream.' "

Yoji Koda (Japan), however, saw China's main interest in controlling all the islands and reefs inside the Nine-Dashed Line as protecting its strategic nuclear capability and using Hainan Island as a base for its anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capability in the South China Sea. He added that China also wants to control the sea lines of communication (SLOC) connecting the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, Japan's lifeline. Referring to the

importance of sea-lanes to China, **Martin Sebastian** (Malaysia) agreed with Koda, stating that “the Chinese strategic intent protects Chinese interest in safeguarding the sea-lanes and the resources it needs for its well-being.”

Tran Viet Thai (Vietnam) then pointed out that China’s massive land reclamation activities have changed the balance of power in the South China Sea in its favor, that what China has done during last two years has been unprecedented, and that it has completely changed the region’s strategic security, with long-term implications.

Turning to the East China Sea, **Hideshi Tokuchi** (Japan) stressed that “China will never sacrifice its ‘national core interest,’ as it defines it, which refers to both the Senkaku Islands and the South China Sea.” **Robert Eldridge** (United States) warned that Japan should not “hope” that China would come around and not be difficult [regarding this] issue.” He also noted that “a China in control of the Senkakus would be dangerous for Japan, for the United States, and for the region as a whole, for many reasons.” It was clear that both **Tokuchi** and **Eldridge** were pessimistic about a peaceful settlement of the Senkakus.

China is trying to drive out the United States from maritime Asia, so it can dominate the area inside its Nine-Dashed Line in the South China Sea. In 2013 it established the Hainan Fishing Zone roughly along the Nine-Dashed Line, and also declared an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the East China Sea. Perhaps in the future China will establish a similar ADIZ over the South China Sea and a fishing zone in the East China Sea.

2. Responses to China’s Actions

ASEAN Seeks Peaceful Resolutions

Although all the participants agreed on China’s objectives in the East and South China Seas, the ASEAN and non-ASEAN participants expressed their differences on how to respond. The ASEAN participants generally sought diplomatic and peaceful resolutions of the territorial disputes. With some exceptions, their responses were passive, perhaps because their countries depend heavily on trade with and investment from China and because they also are militarily inferior to China.

Sebastian (Malaysia) wrote in his paper that “ASEAN is not used to superpower games and has not been in military alliance with any power as a bloc. ASEAN remains as a political security community preferring passive actions against China.” **Shafia Muhibat** (Indonesia) maintained that “Southeast Asia’s engagement with China is aimed at securing China’s respect for norms of state conduct that have come to distinguish the collective

culture of ASEAN and that serve the cause of a stable regional order.”

Sebastian’s and **Muhibat**’s views were reminiscent of dialogues that have been taking place between the ASEAN countries and China since the 1990s. ASEAN’s diplomatic efforts to seek peaceful resolutions and not to resort to force have been impressive. For instance, the organization is promoting negotiations to establish a legally binding code of conduct (COC) for the South China Sea, although so far the negotiations have not been successful. The Philippines, however, has chosen to confront China directly by going to the Arbitral Tribunal of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

Worried about the growing wedge between China and ASEAN, Beijing has conducted a “charm offensive” toward the ASEAN nations for the last few years, proposing a third plan of action (2016-2020) for the ASEAN-China Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity. China also has offered to conclude a treaty of good-neighborliness, friendship, and cooperation and to upgrade the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area. More recently, China proposed a “Maritime Silk Road Initiative.” ASEAN has welcomed these proposals in order to maintain cooperative relations with China.

Non-ASEAN Nations’ Responses Are Tougher

Although non-ASEAN countries, too, have sought diplomatic solutions, they tend to be critical of, and even condemn, China. In fact, Australia, Japan, and the United States have stated that they would be willing to use force to persuade China to abide by the rule of law. But they also support the measures that ASEAN has taken to control tensions in the South China Sea, as well as such ASEAN-led multilateral institutions as ASEAN Plus, ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asia Summit, ADMM Plus, and the Shangri-la Dialogue.

Even so, the region’s non-ASEAN countries already are using military means to reinforce their diplomacy. Since October 2015 the US Pacific Fleet has asserted the “freedom of navigation” in the area by sailing near the shoals reclaimed by China. **Sebastian** (Malaysia) wrote about Malaysia’s having sought “the assistance of Australia and United States to conduct aerial patrols in the South China Sea, even though Malaysia has not announced this publicly.” **Dupont** (Australia) remarked that “for many decades the Australian navy has periodically sailed through the South and East China Seas on freedom of navigation exercises while Australian maritime patrol aircraft have regularly flown surveillance missions over the South China Sea from Malaysia’s Butterworth Air Base as part of Operation Gateway.”

In response to China’s speedy military buildup in maritime Asia, Japan has increased its

defense budget, adopted new security legislation that enables Japanese forces to work closely with its partner forces in combat situations, and revised the Japan–US guidelines for cooperation in defense. In addition, Japan has pledged to provide coast guard vessels to Vietnam and the Philippines. “Minilateral” security arrangements, which include Australia and India, have also broadened Japan’s security partnerships.

3. Responses by Individual Countries

The countries represented in the symposium all have different relations with China, in accordance with their history, trade and investment, domestic politics, and geopolitical factors as well as their diplomatic and military capabilities. The fact that Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are claimants to the territorial disputes with China, whereas Indonesia is not has also colored their relations. The following is a summary of the participant countries’ policies.

Indonesia Is More Critical

Muhibat (Indonesia) stated that as a non-claimant nation, Indonesia wanted to act as an intermediary in the territorial disputes in the South China Sea. But, she wrote, “Contrary to popular belief, Indonesia is not a ‘mediator’ because the dispute has not entered the ‘mediation’ stage.” As an alternative confidence-building measure, Indonesia has also promoted the Workshop on Managing Potential Conflict in the South China Sea. Indonesia’s other policies include support for the ASEAN-China dialogue and, with Singapore, another non-claimant nation, formulation of an official Code of Conduct.

At the same time **Muhibat** described Jakarta’s difficult position. By insisting that Indonesia must strengthen its defense of the Natuna Islands, its naval leaders have given the media the impression that Indonesia no longer takes a neutral position in territorial disputes. Although China’s territorial water claims do not include Indonesia’s Natuna Islands, tensions between the two countries have mounted since 2009 when China’s claims encroached on Indonesia’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Tensions then peaked in March 2016 when an Indonesian coast guard vessel arrested a Chinese fishing boat “illegally” fishing in Indonesian waters and began towing it to Indonesia. Then the coast guard vessel itself was intercepted by a (larger) Chinese coast guard vessel.

Is Malaysia Playing It Safe?

Even though it is a claimant state, Malaysia has traditionally pursued a “safe” policy in the South China Sea. While claiming several islands, Kuala Lumpur at the same time has been careful not to hurt its economic and political ties with China, which is Malaysia’s largest trading partner.

Yet as China expands its sphere of domination, creating artificial islands for military use, harassing Malaysian fishermen, and harvesting rich coral beds, Malaysia has become more and more critical of Beijing. Indicative of this change are President Barack Obama’s visit in April 2014, the first American president to visit Kuala Lumpur since President Lyndon Johnson came in 1966, and the tour by Malaysian Defense Minister Hishammuddin Hussein of a US aircraft carrier.

Although Malaysia agrees with other ASEAN countries on the importance of establishing a formal and binding code of conduct (COC), **Sebastian** is skeptical of its efficacy. In his words, “China clearly did not have much interest in the DOC [Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea] process and did not intend to implement the DOC unless it jeopardizes its sovereignty claims in the South China Sea.”

Sebastian also referred to the fact that China had placed a sovereignty marker on James Shoal, the southernmost point of its claim, which is located offshore Sarawak, Malaysia. He expressed his concern about Chinese fishermen catching a volume of fish beyond the preservation level and illegally harvesting coral. As he noted, “China’s plundering of the sea goes unnoticed because of Malaysia’s lack of capabilities to investigate its extent of China’s plunder. Kuala Lumpur has requested the United States and Australia to conduct aerial patrols in the South China Sea.

The Philippines Is Fighting Back

The Philippines’ conflict with China heated up in 2012 when the latter seized the Scarborough Shoal. Manila decided to bring this case against a series of China’s claims before the Arbitral Tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration, in order to build up strong defense ties with the United States and its partners as well as to buttress its own armed forces and coast guard.

In its statement to the tribunal, the Philippines asked that its legal entitlements under the UN Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) be determined for the Spratly Islands, Scarborough Shoal, Mischief Reef, and other areas inside its 200-mile EEZ. At the first hearing held in July 2015, **De Castro** (Philippines) noted, representatives from Indonesia,

Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam were present. Then on October 29, 2015, the tribunal held that both the Philippines and China were parties to the convention and thus were bound by its provisions on the settlement of the dispute. The outcome is likely to be issued in the early summer of 2016.

The Philippines has responded in kind to China's military expansionism in the South China Sea, clearly the toughest decision by an ASEAN member. The Philippines has strengthened its security ties with the United States by signing the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), accepting the rotational presence of US forces in its country and providing them with "the most extensive access to Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base."

Manila also is seeking a "strategic partnership with Japan." President Benigno Aquino and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have met often to promote their countries' security cooperation. Japan will provide the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) with ten patrol boats as well as capacity-building training. For his part, President Aquino is strengthening both the Philippine Armed Forces (PAF) and the PCG. As **De Castro** (Philippines) pointed out, Aquino's objectives are to enhance the PAF's capabilities, prioritize its needs, and gradually restructure its forces for territorial defense.

Vietnam Opts for Negotiation

According to **Tran Viet Thai**, the official position of the Vietnamese government has four key elements: (1) resolving the dispute in the South China Sea by peaceful means; (2) making international laws, especially the UNCLOS of 1982, the basis for resolving the dispute; (3) calling on all concerned parties to fully implement the DOC and work toward realizing a binding COC; and (4) until then, persuading all parties not to use, or threaten to use, force or to make the situation more complicated.

Specifically, although Vietnam and China should resolve bilateral territorial disputes like that pertaining to the Paracel Islands, multiparty disputes like that over the Spratly Islands should be settled on the basis of equality, mutual respect, and international laws, especially UNCLOS. Vietnam's position is that the Nine-Dashed Line is not based on international laws and so is unacceptable. Vietnam opposes any action that might restrict navigation and overflights in the South China Sea, and it welcomes external actors to ensure these freedoms.

Praising Manila's action in The Hague as "a good job," **Tran Viet Thai** (Vietnam) maintained that Vietnam also sought peaceful resolutions, noting that his country is negotiating with China on issues such as a maritime demarcation of the waters outside the

Gulf of Tonkin and is presenting its position on the unacceptability of the Nine-Dashed Line.

Japan Takes a Hard Line

Japan believes that its sovereignty over the Senkakus is “indisputable.” Despite this explicit position on the legality of its claim, it has avoided using force to prevent Chinese government vessels and fishing boats from crossing into the islands’ territorial and contiguous waters. Tokyo opposes China’s unilateral decision to create an air defense identification zone over the East China Sea, which includes the Senkakus. It is concerned as well about the militarization of Nanji Island, which is off the coast of Zhejiang Province and only 300 kilometers from the Senkakus.

Eldridge criticized Japan’s policy of “hope”—that China will someday acknowledge Japanese sovereignty over the Senkakus—arguing that “it has in fact emboldened China over the past few years.” He proposed that instead, Japan set up weather and radar facilities and station government officials on the islands.

The Japanese government, becoming increasingly worried over China’s growing naval and air activities in the East China Sea, regards Beijing’s claim to the Senkakus as part of its bigger strategy to drive out the American forces from Okinawa and establish a hegemonic position to deny access to the East China Sea, a part of the First Island Chain.

As **Hideshi Tokuchi** noted, four of China’s nine outlets to the Pacific Ocean are located in Japan’s southwest archipelago. Japan has taken several measures: increasing its defense budget, deploying twice as many F-15 fighters as it has now in Naha, Okinawa, and stationing ground troops on the archipelago as well as constructing larger coast guard patrol ships.

Under Prime Minister Abe’s leadership, Japan is establishing closer security ties with Vietnam and the Philippines through capacity-building assistance and is supporting the ASEAN and the ADMM Plus while strengthening its alliance with the United States. As **Yoji Koda** stressed, “An enhanced Japan–USA alliance posture will surely enable a more flexible deployment posture for the US forces, including its presence.”

Australia Asserts Its Rights

According to **Alan Dupont**, “As an Asian Pacific trading nation and long-standing US ally, Australia has long been invested in the preservation of a rules-based regional

maritime order that respects the sovereign and legal rights of all countries and freedom of navigation on the high seas.” For many decades, Australian naval ships have sailed through the East and South China Seas to conduct their freedom of navigation exercises. The navy now is likely to conduct its missions more frequently, in order to support the ASEAN countries’ maritime-domain awareness and to strengthen its defense and intelligence cooperation with like-minded partners.

Australia’s maritime patrol aircraft have conducted surveillance missions over the South China Sea as part of Operation Gateway, using Malaysia’s Butterworth Air Base. Since late 2015, **Dupont** disclosed, Australia’s missions have often encountered Chinese military aircraft warning them to stay away from the area under Chinese control.

Australia’s likely responses include increasing the frequency of national “freedom of navigation” operations (FONOPs) in the South China Sea, intensifying and broadening joint military exercises in the western Pacific, helping improve the Southeast Asian countries’ maritime-domain awareness, and seeking closer defense and intelligence cooperation with like-minded neighbors.

As **Dupont** contended, Australia and its partners should expose China’s aggression to public scrutiny and warn China of its loss of reputation and its actions’ long-term political cost. Australia and its regional partners should coordinate and integrate their policies toward China, spelling out possible diplomatic, political, and military measures, but he feels that they should not gang up on China.

The United States Uses a Combination of Responses

With its strategy of “rebalancing” the region, the Obama administration has been countering China’s aggressive salami-slicing tactics in maritime Asia. As **Cronin** indicated, the United States needs to “reassure allies and friends about America’s determination to remain a vital and permanent Pacific power.” Washington has reassured its security commitment to its allies and like-minded partners through measures such as high-level consultations, new security arrangements, and joint military exercises.

For the last several years, the United States has successfully moved in this direction. In April 2014 President Barack Obama visited Tokyo, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur, and Manila in order to reinforce US ties with Asia. While in Tokyo, he reassured Prime Minister Abe of the United States’ commitment to the defense of the Senkakus in accordance with the countries’ bilateral security treaty. President Obama also was the first US president to visit Malaysia in forty-eight years. He extended US military support for the search for Malaysian Airlines flight 370 and urged Malaysia to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership

(TPP). In Manila, he bolstered the bilateral security treaty and supported the newly arranged Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. In November 2014, President Obama visited India, Myanmar, and Australia. Clearly, these visits reflect Washington's strategic interest in counterbalancing China's influence. Finally, in February 2016 President Obama presided over the US-ASEAN Summit in Sunnylands, California, which helped solidify their ties. **Golez** praised it as a historic achievement.

The United States should have a long-term strategy, founded on comprehensive power and continuous engagement. According to **Cronin**, the United States should be able to sanction China for "bad behavior," but at the same time it should have adequate economic, diplomatic, and security capability. The Obama administration has been diversifying the United States' regional engagement through negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and regional conferences like the US-ASEAN Summit. Washington also is promoting a coalition of willing states to voluntarily support a binding Code of Conduct between ASEAN and China and the outcome of the Arbitral Tribunal. And the United States has worked to strengthen its alliances, particularly those with Australia, Japan, and the Philippines.

Building partnership capacity is important to most of the countries in the region, including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. The United States' strategic relations with Vietnam are particularly valuable to Washington. Similarly, greater region-wide maritime cooperation can lead to a stronger security posture. Accordingly, **Cronin** praised Singapore's Information Fusion Center for calling for more transparency and joint operations and also for sharing real-time information.

4. Recommendations

The Manila Symposium participants offered a number of recommendations to promote cooperation among East Asian and Pacific countries in regard to China's expanding naval and possibly air activities in maritime Asia. The participants' recommendations described in their papers and the subsequent discussion may be categorized as soft, hard, and intermediate responses. Each nation's policies tend to be a mixture of the three.

Soft Responses

Soft responses aim at resolving disputes and tensions in the East and South China Seas through diplomacy, treating China as a partner and seeking cooperation on security. These

responses essentially promote confidence-building measures and include the following:

1. Not ganging up on China. In the long run, it is important to treat it as both an economic partner and a security partner. Antagonizing China will not help resolve disputes.
2. Building regional norms and rules and emphasizing international rules as the basis of regional and international order through the peaceful settlement of disputes between or among ASEAN claimants.
3. Inviting China to participate in regional naval and ground exercises, confidence-building conferences, and crisis management mechanisms to demonstrate the benefits of being a cooperative and peaceful member of the community. The Western Pacific Naval Symposium was cited as a model. In 2014 the symposium hosted by China in Qingdao produced the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), a confidence-building measure.
4. Continuing to support ASEAN's position on the COC and encouraging ASEAN to continue to press China diplomatically for its agreement.
5. Enhancing the ASEAN secretary-general's leadership on consultations with China on the COC.
6. Supporting Indonesia's and Singapore's future mediating role as non-claimants in bringing about reconciliation among the disputants in South China Sea.
7. Encouraging Japan to expand its public diplomacy and declassify information on the Senkakus in order to convince the international public that they belong to Japan.

Hard Responses

Hard responses involve the use or threat of force and intimidation in resolving issues. The recommendations made at the symposium include:

1. Creating a favorable balance of power against China and making sure not to create a vacuum of power in the East and South China Seas. This should deter China from taking aggressive and intimidating actions, fearing physical retaliation. The stronger US-Philippines alliance and US-Vietnam strategic relations should also influence the regional balance of power, as should Japan's growing security relations with Manila and Hanoi. The Southeast Asian claimants might also deploy larger law-enforcement ships and stronger naval ships to counter Chinese ships' intimidation tactics.
2. Encouraging the Philippines to develop its Oyster Base in the Palawan Islands to gain a favorable balance of power in the South China Sea.
3. Preventing China's reclamation of Scarborough Shoal, because a strategic triangle connecting Woody Island, Fiery Cross Reef, and Scarborough Shoal would tip the balance of power in the South China Sea in China's favor.

4. Continuing “freedom of navigation and overflights” operations but perhaps having individual countries initiate them rather than depending on US-led multinational operations, to avoid the impression that the United States and its partners were ganging up on China.
5. Lengthening the deployment of naval law-enforcement vessels by the United States, its partners, and Southeast Asian claimants, assuming their presence will increase their deterrence capability against Chinese ships.

Intermediate Responses

Intermediate responses, between the soft and hard responses, include the following recommendations:

1. Sharing more information about China’s illegal activities and exposing them to public scrutiny. Singapore’s Information Fusion Center was cited as a model.
2. Continuing to support the Philippines’ case being considered by the Arbitral Tribunal and strongly pressuring China diplomatically when or if it is supported by the tribunal. This should encourage the peaceful and law-abiding solution of disputes according to international law (UNCLOS).
3. Considering imposing diplomatic sanctions on China, though short of military sanctions. Prohibiting the import and export of certain commodities and refusing to allow tourists to visit certain attractive areas are examples.
4. Building a web of security “minilateral” and multilateral linkages among like-minded countries in the region, which would include stronger US-led alliances. Japan’s transfer of coast guard vessels and its support of capacity-building training for Vietnam and the Philippines were cited as examples.
5. Protecting the marine environment in the South China Sea from China’s indiscriminate fishing and coral harvesting, through a region-wide monitoring system. China also should be warned of the cost to its environmental reputation for any violations.
6. Reminding China that the United States is committed to defending the Senkakus under Article 5 of the Japan-US Security Treaty.
7. Strengthening the Japanese-US alliance with the newly revised bilateral Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation.
8. Encouraging Japan to station government officials, locate communications facilities, and perhaps constructing radar, a helicopter base, and a port on the Senkakus.

5. Conclusions

The main focus of the symposium was on what China's leaders intend to do in the East and South China Seas and how those countries affected by China's actions could work together to dissuade them. All the participants agreed that China's principal motives were to eliminate the United States' influence in the Western Pacific and to dominate maritime Asia.

Even while the Southeast Asian claimants made their territorial claims, they were careful not to damage their overall relations with China. Only in the last few years, after China started its extensive and unilateral reclamation, have they hardened their position.

Among the Southeast Asian countries covered here, Indonesia and Malaysia have been more constrained in their criticism of China than Vietnam and the Philippines have been, and they now have invited US and Japanese naval ships to visit Cam Ranh Bay and Oyster Bay, respectively. Although Japan now finds itself in a different security environment at the East China Sea, its tensions with China are the same: unilateral coercive behavior.

On the whole, the regional balance of power in the South China Sea is more favorable to China than to the United States and its partners. How it can tip the balance in its favor is a challenge. Conversely, the balance of power in the East China Sea is more favorable to Japan and the United States than to China, although it is slowly shifting to China.

The responses by the participants' countries are a mixture of soft, intermediate, and hard with the US leadership as the key to constraining China's activities.

Periodically holding a symposium of this kind is an important and useful way of discussing where the participating countries stand regarding maritime security in the East and South China Seas.

Contributors to the Symposium

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- Dr. Masashi Nishihara, President, Research Institute for Peace and Security, Tokyo

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- Commodore Joel Garcia, Director, National Coast Watch Center, Manila
- Dr. Gerardo Janairo, Chancellor, De La Salle University
- Hon. Jesus Yabes, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs for Migrant Workers Affairs, on behalf of Hon. Albert Del Rosario, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, Manila

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Malaysia

- Captain Martin Sebastian, Head of Centre for Maritime Security and Diplomacy, Maritime Institute of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

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- Hon. Roilo Golez, former National Security Adviser, National Security Council of the Philippines, Manila
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- Mr. Dinh Nho Hung, Vice President, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam

Japan

- Mr. Hideshi Tokuchi, former Vice Minister of Defense for International Affairs, Ministry of Defense, Tokyo
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- Dr. Atsushi Yasutomi, Senior Researcher, Research Institute for Peace and Security
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Panelists and Papers

- Cronin, Patrick. "Challenge and Response in Maritime Asia."
- De Castro, Renato. "Confronting China's Maritime Expansion in the South China Sea: The Case of the Philippines."
- Dinh, Nho Hung. "Towards an Enhanced Regional Security Architecture in East Asia."
- Dupont, Alan. "China's Maritime Strategy in the Western Pacific: An Australian View."
- Eldridge, Robert. "How Should We Cope with the Situation? The View from the United States (Western Pacific), with a Focus on the Senkaku Islands Dispute."
- Golez, Roilo. "An Analysis of the More Recent Developments in the South China Sea Situation."
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発行 一般財団法人 平和・安全保障研究所



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