THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

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NOTE FROM THE CHAIRS

Greetings Delegates,

We take immense pleasure to welcome you to the Second Edition of the Maria’s Model United Nations, 2016. We at ECOFIN have taken it upon ourselves to tackle a topic that is seemingly impossible to solve peacefully, The South China Sea Dispute (SCSD).

The SCSD is a maritime territorial dispute that involves the maritime area known as the South China Sea and the island territories consisted within. The major players in this dispute are the Chinese and the ASEAN, as they are in direct contact with the region in question. Other parties involved, though not directly in contact, are the United States, the European Union, Korea and Japan.

On one hand, China lays claims on the island territories owing to their historical occupancy and on the other hand, the ASEAN countries of Viet Nam and the Philippines are in total opposition of the claims stating similar ones themselves. The outcome this dispute may dramatically change the political scenario of the World. Hence, the delegates of ECOFIN will have a crucial responsibility on their shoulders, to shape the future of World Politics.

Conclusively, we wish the delegates the best of fortunes and request you to be thorough with your research as this will not just be another committee where you can gain accolades half-baked.

With Regards,

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INTRODUCTION TO ECOFIN

Economic and Financial committee is one of the six committees of the UN General Assembly also known as the second committee. Like other committees it was formed after the WW1. ECOFIN is open and equal to all 193 member states of the UN. All resolutions passed in ECOFIN are non-binding, nonetheless hold immense importance in the international community. Through policy dialogue and oversight for specialized agencies, functional commissions, and regional commissions, ECOFIN’s mandate allows for the responsibility to address problems with comprehensive approaches.

As the name implies, the primary aim of ECOFIN is the promotion of economic development. ECOFIN was created with the purpose to “promote international cooperation in the economic field,” as outlined in Article 13 of the United Nations Charter of 26 June 1945. According to its mandate, ECOFIN aims to discuss “macroeconomic policy questions like financing for development, globalization and eradication of poverty.”

In the past, ECOFIN has addressed issues of financial sustainability and economic cooperation between countries. From general to specific groups of countries, the committee has laid great stress upon the issue of Least Developed Countries and Landlocked Developing Countries. Moreover discusses variety of International Measures for preventing financial crisis.

ECOFIN is engaged in improving the quality of debate and the impact of the decisions made. The committee has also worked in collaboration with the IMF and The World Bank in order to promote welfare and economic stability, and also is responsible to promote economic development in a sustainable manner as where environmental sustainability must not be ignored.

It plays a unique role within the United Nations as a primary organ tasked with discussing crosscutting issues related to development, cooperation and financial stability. In addressing these issues, ECOFIN may make recommendations, initiate
studies and submit draft conventions to the General Assembly Plenary Second Committee. The delegates will not just propose solutions, but also debate the events leading to these concerns. Unfolding these scenarios and understanding of current events is essential for a productive discussion in the committee session.
THE SOUTH CHINA SEA - THE ISSUES THEREOF

On Tuesday, October 27, 2015 the U.S. Navy deployed the USS Lassen, a US Navy Warship, into the 12-nautical mile boundary of some islands in the Subi Reef

The incidence has brought The US and China face-to-face once again on the issue of the South China Sea. Tensions between the two countries are rising as a result of Washington’s decision to deploy a warship to a region that Beijing claims to be a part of Chinese territory.

Beijing views the deployment of a U.S. Navy warship in the area as a strong violation of its territorial integrity.

The U.S. Navy guided missile destroyer was ordered into the region prior to U.S. Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter’s visit to the USS Theodore Roosevelt, also operating in the region. The fact that the U.S. chose a warship and not any ordinary seafaring vessel to conduct a run-of-the-mill surveillance operation has sent a strong message to China.

While Washington has advised China against its land reclamation projects and island building in the South China Sea over the last two years, the recent naval mission is the first example of the U.S. adopting a strong military position on the matter. As such, it has been interpreted as a powerful warning to Beijing that the U.S. will not condone indiscriminate territorial assertions in the South China Sea.

China has announced its sovereign rights over much of the South China Sea, and the state has singlehandedly claimed more territory in the last two years alone than all the other disputants have, put together, over the last forty years.
DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
The area from the coast up to 200 nautical miles into the sea is the exclusive economic zone of the coastal nation having sovereign rights over all the economic resources of the sea, seabed and its subsoil.

The Law of the Sea Convention defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources.


In 1956, the United Nations held its first Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS I) at Geneva, Switzerland. UNCLOS I resulted in four treaties concluded in 1958:

- Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone, entry into force: 10 September 1964
- Convention on the Continental Shelf, entry into force: 10 June 1964
- Convention on the High Seas, entry into force: 30 September 1962
- Convention on Fishing and Conservation of Living Resources of the High Seas, entry into force: 20 March 1966

Although UNCLOS I was considered a success, it left open the important issue of breadth of territorial waters.
In 1960, the United Nations held the second Conference on the Law of the Sea ("UNCLOS II"); however, the six-week Geneva conference did not result in any new agreements. Generally speaking, developing nations and third world countries participated only as clients, allies, or dependents of the United States or the Soviet Union, with no significant voice of their own.

The issue of varying claims of territorial waters was raised in the UN in 1967 by Arvid Pardo, of Malta, and in 1973 the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea was convened in New York. In an attempt to reduce the possibility of groups of nation-states dominating the negotiations, the conference used a consensus process rather than majority vote. With more than 160 nations participating, the conference lasted until 1982. The resulting convention came into force on 16 November 1994, one year after the sixtieth state, Guyana, ratified the treaty.

The convention introduced a number of provisions. The most significant issues covered were setting limits, navigation, archipelagic status and transit regimes, exclusive economic zones (EEZs), continental shelf jurisdiction, deep seabed mining, the exploitation regime, protection of the marine environment, scientific research, and settlement of disputes.

The convention set the limit of various areas, measured from a carefully defined baseline. (Normally, a sea baseline follows the low-water line, but when the coastline is deeply indented, has fringing islands or is highly unstable, straight baselines may be used.) The areas are as follows:

As of January 2015, 166 countries and the European Union have joined in the Convention. However, it is uncertain as to what extent the Convention codifies customary international law.

While the Secretary General of the United Nations receives instruments of ratification and accession and the UN provides support for meetings of states
party to the Convention, the UN has no direct operational role in the implementation of the Convention. There is, however, a role played by organizations such as the International Maritime Organization, the International Whaling Commission, and the International Seabed Authority (ISA).

**Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

An organisation established in 1967 to promote peace and cooperation of nations of Southeast Asia. ASEAN was founded on 8 August 1967 with five members: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Vietnam joined in 1995, Laos and Burma in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999. As of 2010, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has 10 member states, one candidate member state, and one observer state.

**The nine dotted line area**

9 dash line is the several intermittent dotted lines on maps published by China to define borders in South China Sea over which China claims sovereignty. It is
originated from Chinese historic practice instead of international conventions or treaties

Since 2009, when China asked the secretary-general of the United Nations to circulate its nine-dashed line claim to the community of nations, the world has stood in bewilderment at Beijing’s actions in the South China Sea. Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines have the most to lose over China’s gambit, and the disparity in power between them and China leaves them confounded and stunned – and privately, apoplectic. China’s policies have created a dangerous mess in the South China Sea. The irony is palpably bitter on nine distinct levels. Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines hold the key to the best chance to fix the mess.
Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelves

It is an International Commission that regulates the extent of the continental shelves of nations.

The purpose of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (the Commission or CLCS) is to facilitate the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (the Convention) in respect of the establishment of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles (M) from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured. Under the Convention, the coastal State shall establish the outer limits of its continental shelf where it extends beyond 200 M on the basis of the recommendation of the Commission. The Commission shall make recommendations to coastal States on matters related to the establishment of those limits; its recommendations and actions shall not prejudice matters relating to the delimitation of boundaries between States with opposite or adjacent coasts.

Its main functions include

(a) To consider the data and other material submitted by coastal States concerning the outer limits of the continental shelf in areas where those limits extend beyond 200 nautical miles, and to make recommendations in accordance with article 76 and the Statement of Understanding adopted on 29 August 1980 by the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea;

(b) To provide scientific and technical advice, if requested by the coastal State concerned during preparation of such data.

In accordance with article 76(8), the Commission shall make recommendations to coastal States on matters related to the establishment of the outer limits of their continental shelf. The limits of the shelf established by a coastal State on the basis of these recommendations shall be final and binding.
Cairo and Potsdam Declaration

It's the declaration of the Allies of World War II by which all the Chinese territory occupied by the Japanese army had to be returned after the war.

The Cairo Declaration was the outcome of the Cairo Conference in Cairo, Egypt, on November 27, 1943. President Franklin Roosevelt of the United States, Prime Minister Winston Churchill of the United Kingdom, and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek of the Republic of China were present. The declaration developed ideas from the 1941 Atlantic Charter, which was issued by the Allies of World War II to set goals for the post-war order. The Cairo Declaration is cited in Clause Eight (8) of the Potsdam Declaration, which is referred to by the Japanese Instrument of Surrender.

Territorial Dispute

Disagreement over the possession/control of land between two or more territorial entities, usually between a new state and the occupying power.

Natural Resources:

Materials and substances available in nature which can be exploited for economic gain.
BACKGROUND

The South China Sea is surrounded on three sides by the coasts of nine independent states and Taiwan. There overlapping claims of these countries over the continental selves, islands, islets, reefs and Exclusive Economic Zones have made this area disputed.

The islands of the South China Sea can largely be grouped into two island chains. The Paracel Islands are clustered in the northwest corner of the Sea, and the Spratly Islands in the southeast corner.

The claimants have argued bitterly over the “true” history of these island chains. Some have tried to ground their claims by proving a long and unbroken record of national control over claimed features. These states assert that their nationals fished around the islands of the Sea or used them for shelter from storms. In particular, Beijing has taken an active role in subsidizing archaeological digs to find
evidence of exclusive Chinese usage of the Sea’s many features since time immemorial.

It is hard wade through these partisan claims (many of which constitute pure propaganda). No impartial tribunal has yet taken on that challenge. To the extent that it is possible to draw any conclusions, it seems fair to say that no claimant has conclusively demonstrated a pattern of exclusive historical control over the South China Sea, or even over isolated parts of it.

In any case, the issue was moot for most of the region’s history. Through the first half of the twentieth century, the Sea remained quiet as neighbouring states focused their attention on conflicts unfolding elsewhere.
SPECIFIC TERRITORIAL DISPUTES

Territorial disputes in the South China Sea involve both island and maritime claims among several sovereign states within the region, namely Brunei, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

There are disputes concerning both the Spratly and the Paracel islands, as well as maritime boundaries in the Gulf of Tonkin and elsewhere. There is a further dispute in the waters near the Indonesian Natuna Islands. The interests of different nations include acquiring fishing areas around the two archipelagos; the potential exploitation of suspected crude oil and natural gas under the waters of various parts of the South China Sea; and the strategic control of important shipping lanes.

The disputes involve both maritime boundaries and islands. There are several disputes, each of which involved a different collection of countries:

The nine-dash line area claimed by the Republic of China, later People’s Republic of China which covers most of the South China Sea and overlaps Exclusive Economic Zone claims of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Maritime boundary along the Vietnamese coast between Brunei, Cambodia, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Maritime boundary north of Borneo between Brunei, China, Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.
Islands in the South China Sea, including the Paracels Islands, the Pratas Islands, Scarborough Shoal and the Spratly Islands between Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Maritime boundary in the waters north of the Natuna Islands between Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam.[5]

Maritime boundary off the coast of Palawan and Luzon between Brunei, China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

Maritime boundary, land territory, and the islands of Sabah, including Ambalat, between Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

Maritime boundary and islands in the Luzon Strait between the China, the Philippines, and Taiwan.

Maritime boundary and islands in the Pedra Branca (and Middle Rocks) between Singapore and Malaysia.
## Summary of disputes

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TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1952

June: Taiwan occupies Taiping, the biggest island in the Spratlys, which was originally claimed by France as part of its colony of Indochina and expanded by the Japanese during World War II as a submarine base.

1970-71

The Philippines occupy five of the Spratly Islands and claim the entire western part of the archipelago.

1974

January: The Battle of the Paracel Islands. South Vietnam is driven from the Paracel Islands by China's People's Liberation Army. Thirty-six soldiers die.

South Vietnam occupies six of the Spratly Islands.

1983

August: Malaysia occupies three Spratly Islands.

1984


1986


October: Malaysia occupies two of the Spratly Islands.
1988

March: The so-called Johnson South Reef Skirmish between Vietnam and China on the Spratly Islands results in the deaths of 74 Vietnamese sailors.

1992

June to September: China seizes 20 Vietnamese cargo ships coming from Hong Kong, accusing them of smuggling.

July: Chinese marines land on Da Lac reef in the Spratlys and build a "stone boundary marker of sovereignty."

1994


China occupies Mischief Reef, claimed by the Philippines, and erects buildings on it.

1995

March: The Malaysian Navy fires on a Chinese trawler, which it claimed had been fishing within Malaysia's exclusive economic zone.

Taiwanese artillery bombards a Vietnamese freighter that had approached one of the Spratly Islands held by Taiwan.

The Philippine military expels the Chinese from Mischief Reef and destroys all the buildings erected.

1996

**1997**

April: China and the Philippines clash over Scarborough Reef, on which they document their claims with flags and other markings.

**1998**

January: Twenty-two Chinese fishermen are detained by the Philippine Navy. They are accused of fishing illegally in Scarborough Reef.

January: Vietnamese soldiers fire on a Philippine ship and severely injure a fisherman.

**1999**

May: A Chinese fishing boat collides with a Philippine Navy vessel and sinks off Scarborough Reef.

June: Again, a Chinese fishing boat collides with a Philippine Navy vessel and sinks near the Spratly Islands.

**2000**

May: Philippine soldiers seize Chinese fishing at the Palawan Islands. They killed one and arrested seven fishermen.

**2001**

January - February: The Philippine Navy brings 14 trawlers on under the Chinese flag, confiscate their catch and escort the ships away from the sea area of the Spratly Islands claimed by the Philippines.

April 2001: A U.S. Navy intelligence aircraft and Chinese J-8II fighter jet collided in midair approximately 70 miles away from China's Hainan Island, killing one Chinese pilot and forcing the U.S. aircraft to land on Hainan Island, where U.S. crew members were detained.
Aug. 2002: Vietnamese troops fired warning shots at Philippine military reconnaissance planes flying overhead near a Spratly Islands islet.

March 2009: A Chinese Bureau of Fisheries vessel shined a high-powered spotlight on the USNS Victorious, forcing the ship to stop. Later that month, five Chinese vessels surrounded and harassed the USNS Impeccable approximately 75 miles south of Hainan Island in the South China Sea.

June 2009: A People’s Liberation Army Navy submarine followed the USS John S. McCain destroyer and was suspected of colliding with and damaging the ship’s sonar equipment.

May 2009: Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei claimed the continental shelf attached to their land should be extended so they could claim the economic rights to large areas of the South China Sea, including any energy discovered. China protested the claims.

Feb. 2011: A Chinese warship allegedly fired warning shots at a Philippine vessel after ordering it to leave the area near Jackson Atoll in the Spratly Islands.

May 2011: Philippine President Benigno Aquino III warned the visiting Chinese Defense Minister Liang Guanglie of a possible arms race in the region if tensions worsened over disputes in the South China Sea.

July 2011: Chinese soldiers reportedly assaulted a Vietnamese fisherman and threatened crew members before expelling them from waters near the disputed Paracel Islands.

March 2012: Taiwan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated its sovereignty claim over the entire South China Sea.

April 2012: Filipino surveillance aircraft identified Chinese fishing vessels at Scarborough Shoal, causing the Philippine Navy to deploy its largest
warship, newly acquired from the U.S, to the area. In response, China sent surveillance ships to warn the Philippine Navy to leave the area.

Aug. 2013: Malaysia suggested that it might work with China over their South China Sea claims and ignore the other claimants, with Malaysian Defense Minister Hishamuddin Hussein saying that his country had no problem with China patrolling the South China Sea.

Jan. 2014: China imposed a fishing permit rule in the South China Sea, defying the objections of the U.S., the Philippines and Vietnam.


April 2015: China was in the middle of transforming Mischief Reef and Fiery Cross Reef into artificial islands, in addition to creating other small islands in the region. According to the U.N., artificial islands do not afford the occupying nation territorial waters.

Sept. 2015: China completed a 3,125 meter runway on the newly created Fiery Cross reef.

Oct. 2015: USS Lassen passes through waters around the artificial islands that China has claimed our sovereignty.
VIEWS OF MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED IN SCS DISPUTES

China

China claims by far the largest portion of territory - an area defined by the "nine-dash line" which stretches hundreds of miles south and east from its most southerly province of Hainan.

According to Beijing its right to the area goes back centuries to when the Paracel and Spratly island chains were regarded as integral parts of the Chinese nation, and in 1947 it issued a map detailing its claims. It showed the two island groups falling entirely within its territory. Those claims are mirrored by Taiwan.

The Philippines filed its arbitration case at The Hague in early 2013. The hearing on jurisdiction and admissibility was concluded in July. However, China has made it clear it will not accept or get involved in these proceedings initiated unilaterally by the Philippines.

The Chinese government made a declaration in pursuance of Article 298 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), excluding disputes regarding such matters as those related to maritime delimitation and historic titles from the compulsory dispute settlement procedures including arbitration.

The Chinese government published a position paper on Dec. 7, 2014, to elaborate on the legal basis for China's position on the arbitration proceedings. It says that the arbitral tribunal manifestly has no jurisdiction in this case.
According to the position paper, China and the Philippines have agreed, through bilateral instruments and the DOC, to settle their relevant disputes through negotiations.

**Vietnam**

Vietnam hotly disputes China’s historical account, saying China had never claimed sovereignty over the islands before the 1940s. Vietnam says it has actively ruled over both the Paracels and the Spratlys since the 17th Century - and has the documents to prove it. In 1988, Viet Nam had a military encounter with China resulting in death of dozens of Vietnamese soldiers. Vietnam and China conducted bilateral talks and made an agreement to work towards achieving the Code of Conduct. Vietnam has further conducted joint military drills with the United States of America.

**Philippines**

The other major claimant in the area is the Philippines, which invokes its geographical proximity to the Spratly Islands as the main basis of its claim for part of the grouping.

Both the Philippines and China lay claim to the Scarborough Shoal (known as Huangyan Island in China) - a little more than 100 miles (160km) from the Philippines and 500 miles from China.
Malaysia and Brunei

Malaysia and Brunei also lay claim to territory in the South China Sea that they say falls within their economic exclusion zones, as defined by UNCLOS - the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It has ties with Viet Nam due to a joint submission to the Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelves. This has caused conflict with China and Philippines.

Brunei does not claim any of the disputed islands, but Malaysia claims a small number of islands in the Spratlys. Brunei has preferred acting through peaceful rather than a military show of force. In fact Brunei Royal Navy is a small force whose major task so far has been to conduct search and rescue mission.

India

India is concerned because 55% of its trade with the Asia Pacific pass through the SCS. It is also important for India to keep the sea lane open for secure energy supplies to Japan and South Korea.

India has friendly relations with ASEAN countries and hostile relation with China, citing this, the ASEAN nations have encouraged India to get involved in the South China Sea as they see India as a strong and influential nation that can counter China and can help in peaceful negotiations (especially Singapore and Vietnam).

India sees this as an opportunity to develop strong relations with 10 ASEAN nations and Japan (Japan is also very much concerned with the growing Chinese presence in the region as it may threaten their trade). This will also help India to gain support from other countries in times when China creates a problem for India.
In October, 2014 the Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) and Petro Vietnam signed a three year agreement for cooperation in oil and gas exploration and production in SCS. This was severely opposed by China.

From Strategic point of view, India might be interested in developing military and air base in South China Sea (as suggested by Defence Minister George Fernandes) to counter China from different directions because of the increasing Chinese presence in Indian Ocean which has become a huge matter of concern for the Indian Government. However, nothing can be said much in this regard as India hasn’t said or done anything officially in developing a military presence in South China Sea.

Under the leadership of PM Modi, the new government has renewed its interest in maritime security and has recognised the need to be involved in shaping the changing security architecture of the Indo-Pacific.

In boosting defence ties, India is also focusing on strengthening its maritime partnerships with the navies of the region such as Australia, Japan, Singapore and Vietnam. India offered a US$ 100 million line of credit to Vietnam, which was reiterated during the visit of the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to Delhi in October 2014. Hanoi in turn is looking to use the credit to buy new naval vessels from New Delhi in an effort to strengthen its maritime defence in the South China Sea.

New Delhi must now also look to strengthen its maritime partnership with Jakarta under the leadership of President Joko Widodo -- the new leader in Indonesia paying special attention to the maritime strategy of the country.
European Union (EU)
No European Union Country has any territorial claim over the area of South China Sea. Nevertheless, the SCS being a major a major area which play valuable economic role, there is immense prospect for investment by any country. The EU, therefore, released its guidelines on the EU’s Foreign and Security policy in East Asia in 2012, encouraging freedom of navigation in the SCS. The EU also favours a peaceful solution that is in accordance with UNCLOS, contrasting China’s preferences. Further, the EU has also offered its help to parties involved in the conflict by sharing its skills in settling laws of maritime borders and sustainable management of resources and security measures in the major disputed areas of the SCS.

Republic of Korea
The Republic of Korea (ROK) is very unlikely to get involved in SCS disputes. It does not have any claim in SCS. It is close ally of USA and also has ties with China. It has recently increased its defence cooperation with Philippines. For historical reasons ROK is distant from Japan. But, it is unlikely that ROK shall take a stance with China in the conflict at SCS.

The United States of America
Although the USA does not have any territorial claim in SCS, it is a very strong party to the conflict as it aims to prevent the Chinese influence in the region. The US does not accept any unilateral method in settling this conflict and is backing a solution under international law. Paradoxically, USA has not ratified the UNCLOS. On the other hand, the USA has conducted numerous military drills in cooperation with Viet Nam and it has also announced that it will be deploying more ships in the Pacific to hinder China’s advance. Further the US has defence treaty with the Philippines, as they are major allies.
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
The membership and the objectives of its member nations namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, make ASEAN a key organisation involved in the conflicts of SCS. In 2002 the Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea was agreed upon, initiating and promoting dialogue and cooperation between the parties. With the help of ASEAN in 2011, the parties agreed on a set of guidelines to achieve the tasks in the Code of Conduct. In general, ASEAN’ holds an objective, peaceful view on the issue.
THE POSSIBLE SOLUTION

The issues in the SCS is complicated as a number of coastal countries have overlapping territorial claims in this region. Further, Further China's aggressive actions and unwillingness to collaborate have compelled many countries to think that all claimant countries and rest of the international communities should come together to confront China's aggressive policy.

An aggressive policy, be it China or any other country, is not likely to result in possible long term solution.

Because of recent initiative of the US intending tough action against China in SCS, it is generally opined that the United States should create a good environment and ratchet down its diplomatic tones. In other words, if it continues to accuse China, the result will just be the opposite of what Washington wishes.

China has begun to act. In mid-June, Beijing announced that the land reclamation project on some islands and reefs in the South China Sea had almost been completed and that the next step will involve construction of facilities for the public interest, such as a lighthouse, maritime rescue station, meteorological observation station, maritime research centre and first aid service centre.

Seeing China’s goodwill in making its own plans transparent, the United States needs to show reciprocity, for instance, by reducing its frequency of reconnaissance flights along China’s coast.

The fundamental solution would be to achieve a "great reconciliation," which requires Washington to back down a bit and China to improve its method of communication and allow for U.S. legitimate interests in the region.
Facing the new balance of power in the South China Sea, Washington should remain relatively neutral regarding disputes in the region in exchange for Beijing’s assurance of navigation safety and regional peace. Washington should also assess the risks involved with regional disputes since the Philippines and Vietnam are unable to play a big role in helping America contain China and may trigger more conflict.

Considering the complexity of claims in the South China Sea and the diversity of stakeholders involved, it is difficult to foresee any major breakthrough in solving the issue in the short term. According to various analysts dialogues or a peaceful diplomatic solution is only way ahead.

It is also opined that continuous dialogue is necessary to address the transnational security issues that need to be addressed through cooperation.

With regard to non-traditional security threats involving fisheries, environmental degradation and so on, all claimants should join forces to achieve more efficient and sustainable results for the benefit of all parties.

The overlapping territorial claims in the South China Sea and unresolved sovereignty disputes do not pose any major security threat in the near future unless the USA or China do not become desperate for their interests in SCS. This is unlikely to happen because of their stake elsewhere.

What can and should be resolved above all is the establishment of a code of conduct that would prevent any possible escalation and ensure for the management of everyday security issues. This is the line in which the ASEAN is making efforts.

At the 9th China-ASEAN senior officials’ meeting in July, 2016 in China, senior diplomats pledged to enhance practical maritime cooperation, work toward a full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the
South China Sea (DOC) and continue consultations on formulating a Code of Conduct (COC) for the South China Sea.

Proposals for solving the SCS conflict in many way, most of course shall be very sincere. Instead of going through the details of such mechanism, we can summarise the possible solutions as below.

- An ASEAN-China forum to be proposed by ASEAN which could act as a platform for continuous discussion and negotiation on the dispute.
- The UN and ASEAN may ask for an official declaration from each claimant nation about its claim based on requirement of international law to be endorsed subsequently, if found in order.
- Once the boundary is decided at the initiative of UN, protection of the borders can be assured through mutual cooperation.
- China’s aggressive stand shall have to be countered and enforcement capabilities of weaker nations shall have to be enhanced through international cooperation involving interested nations like US, Japan, India, Australia and EU nations.
- Adequate incentives shall have to be offered to China to divert its aggressive position in SCS and use its potential for more productive and profitable activities in the high sea. China thereby can gain huge advantage through support and cooperation of its neighbouring countries.
NOTE ON POSITION PAPERS

The Position Paper is a one or two page document that is essentially an outline of the position of your country on the agenda at hand and will allow the chairperson to get a glance of the direction your respective country will take during the session. It also proves to be an important starting point for the delegates when putting up their opinions and solutions during the course of the debate and also helps them emphasise the ideas, policies and sub topics they will concentrate upon most during committee in relevance to their importance in their respective countries’ policies and the agenda as a whole.

How to write a Position Paper?

Position papers are usually one to one-and-a-half pages in length. Your position paper should include a brief introduction followed by a comprehensive breakdown of your country’s position on the topics that are being discussed by the committee. A good position paper will not only provide facts but also make proposals for resolutions. They will include:

* A brief introduction to your country and its history concerning the topic and committee;

* How the issue affects your country;

* Your country’s policies with respect to the issue and your country’s justification for these policies;

* Statistics to back up your country’s position on the issue;

* Actions taken by your government with regard to the issue;

* Conventions and resolutions that your country has signed or ratified;

* UN actions that your country supported or opposed;

* What your country believes should be done to address the issue;
* What your country would like to accomplish in the committee's resolution; and

* How the positions of other countries affect your country's position.

Submission of Position Papers:

The position papers are to be sent to the chair's email address (munecofin2016@gmail.com) in PDF format by 17th MAY, 2016
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