

# Comparative Connections

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**China-Southeast Asia Relations:**

## **China's Toughness on the South China Sea – Year II**

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China's tough stand on maritime territorial disputes evident first in 2012 confrontations with the Philippines in the South China Sea and Japan in the East China Sea has endured into 2013. Leaders' statements, supporting commentary, military and paramilitary activity, economic developments, and administrative advances all point to determined support of an important shift in China's foreign policy with serious implications for China's neighbors and concerned powers, including the US. China's success in advancing its control of disputed areas in the South China Sea and its overall assertiveness in support of China's broad territorial claims along its maritime rim head the list of reasons why the new Chinese policy is likely to continue and intensify. Few governments are prepared to resist.

### **Explaining the shift in Chinese foreign policy**

China's foreign policy shift is the most important in a decade. China has long maintained that its foreign policy is consistent but experience shows repeated shifts and changes, with serious consequences, particularly for its neighbors. Mao Zedong was notorious for changing foreign policy; Deng Xiaoping shifted repeatedly in seeking advantage in the US-Soviet-Chinese triangular dynamic. Post-Cold War Chinese leaders focused on advancing conventional relations in neighboring Asia. A major shift happened in the mid-1990s when negative reactions to Chinese military assertiveness over Taiwan and the South China Sea in 1995 prompted China to emphasize reassurance of neighbors in its so-called "New Security Concept," although the US and its allies were still targeted and sharply criticized by China. Beijing eventually felt compelled to shift again at the turn of the century to an approach of "peaceful rise," later called "peaceful development," which endeavored to reassure the US, its allies, and other Asian neighbors. The focus on peace, development, and cooperation was welcomed and continues as the main emphasis in Chinese foreign policy. But now it is accompanied by repeated use of coercion and intimidation well beyond internationally accepted norms along with other means in support of Chinese broad maritime claims.

Chinese commentaries have laid out the implications clearly. Those neighbors and other concerned powers that accept Chinese claims are promised a peaceful and mutually beneficial relationship of "win-win" cooperation. Those that don't, including US allies the Philippines and Japan, are subjected to heavy coercion and threats, thus far stopping short of direct use of military force. US interventions against bullying, which were attacked strongly to the satisfaction of Chinese commentators, have become less frequent over the past year. Most concerned governments have come to recognize that China's "win-win" formula emphasizing cooperation over common ground is premised on the foreign government eschewing actions seen as acutely

sensitive to China regarding Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, and that the scope of Chinese acute sensitivity has now been broadened to include the maritime disputes along China's rim.

### **Firm resolve and advancing capabilities**

On July 31, Xi Jinping vowed to protect Chinese maritime interests in a major speech to a group study session of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that was discussing China becoming a maritime power. According to official media reportage of the speech, Xi followed recent practice in emphasizing China's pursuit of peaceful development with neighbors and other concerned powers, while strongly protecting what China views as increasingly important maritime interests.

Supporting commentary in official Chinese media saw the roots of Xi's stance in leadership decisions of last year's 18<sup>th</sup> CCP National Congress, which in the view of the commentators, showed that "China will use all its strength – political, diplomatic, economic, legal, cultural and military – to safeguard its maritime rights and interests." Underlining such resolve was the analysis on April 30 of the biannual Chinese national defense white paper by the director of the Academy of Military Sciences. The director stressed the important role of the PLA Navy in supporting China's maritime law enforcement, fisheries, and oil and gas exploration in Chinese claimed maritime areas along China's rim. A lengthy Aug. 2 *China Daily* report also highlighted Xi's speech as supportive of the PLA Navy's growing "blue water" capabilities and applauded its ability to "break through" the so-called first island chain involving Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines to gain freer access to and to carry out military operations in the western Pacific Ocean. On Aug. 27, Prime Minister Li Keqiang reaffirmed China's "unswerving" resolve on sovereignty and territorial issues in welcoming Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong for an extensive visit to China. Official commentary on the meeting recalled criticisms of Lee's comments in May regarding the negative international consequences for China in adopting a "non-peaceful approach" to territorial disputes.

Foreign commentary highlighted the timing of Xi's speech on the eve of China's annual Aug. 1 celebration of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and just prior to important leadership deliberations at the beach resort Beidaihe in August to decide a range of important policies for the plenum of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to be held this fall. They judged that Xi saw his interests well served by sustaining firm resolve on territorial issues in boosting his leadership stature and control over policy decisions.

Other significant indicators during this reporting period regarding the South China Sea included:

- The PLA Navy in late May used ships from its three fleets to carry out a joint exercise in the South China Sea, the first such three-fleet exercise since 2010.
- Official reportage on China's expanding maritime security forces noted on July 10 that the various maritime security forces consolidated under plans adopted at the National People's Congress in March would number 16,300. On July 22 and July 23, Chinese and foreign media said that China's new unified Coast Guard Agency had gone into operation in the South China Sea and other maritime areas with the 16,000 personnel divided into

11 squadrons. According to some Chinese commentators and foreign specialists, Chinese Coast Guard officials are planning to arm their ships with weapons along the lines of those used by US, Japanese, and South Korean Coast Guard forces.

- A report from the State Oceanic Administration (SOA) in May said that China's maritime economy, which now accounts for 9.6 percent of China's GDP, will grow to at least 13 percent of GDP by 2020 and will likely amount to 18 percent of GDP in 2030. Official commentary on the report highlighted the oil reserves in the South China Sea, saying that they represent 33 percent of China's total oil reserves. In this regard, the SOA report said "China does not get any oil from the South China Sea, while neighboring countries have built more than 200 drilling platforms there."
- On May 6, a fleet of 30 Chinese fishing ships along with an accompanying supply ship and transport vessel left Hainan Island for 40 days of fishing in the disputed Spratly Islands of the South China Sea to "exploit high-seas resources in systematic ways," according to *Xinhua*.
- On July 23, *Xinhua* reported that China will be carrying out its second island resources survey, involving 10,000 "territorial islands" over the next five years. The new survey reportedly is needed as China formulates a "strategic blueprint" for maritime development in the islands in China's 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2016-2020).
- Official media reports showed that developing commercial ties are expanding between Hainan Island and the new city of Sansha headquartered in Yongxing Island in the disputed Paracel Islands of the South China Sea. Berths for civil use have been built, two tourist ships regularly take Chinese civilians to visit the islands, a supply ship that can carry passengers made 70 trips to Sansha over the past year, a new supply ship will be ready for use in 2014, and an express air service between Hainan and Sansha involving initially two 19-passenger amphibious aircraft awaits government approval.

### **Peace, development, and slow movement on code of conduct in the South China Sea**

Chinese leadership statements and authoritative commentary have continued recent practice of meshing resolve in advancing Chinese claims and interests in the South China Sea with reassurance of China's peaceful intention focused on mutually beneficial development, provided Chinese territorial claims are not challenged. Xi Jinping noted in his July 31 speech to the Politburo that China "loved peace," was committed to "peaceful development," supported "shelving disputes in order to carry out joint development" in contested areas, and urged solving maritime disputes through diplomatic and political means. The senior PLA officer representing China at the annual Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore spoke of China's commitment to peace, development, and mutual cooperation.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi has undertaken the leading Chinese official role in managing differences and improving relations with Southeast Asian states. In August, Wang completed a trip to Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. This followed his visit in May – his first trip abroad as foreign minister – to Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, and Brunei; and his visit to

Brunei in late June and early July for extensive interchange with Southeast Asian counterparts at the China-ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting, the ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea) Foreign Ministers Meeting, and the ASEAN Regional Forum. Wang made a special 14-hour visit to Cambodia on Aug. 21, as official Chinese media said that government leaders there were preoccupied during Wang's swing through the region earlier in August, notably on account of consequences of Cambodia's disputed elections in July.

Wang's emphasis was on the positive development of China-Southeast Asian relations. He stressed that relations with ASEAN "have always topped China's diplomatic agenda" and urged new progress after 10 years of "strategic partnership." He called for advancing the ASEAN-China free trade agreement and enhancing the two sides' economic integration. Supporting commentary said that China-ASEAN trade reached \$400 billion in 2012, and business, tourist, and other visits between China and ASEAN numbered 15 million that year.

In the face of sometimes strong criticism of Chinese actions in the South China Sea, especially from Philippines officials, and calls by prominent US and other international and regional leaders for progress in dealing with South China Sea disputes through an agreed code of conduct (CoC), Wang was measured in his criticism, encouraging closer cooperation, and emphatic that the process leading to a possible code of conduct should not be rushed. During meetings with the Indonesia's foreign minister in May, Wang affirmed that China agreed with Indonesia that China and ASEAN should "steadily promote the code of conduct procedure in the process of implementing effectively the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea (DoC)." He said China was willing to discuss promoting the CoC under the framework of the joint China-ASEAN working group on DoC implementation. He reportedly received Indonesia's endorsement of China's proposal to establish an Eminent Persons Group of Chinese and ASEAN representatives to deal with CoC and related issues.

The Philippines foreign minister was sharply critical of China during the ASEAN-China meetings in Brunei in late June. For his part, Wang criticized the Philippines for its occupation of disputed Second Thomas Shoal and for bringing the South China Sea disputes before a UN arbitral tribunal. The June meetings nonetheless saw the announcement that China and ASEAN will hold a meeting in September in China involving the "6<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials Meeting and the 9<sup>th</sup> Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DoC" and that the participants will hold "official consultations on the CoC within the framework of implementing the DoC," according to *Xinhua*. Wang affirmed that progress on reaching a code of conduct required following the confidence building provisions of the DoC, which he saw the Philippines as violating with its actions in the South China Sea and with the UN tribunal.

During his visit to Southeast Asia in August, Wang emphasized on the one hand that China is determined not to allow territorial issues to hinder overall cooperation between China and ASEAN. On the other hand, he stressed that the process leading to a proposed CoC should be iterative, deliberate, and gradual. He warned that the process is disrupted by actions of disputants like the Philippines that fail to implement the "necessary conditions" of the DoC. Supporting Chinese official commentary showed deep suspicion of the Philippines and other foreign countries seeking to use a CoC to limit China's freedom of action of South China Sea issues. Presumably pointing to the US and others, official commentary said "powers outside the region"

are interfering in the CoC process and making the issue more complicated “under the guise of freedom of navigation.” Against this backdrop, Wang proposed an agreement on a possible “road map” for the CoC to be reached within the process of implementing the DoC as an initial goal.

At a meeting of Chinese and ASEAN foreign ministers in Beijing on Aug. 29 focused on celebrating 10 years of “strategic partnership” in ASEAN-China relations, Foreign Minister Wang emphasized the growing economic cooperation between China and its Southeast Asian neighbors. He also underlined an iterative process toward reaching a CoC in the South China Sea with the next step being the 6<sup>th</sup> Senior Officials Meeting and the 9<sup>th</sup> Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DoC.

### **China-Philippines polemics; US and Japanese support for Manila**

This reporting period featured repeated and widely publicized exchanges of accusations and charges between Chinese and Philippines officials over their South China Sea disputes that were reminiscent of the more protracted polemics in China’s past disputes with Moscow, Washington, Taipei, Hanoi, and New Delhi. Also evident in Chinese media coverage was concern over the roles of the US and Japan in supporting the Philippines during its disputes with China.

#### *China-Philippines confrontation*

The primary focus of attention was counter claims over the Second Thomas Shoal. Known as Ayungin in the Philippines and Ren’ai Reef in China, the shoal is 15 km long and 5 km wide and located near Reed Bank, an area claimed by both countries that is said to have important oil and natural gas deposits. On May 10, the Philippine government filed a protest with the Chinese Embassy in Manila against China’s “provocative and illegal” deployment of a Chinese Navy ship and maritime surveillance ships near the shoal. About a week later, a local Philippines official told the media that a civilian boat carrying the official and 150 civilian passengers was chased by a Chinese warship as the Philippines boat passed near Second Thomas Shoal. At the end of May, the Chinese Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry spokespersons joined the Chinese ambassador in Manila in condemning the Philippines for grounding an old warship on Second Thomas Shoal in 1999 and the continued deployment of a small contingent of marines there. The Foreign Ministry representative said that Beijing “has never tolerated Manila’s illegal attempt to seize the reef and that Chinese government ships are entitled to patrol there.”

As shown in the chronology section, there were several back-and-forth exchanges between government officials in various forums over the summer even as the Philippines was able to resupply the Marines located on the abandoned ship without any obstruction from the Chinese vessels in the region. The confrontation took another turn in late August when Philippine President Benigno Aquino cancelled a planned Sept. 3 trip to attend the annual China-ASEAN Trade and Business Expo in Nanning, China after China placed what Aquino described as “unacceptable conditions” on his attendance. China’s Foreign Ministry told the media, without reference to the proposed presidential visit, that there were “difficulties” in relations and urged Manila to rectify them.

## *Roles of the United States and Japan*

Senior Chinese officials tended to eschew mention of increased US and Japanese support for the Philippines military, for the Philippines seeking a UN tribunal's ruling on China's South China Sea claims, and for faster movement toward establishing a rules-based CoC in the South China Sea. Chinese officials did not weigh in against strong remarks urging China to avoid intimidation and coercion in maritime disputes made by President Obama during a meeting with the Chinese delegates to the annual US-China Strategic and Economic in July. They also demurred after similar statements that avoided direct reference to China by Secretary of Defense Hagel to the June Shangri-La Dialogue and by Secretary of State Kerry to the ASEAN Regional Forum in July. Similarly, Chinese officials did not directly respond to Vice President Joe Biden pressing for faster movement on the South China Sea CoC during a visit to the region in July.

Nevertheless, lower level Chinese media commentary took aim at the United States and Japan for providing greater military support to the Philippines and at the US for conducting frequent ship visits and periodic military exercises with the Philippines government – steps seen as encouraging deeper security interaction with Washington and Tokyo in order to counter China. Official Chinese media responded promptly and negatively to the Philippine leaders' disclosure on July 31 that US spy planes were providing Manila with “crucial intelligence” about Chinese vessels in the South China Sea. Chinese officials also strongly urged the US “to refrain from doing anything that could complicate matters” in the maritime disputes; the Chinese government also strongly opposed foreign efforts to expedite the process leading to a CoC in the South China Sea. The Chinese Foreign Ministry did formally condemn and protest a US Senate resolution in late July expressing concerns with Chinese actions regarding maritime disputes including those in the South China Sea.

### **Vietnamese leaders stress stability with China, reach out to the United States**

Vietnam, the other main disputant of Chinese claims in the South China Sea, has followed a more moderate and nuanced path than the Philippines in dealing with China. Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang visited China to meet President Xi Jinping on June 19-21. The summit was the first for the two leaders in their new positions and capped a series of high-level Sino-Vietnamese leadership exchanges during this reporting period that came amid official media reportage emphasizing progress in various interactions while avoiding actions that would worsen disputes over the South China Sea. The lead-up to the Vietnamese president's visit saw the sixth meeting in Beijing on May 11 of the China-Vietnam Steering Committee for Bilateral Cooperation with the Vietnamese delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Thien Nhan and the Chinese delegation led by State Councilor Yang Jiechi. The seventh China-Vietnam consultation on defense and security was held in Beijing on June 3 with the Vietnamese delegation led by a deputy defense minister and the senior Chinese representative being a deputy chief of the general staff of the PLA.

At the Xi-Sang summit, the Chinese leader was forthright in emphasizing the importance of China and Vietnam to “push forward” in seeking a political solution to the South China Sea issue. The Vietnamese president's visit was marked with agreements advancing cooperative demarcation of waters and promoting common development outside the mouth of Beibu Bay,

and pursuing negotiations in such “low-sensitivity” maritime topics as environmental protection, scientific research, rescue work, and disaster relief. On disputes over the South China Sea, both sides agreed to “remain calm” and “to avoid taking action that could complicate or escalate a dispute.” A hotline between the Chinese and Vietnamese navies to help manage incidents in the South China Sea was agreed in the defense talks in early June, while the Xi-Sang summit saw an agreement to establish a hotline to deal with fishing disputes. The cooperative tone and emphasis on stability continued during Foreign Minister Wang Yi’s visit to Vietnam during his travels in Southeast Asia in August.

Against this background, evidence of Vietnamese differences with China tended to be muted. An incident on May 20 in which a Vietnamese fishing boat was surrounded by Chinese boats and rammed by one of them led to a Vietnamese Foreign Ministry protest on May 27; charges were promptly rejected by the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson. An anti-China demonstration in Hanoi on June 2 was suppressed by police who arrested protest leaders. Vietnamese media reported that Vietnamese fishing boats were attacked by crews from a Chinese fishery patrol boat in two instances on July 6 that involved beatings, robbery, and destruction.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung registered concern with China and caused a media stir when one passage of his keynote address at the opening dinner of the Shangri-La Dialogue on May 31 warned without naming China of practices widely associated with China’s recent assertive behavior over maritime territorial disputes. The passage said: “Somewhere in the region, there have emerged preferences for unilateral might, groundless claims and actions that run counter to international law and stem from imposition and power politics.”

Hanoi also seemed to register a need for closer relations with the United States following the summit with the Chinese president. Carlyle Thayer, David Brown, and other specialists noted that President Sang’s summit with President Obama on July 25, the first such Vietnamese visit since 2007, was organized on “very short” notice. The implication was that Hanoi sought closer ties with the US to offset real or anticipated pressures from China.

### **Philippine Coast Guard kills Taiwan fisherman – serious consequences**

A fatal shooting of a Taiwan fisherman took place on May 9 in an area of the South China Sea where Taiwan’s and the Philippines’ 200 mile exclusive economic zones overlap. Initial reports said the Philippine forces opened fire when the Taiwan fishing boat tried to ram a Philippine patrol boat. Taiwan said there was no evidence to support this claim and accused the Filipinos of using excessive force.

As Manila equivocated on responsibility and what to do, Taipei made four demands: an apology, an investigation and punishment of those responsible, compensation for the fisherman’s family, and talks on a fisheries agreement to prevent such incidents. Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou, on May 11, demanded that the Philippines meet Taiwan’s demands or face serious consequences, notably a hiring freeze on Filipino workers in Taiwan. The Ma government imposed sanctions on May 15. They included suspending issuing visas to Filipino workers in Taiwan, issuing a warning for Taiwan residents against travel to the Philippines, suspending high level exchanges, and halting bilateral economic exchanges and various ongoing cooperation agreements. On May

16, the Taiwan Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard made an impressive show of force in exercises near the site of the shooting incident.

Chinese official media fully supported Taiwan's positions. *People's Daily* (Overseas edition) said on May 11 that China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the government's Taiwan Affairs Office both expressed serious concern, demanding that the Philippines "immediately" carry out an investigation and give an explanation. The report said that China's "stern language" and "clear cut demands" showed its concern for the "Taiwan compatriots" and opposition to the Philippine side's "crude handling of maritime issues."

Taiwan-Philippines tensions began to ease somewhat with agreement at the end of May to start parallel investigations by Taiwan and Philippine authorities. The Philippine investigators said in mid-June they had recommended that criminal and administrative charges be pursued against the crew of the Philippine Coast Guard ship. They awaited a final decision from President Aquino. Meanwhile, preliminary bilateral talks on fishing rights reached an agreement on June 15 to avoid the use of force when policing fishing areas to prevent a recurrence of the May 9 incident.

The resolution of the dispute came on Aug. 9 when the head of the Philippine office managing relations with Taiwan was delegated as a presidential emissary to convey President Aquino's personal apology to the dead fisherman's family. Compensation to the fisherman's family came in an agreement on Aug. 7 that was to remain confidential. Taiwan's demands for prosecution of those responsible and talks on a fishery agreement were seen by the Taiwan government as satisfied sufficiently to allow the lifting of the 11 sets of sanctions imposed in May. Media reports indicated that many thousands (estimates were as high as 30,000) Philippine workers in Taiwan had their contracts frozen during the three months of the sanctions; the result impacted Taiwan's hi-tech industries, which rely on Philippine workers with English language proficiency.

### **China-Myanmar relations**

Relations between China and Myanmar saw new developments in the last four months, most prominently with the Chinese government's initiative to encourage its state-owned companies in Myanmar to engage in corporate social responsibility. In June, Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi made an official visit to Nay Pyi Daw and met senior officials to discuss the prospects of agricultural projects and expanding micro-finance loans that would address poverty alleviation issues and support rural development in Myanmar. In particular, Yang called for "enhancing cooperation in people's livelihood," and expressed China's interest in contributing to Myanmar's socio-economic development, providing hospitals and clinics in rural communities.

These latest initiatives may be in response to the growing skepticism and opposition among the general public in Myanmar about the exploitive nature of Chinese mega-projects. The opening of the 500-mile oil and gas pipeline and the deep-sea port near the Bay of Bengal, for example, were met with public protests over the environmental impact of the pipelines and energy plant and the failure of the Chinese companies to provide proper compensation for farmers' land used in the pipeline project. In recent months, grassroots demonstrations and attacks on Chinese conglomerates and buildings in Myanmar have prompted senior Chinese officials to take heed of local concerns. The Chinese special envoy to Myanmar, Wang Yingfan, spoke with several

Chinese state-owned companies about corporate social responsibility issues and embassy officials have also encouraged Chinese enterprises in Myanmar to solicit support from and reach out to the local communities.

## **Chronology of China-Southeast Asia Relations May – August 2013**

**May 1, 2013:** Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi meets Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra on the first leg of his six-day Southeast Asian trip, which will also take him to Indonesia, Singapore, and Brunei. They agree to deepen cooperation in the areas of infrastructure development, education, tourism, and defense.

**May 2, 2013:** Foreign Minister Wang Yi arrives in Jakarta and meets Indonesian counterpart Marty Natalagewa. They agree to maintain high-level exchanges, expand bilateral trade and investment, and strengthen maritime cooperation.

**May 7, 2013:** ASEAN-China Consultative Meeting takes place in Brunei on the sidelines of the Seventh ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting. Chinese Defense Minister Chang Wanquan attends the meetings and discusses expanding ASEAN-China cooperation in the areas of military exchanges, personnel training, and joint exercises.

**May 9, 2013:** Philippine Coast Guard fires on one of four Taiwanese fishing vessels that it claims entered its territorial waters, killing a fisherman. Taiwan demands a formal investigation, apology, compensation, and punishment for those responsible within 72 hours.

**May 10, 2013:** China and Vietnam convene the sixth meeting of the bilateral Cooperation Steering Committee. Topics include expanding trade and economic cooperation, people-to-people exchanges, and increasing coordination and communication on the South China Sea.

**May 10, 2013:** Philippines files a protest with the Chinese Embassy in Manila against China's "provocative and illegal" deployment of a Chinese Navy ship and Maritime Surveillance ships near Second Thomas Shoal.

**May 10, 2013:** Cambodia's National Assembly ratifies a maritime transportation agreement between ASEAN and China that will expand cooperation on passenger and cargo transport. All ASEAN member states except for Indonesia have ratified the agreement.

**May 15, 2013:** Senior commander of the PLA Navy (PLAN) South China Sea Fleet attends the International Maritime Defense Exhibition and Conference in Singapore and calls for increased exchange of information and cooperation on maritime security, including joint patrol operations to counter piracy activities and drug trafficking on the high seas.

**May 15, 2013:** Philippines issues an apology to Taiwan regarding the May 9 fishing boat incident. Taiwan rejects the apology as insincere and implements new sanctions against the Philippines, including a tourist "red alert" and suspension of all Philippine laborer applications.

**May 17, 2013:** Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime sign a memorandum to deepen regional and international cooperation on illicit drug trafficking in the Golden Triangle and the greater Mekong region.

**May 17, 2013:** Local Philippine official tells the media that a civilian boat was chased by a Chinese warship as the boat passed near Second Thomas Shoal.

**May 22, 2013:** Taipei announces that the Taiwan Coast Guard will protect Taiwanese fishing boats from “harassment by the Philippines.”

**May 25, 2013:** PLAN carries out a joint naval exercise in the South China Sea that includes warships, submarines, and the naval air force from North Sea, East Sea, and South Sea fleets.

**May 29, 2013:** ASEAN and China hold eighth joint meeting on the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DoC). They agree to implement the declaration and develop maritime emergency measures.

**May 30, 2013:** Chinese Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry spokespersons join the Chinese ambassador in Manila in condemning the Philippines for grounding an old warship on Second Thomas Shoal in 1999 and continuing to deploy a small contingent of marines there.

**June 4, 2013:** China and Laos agree to deepen bilateral cooperation and expand their comprehensive strategic partnership during a meeting in Beijing between Liu Yunshan, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), and Pany Yathotou, president of the Laotian National Assembly.

**June 7, 2013:** Philippine government protests to the Chinese Embassy about publication of a Chinese map in January with claims to the South China Sea that are strongly opposed by Manila.

**June 13, 2013:** Philippines National Bureau of Investigation announces it will pursue criminal charges against Philippine Coast Guard members for the May 9 death of a Taiwanese fisherman.

**June 19, 2013:** Philippine defense minister says the Philippines deployed a new contingent of marines and new supplies to Second Thomas Shoal – an operation that was not obstructed by Chinese Navy and civilian surveillance ships in the area.

**June 19-20, 2013:** Representatives from ASEAN and China meet in Vietnam for a workshop to strengthen search and rescue coordination in the South China Sea.

**June 19-21, 2013:** Vietnam’s President Truong Tan Sang visits China and meets President Xi Jinping. They agree to establish a maritime hotline to handle fishing disputes in the South China Sea, to implement the DoC, and to hold two joint patrols of the Beibu Gulf later this year.

**June, 21, 2013:** Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson condemns the Philippines continued “illegal occupation” of the disputed Ren’ai reef.

**June 23, 2013:** Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi visits Nay Pyi Daw and meets Vice President Nyan Tun. They reaffirm ties and agree to expand trade, economic, and business activities and cooperation on poverty alleviation programs and agricultural development.

**June 25, 2013:** China and Indonesia sign an anti-graft cooperation memo at conclusion of the fifth seminar of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities. Both sides agree to exchange information, share best practices on handling corruption and money-laundering cases, and carry out capacity-building programs for investigation and prosecutorial skills.

**June 30, 2013:** Chinese and ASEAN foreign ministers announce that they will hold a detailed discussion during the Sixth Senior Officials Meeting in September on the implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and work toward establishing a formal Code of Conduct.

**June 30, 2013:** Overseas edition of *People's Daily* warns Manila of a Chinese “counterstrike” if it continues to provoke Beijing in the South China Sea.

**July 2, 2013:** Sharply worded *Xinhua* commentary criticizes Philippine foreign minister's remarks to the media and challenge to Chinese Foreign Minister Wang during China-ASEAN and ASEAN Regional Forum meetings in Brunei and accuses the US and Japan of establishing closer ties with the Philippines military in this period of tension in Sino-Philippines relations.

**July 9, 2013:** Philippine foreign minister attacks China in a speech in Belgium.

**July 11, 2013:** UN tribunal hearing the Philippines' case against Chinese claims in the South China Sea is convened in The Hague, Netherlands.

**July 12:** Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson rebuffs Philippine foreign minister's charges.

**July 14, 2013:** Planned demonstration in Manila causes Chinese Embassy to close its visa office.

**July 14, 2013:** China's largest search and rescue vessel *Haixun 01* arrives in Jakarta for a port visit and Chinese and Indonesian officials exchange views on future collaboration on joint search and rescue exercises on the high seas.

**July 15, 2013:** Philippine Foreign Ministry spokesperson issues a detailed response to the Chinese spokesperson's charges of July 12.

**July 16, 2013:** Chinese spokesperson responds to Philippine charges of July 15.

**July 24, 2013:** Fan Changlong, vice chair of the Central Military Commission, arrives in Nay Pyi Daw for an official visit and meets Myanmar President Thein Sein and other senior military officials to discuss the continued cooperation and exchanges between the two armed forces.

**July 25, 2013:** Philippine Foreign Ministry spokesperson denounces China's reported decision to arm coast guard vessels to patrol the South China Sea.

**July 25, 2013:** Senior officials of the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of Vietnam meet in Beijing and pledge to enhance communication and high-level exchanges.

**July 28, 2013:** The natural gas portion of the Myanmar-China Oil and Gas Pipeline begins transporting gas to China.

**Aug. 1-6, 2013:** Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi attends China-ASEAN forum and visits Malaysia, Laos, and Vietnam.

**Aug. 5, 2013:** In a meeting in Hanoi, Foreign Minister Wang announces that the envisaged Code of Conduct in the South China Sea is an important development in ASEAN-China relations but cautions that such an agreement should not be rushed and should be implemented gradually on a consensus basis.

**Aug. 7, 2013:** Philippine Justice Department announces that they recommended homicide charges against eight Filipino coastguards for the fatal shooting of a Taiwanese fisherman in disputed waters on May 9. Taiwan welcomes the move as a "constructive response."

**Aug. 14, 2013:** Southeast Asian foreign ministers meet in Hua Hin, Thailand and agree in an informal session on a common position regarding a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea.

**Aug. 19, 2013:** First China-Thailand Strategic Dialogue is held in Bangkok.

**Aug. 23, 2013:** Myanmar's Parliament approves \$100 million of the \$600 million China has offered in loans.

**Aug. 28, 2013:** China requests Philippine President Aquino cancel his visit to the Sept. 3 Nanning Trade Expo and reschedule it for a "more conducive time."

**Aug. 29, 2013:** China and ASEAN foreign ministers meet in Beijing and agree to strengthen their economic relations and upgrade their trade area. The ministers agree to facilitate economic integration through more efficient interconnection of sea, land, and air networks in the region.