

MARITIME STRATEGIC EVALUATION FOR ISRAEL 2017/18

Chief editor: **Prof. Shaul Chorev**

Edited and produced by: **Ehud Gonen**



Asian culture and developments in the South China Sea

Benny Ben Ari

On 12 July 2016, the International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled on the issue of the ongoing conflict in the South China Sea between the Philippines and China, "sent China into a corner" in a state of "loos face" and left its government with two options: to adhere to its position or to accept international law. The ruling was made (in a complaint filed by the Philippine government on January 22, 2013 on the violation of its sovereignty by China in the exclusive economic zone – EEZ) as a unanimous decision of all five members of the Court, based entirely on the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – to reject China claims of sovereignty over most of the territory, the islands and the southern Chinese mainland. China's claim was entirely based on "historical rights" and the "nine dashes line" (NDL).

China, which did not cooperate in the discussions in any way, immediately rejected the ruling, and again announced that it did not recognize the jurisdiction of the tribunal and added that it will take all the means necessary to protect its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights. "

The Chinese also noted in their initial response that the court did not take into account the culture of the East (as long as there was no jurist from Asian state), ignored "basic truths" and "trampled" international laws. At the same time, the Chinese president stressed that China is committed to resolving the dispute. It seems that the Chinese have moderated their position after setting up political and military facts in the South China Sea, and are ready to discuss a "code of conduct" and arrangements that will be a joint document between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations¹ (ASEAN).

The Chinese president responded by saying that China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights will not be affected by the ruling. In rejecting the legality of the ruling, China even claimed that the decision was a political one.

About a year and a half have passed since the ruling of the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the South China Sea dispute, in which all Chinese claims were rejected, and it looks as nothing was changed. Only recently has China changed the basis of its sovereign claims and replaced NDL with a new definition, the "four sandbars". The new definition, introduced on August 28, 2017, is more limited in size and is called "Four Shas" (Chinese: the four sand bars). The claim includes the four disputed island groups: the requirement for sovereignty over the Paratas Islands (controlled by Taiwan), the Paracel Islands (in the sovereignty dispute between China, Taiwan and Vietnam), the Spratly Islands (in the sovereignty dispute between China, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan

1 China vows to protect South China Sea sovereignty, Manila upbeat. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-ruling-stakes-idUSKCN0ZS02U>

and Vietnam) and Macclesfield Bank (in the sovereignty dispute between China and Taiwan).

China is seeking this change to raise again, in what appears to be a more "legal" and "diplomatic" form, the claim that the 'four sand bars' are historically Chinese maritime territory and part of the continental shelf of China and China's exclusive economic zone. Again, there is no presentation of convincing legal arguments or historical evidence to support those demands.



Figure 1 – Chinese line of claim based on the nine dashes line and claims areas for exclusive economic zones of the countries surrounding the South China Sea.

Summary of processes during the conflict, China's position and the situation in the South China Sea

In 2012, China took control of the Scarborough Shoal at the island of Spratly in the exclusive economic waters of the Philippines and prevented Filipino fishermen from fishing in the area. Since 2014, China has been changing the face of the South China Sea, building seven artificial islands based on reefs, coral atolls and small islands. Despite China's claims that there are no military bases, the airports strips, the structures and the positions of weapons systems, which are clearly visible in aerial photographs and satellites images, show otherwise.

China's insistence, including statements made by heads of state at high-level political meetings, that non-military construction is clearly "polite lies" (see below). The President of China Xi, declared during his visit to President Obama at the White House that China will not turn the region into a military zone(he meant and noted the Spratly Islands), it is reasonable to say that the Chinese announcements on the subject are mainly for domestic needs to strengthen the Party's status among the citizens.

In addition to China, four other states – Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei – claim sovereignty over various parts, islands and sand bars in the South China Sea, and Taiwan also claims sovereignty and effectively controls the large island of Taiping in the center of the South China Sea.

Chinese construction is concentrated mainly in the Spratly Islands group in order to demand in due course the economic waters surrounding this group of islands. The whole process is done at a relatively slow pace, according to Confucius' theory: "It does not matter how slow you go as long as you do not stop." Only recently, intelligence sources announced that the construction of the missile posts had ended and that the islands were ready for the placement of the weapons systems. China is not the only country to establish facts on the ground, and at the same time, the situation is complicated by the fact that other countries in the region are also engaged in the construction of artificial islands, including landing strips and weapon posts.²

The conflict has been "active" in a tense atmosphere for several years, but the atmosphere has calmed down in recent years, mainly because of China's assertive policies and behavior with its adversaries. Thus, on August 3, 2015, the Chinese foreign minister announced that China was willing to guarantee and maintain five commitments on the South China Sea conflict: 1) maintaining peace and stability in the region; 2) Resolving peaceful differences of opinion through negotiations and consultations. 3) Control and management of differences of opinion in accordance with the laws and rules. 4) Maintain freedom of navigation, including flights, in the area. 5) Achieving common benefits to the parties through cooperation.

2 China Completes Construction Of New Missile Shelters On Disputed South China Sea Islands. <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-07-01/china-completes-construction-new-missile-shelters-disputed-south-china-sea-islands>

The five commitments were an improvement in the Chinese traditional concept of "double track" announced by China in August 2014, according to which the disputes would be resolved in friendly negotiations only between the countries directly involved in the conflict, and peace and stability in the South China Sea would be maintained by China and ASEAN countries.³

The Nine Dash Line

A series of maps conducted by Persian and Arabian geographers between the 9th and 17th centuries shows that the conflict zones in the South China Sea were under Chinese sovereignty from ancient times.⁴ In contrast, in marine maps drawn by European geographers from 1525 to 1833 Hainan Island is marked as the southernmost part of the Chinese Empire to its dynasties.⁵

After the surrender of Japan in World War II, the Republic of China (Taiwan) took control of several islands and sand bars in the South China Sea under Japanese occupation and declared sovereignty over the South China Sea, the islands and the provinces. In 1947, the area was delineated by a dashed line consisting of 11 dashes from the southern coast of China and Taiwan and south to the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam. With the establishment of Communist China, the government adopted the South China Sea area, but the line of dashes was reduced to nine dashes with the cancellation of two hyphens in Tonkin Bay. This was after the Chinese Communist Party allowed North Vietnam in 1957 to build a radar station and one of the islands in the Parcel Group On the basis of "Comradeship and Brotherhood". While Taiwan holds a military base on the largest island in the Spratly group also the Philippines and Vietnam claim sovereignty over this island.



Figure 2 – The Taiwan Island of Taiping, Distance from Taiwan 1637 km⁶

- 3 Explaining China's New 'Commitments' on the South China Sea. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/09/explaining-chinas-new-commitments-on-the-south-china-sea/?allpages=yes&print=yes>
- 4 China Exclusive: Ancient Persian maps show South China Sea islands part of Chinese territory. <http://english.cctv.com/2016/07/11/ARTIknyvNOK1OxVb1tqnLTMyl60711.shtml>
- 5 The South China Sea Dispute. <http://muriellovelardemap.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SCS-WPS-Dispute-Non-Interactive.pdf>
- 6 South China Sea: Taiwanese lawmakers land on Taiping Island in sovereignty, fishing rights push. <https://www.democraticunderground.com/10141524524>

China, which has joined the Convention on the Law of the Sea since 1996, has never defined the legal meaning of the "nine dashes" line, which extends up to 2,000 kilometers from the southern Chinese coast. Also, no geographic coordinates are defined for the location of the "hyphens" that make up the line, nor how to connect them. Although the Chinese presented maps from the Ming dynasty and other documents in an attempt to prove their claim, but apparently without success, their arguments for rights in the region were "historical rights" and "traditional Chinese fishing grounds"

Aspirations of China

China's interest in both the "economic" areas of the South China Sea and the "marine silk road" is not only economic, as can be seen from the Chinese declarations, and also includes geopolitical and security elements. The importance of the sea lines of communication in the south china sea are also related to the efforts of the Communist Party, the sole control of China, to meet the needs of 1.5 billion people in the provision of food, energy and raw materials for the development of the country, while preserving cultural and historical values, including self-respect, identity and state status. Improvement and success in these three areas: geopolitical, economic and cultural / historical together with the events for several years in the South China Sea are the components of the Chinese strategy to become a major marine power. The third factor, the historical factor was the main basis for the claim of China's sovereignty. But the historical cultural issue has not been taken into account by the United States and other countries, including the International Court, in efforts to find a solution to the crisis.

Chinese navy, missions and naval strategy of China

The Chinese navy has a history of commercial and operational activity for thousands of years. The development of China's naval, military and commercial activities since the 11th century onwards is undoubtedly one of the most important phenomena in the history of Asia, positioning China as the world's largest maritime power.⁷

The modern Chinese navy was established in September 1950 with Soviet help. Navy missions were mainly against Taiwan, both in defense missions and attack capabilities, in parallel to the presence of the US Navy in the East Asia region.

The significant change in the improvement of the navy's status began in 1977 as part of the modernization plan of President Deng Xiaoping (who success Mao Zedong). Deng who understood the importance of the navy, although this role was still limited to the protection of China's shores from an amphibious invasion of the Soviet Union And possibly Taiwan, anti-piracy, smuggling, and illegal immigration.

7 Gernet, J. 1999, A History of Chinese Civilization, Cambridge University Press.

About 20% of the defense budget was devoted to the development of a fleet that grew dramatically. The construction of large vessels, including vessels supporting and assisting open oceans voyages, and the development of nuclear-powered attack Submarines (SSN) and nuclear-powered ballistic missile-carrying submarine (SSBN) began.



Figure 3 – China nuclear-powered attack Submarines (SSN) and nuclear-powered ballistic missile-carrying submarine (SSBN) class 090 and 094⁸



Figure 4 – on the right of the Amphibious Mobile dock (Type 071 Amphibious dock) and on the left a Chinese destroyer Type 052 (Luhu class)



Figure 5 – The first Chinese aircraft carrier Liaoning (CV-16)⁹

- 8 Pictures of vessels from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_active_People%27s_Liberation_Army_Navy_ships
- 9 Analysis: China's New Aircraft Carrier. <https://scout.com/military/warrior/Article/Analysis-Chinas-New-Aircraft-Carrier-101457386>

A study published in November 2017¹⁰ concludes: "Observers believe that efforts to improve and upgrade the Chinese navy are aimed at developing capabilities to counter Taiwan's military position, if necessary, to claim or defend the sovereignty demands in the South China Sea and the East China Sea, and generally to gain a higher level of supervision and control of the South China Sea, to enforce China's position that it has the right to operate militarily 200-mile in the exclusive economic zone, to protect China's commercial sea lines (SLOCs), especially those linking China to the Persian Gulf, to replace the United States' position of influence in the Western Pacific and the position the status of China as a regional power and a leading international force."¹¹

The Chinese fleet is ranked second in the world in term of size, after the United States and before Russia, Britain and Japan. In the fleet serves about 133,000 sailors (in addition to the 35,000 naval personnel of the Navy, some 60,000 Marines, 40,000 Coast Guard personnel and tens of thousands of Marine Militia personnel). The Navy, which has become a fleet of blue waters, is expected to operate and defend along 14,500 kilometers of coastline and protect more than 2030 merchant vessels sailing under Chinese flag, with 714 operational vessels, of which 232 are auxiliary vessels and the others are offensive and defensive vessels.¹²

Although the Navy's main first roles were defensive, the development of a fleet of blue water has necessitated the construction of large vessels, including aircraft carriers, which could operate at longer distances, including airborne capability on board the vessels. This is how the current fleet is being built, which is still in the process of development and numerical strength, including missile systems, modern weapons and advanced command and control systems, utilizing all the latest military technologies. The tasks of the modern Chinese navy are dictated by China's foreign and defense policy, emphasizing the need to become a maritime power, a policy defined by President Hu Jintao (2002-2012):

We need to do more to take interest in the sea, understand the sea, and strategically manage the sea, and continually do more to promote China's efforts to become a maritime power.¹³

One of the tasks of the modern Chinese navy is to cooperate with fleets of other countries and to join international activities both in order to accumulate experience in activities away from the coast of China and to cooperate and study. Since 2008, the Chinese navy has sent a task force consisting of two destroyers carrying missiles and helicopters, a

10 China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities—Background and Issues for Congress, Ronald O'Rourke

11 China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities – Background and Issues for Congress <http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA590423>

12 China Naval Modernization: Implications for U.S. Navy Capabilities – Background and Issues for Congress <http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA590423>

13 The PLA Navy – New Capabilities and Missions for the 21st Century. <http://www.oni.navy.mil/Intelligence-Community/China>

marines force and a supply ship to the Gulf of Aden to take part in naval activities against pirates off the coast of Somalia. The Chinese navy's ships took training and diplomatic trips as far as Britain.

Fishermen and China's Maritime Militia

Most of the attention from the beginning of the conflict in the South China Sea and during it was given to the strategic and military issues and the construction of artificial islands and their equipment. However, a quiet but dangerous fishing war is fought within this conflict and is one of the main elements that led to confrontations and clashes. China is increasing its power and influence in the region by establishing an aggressive fishing fleet operating in full cooperation with the Chinese Navy and the Coast Guard.¹⁴ This is how the fishermen are at the front line of the conflict. The 2015 estimate is that China's fishing fleet includes more than 200,000 boats and ships and provides employment for more than 1.8 million fishermen.



Figure 6 – Chinese fishing vessels departing from the port of Shipu in southern China¹⁵

The realization of the Chinese "aggression" is carried out by the naval militias. China is developing and increasing the "military" role of its fishing fleet, and as of 1949, the "Marine Militia" was established. Fishing vessels armed with light weapons or without weapons are accompanied by navy or coast guard ships for protection and are operating aggressively against fishermen from other countries in the region. Also participating in this militia are research vessels, drilling vessels and other vessels. The activity of the fishing fleets and the marine militia to achieve military objectives, including taking control of islands or sand dunes, is effectively defined as the activity of non-military forces or activities in a "gray area." This type of activity causes difficulties in decision-making and ambiguity about the use of appropriate strategies against this 'gray' military activity. For example, there is a difficulty in distinguishing between an enemy and a friend or a

14 Massive fishing fleet forms sharp edge of china's south china sea expansion. <http://en.asiamaritime.net/massive-fishing-fleet-forms-sharp-edge-of-chinas-south-china-sea-expansion>

15 Fishing boats set out to fish from the Shipu harbour after the fishing moratorium ended in Xiangshan county, Ningbo city in east China's Zhejiang province. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picturegalleries/picturesoftheday/11869968/Pictures-of-the-day-17-September-2015.html?frame=3442965>

neutral player, and there is the danger of showing aggression if the US, for example, uses military means against non-military targets. The options available to the US Navy are very few in the 'gray area', as Barry Maryland of the US Coast Guard noted:

It's too painful to admit that the United States allowed China to seize sovereign maritime rights from a U.S. ally while we did nothing about it. It was an armed robbery in broad daylight, but 'gray zone operation' sounds much better.¹⁶



Figure 7 – A collisions between a Vietnamese ship and a Chinese ship in the "gray zone" and a water cannon battle between a Chinese coast guard ship and a Vietnamese ship.¹⁷



Figure 8 – The Chinese marine militia, based on fishing vessels and fishermen and trained by the Chinese navy.¹⁸

16 China's Maritime Operation: The 'Gray Zone' in Black and White. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/chinas-maritime-operation-the-gray-zone-in-black-and-white>

17 ASYMMETRIC MARITIME DIPLOMACY: INVOLVING COASTGUARDS, MARITIME MILITIAS IN CHINA DEALINGS. <http://cimsec.org/asymmetric-diplomacy-time-maritime-nations-involve-coastguards-maritime-militias-dealings-china/23842>

18 China's Uniformed, Navy-Trained Fishing "Militia". <https://www.maritime-executive.com/editorials/chinas-uniformed-navy-trained-maritime-militia>

Asian Culture and Traditional Cultural Value System in China Reflecting in Chinese politics

In light of the conclusion of the 19th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party on Oct. 24, 2017, in which the main consideration of President Xi's thoughts on "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era"¹⁹ was reaffirmed that Chinese cultural values and traditions are a structured part of the concept Chinese policy, since Mao Zedong's communist teachings.

China's foreign policy, and at the same time domestic policy, rely heavily on Chinese culture, with the main intention of returning China to its heyday. Thus, the administration's (almost always) conduct of decision-making and policymaking continues to be clearly influenced by China's cultural and historical values. Today, this clear trend is also part of the Chinese Communist Party's constitution,²⁰ and so is the administration of the conflict in the South China Sea.

In Chinese diplomatic history, there are many cases of ambiguity and vagueness in Chinese government statements and policies (typical of Far East culture in countries other than China, including permitting the use of "white lies" or "polite lies"). The same ambiguity has led to a large part of China's population, especially since the 1970s, convinced that the areas within the "nine dashes" line are areas of Chinese sovereignty.

For thousands of years, the culture and decision-making process in China in particular, and in the Far Eastern countries in general, have been based on Asian religions and Confucian doctrines, Sun Chu and other philosophies. The conduct based on this culture is realized and reflected in both routine and business, political and diplomatic life. China's conduct in the conflict is based, among other things, on Sun Cho's statement from the art of war. "The greatest art of war is to weaken the enemy without a fight".²¹

Confucius's writings served as a model of Chinese rule until communism came in the middle of the twentieth century. After the end of Mao Zedong's reign, Confucius returned to China in a new and "modern" structure. With the retreat of the Chinese nation from Mao's communism, the new Confucianism provided a convincing solution to the partial adoption of Western liberalism so that China could integrate into the global economy, for example, in the form of a partially free market. However, the basic principles of the hierarchy in the various relationships, the decision-making process, respect and proper behavior remain within the cultural values of harmony, generosity, justice, honor, wisdom,

19 Full text of resolution on amendment to CPC Constitution. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c_136702726.htm

20 China Focus: Xi's thought enshrined in CPC Constitution. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-10/24/c_136702802.htm

21 The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting <https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/s/suntzu383158.html>

trustworthiness, and respect for the fathers. "Traditional Chinese thought emphasizes harmony, balance, compromise and perfection, stability and the maintenance of the existing order." Thus, the Chinese system of values today includes three components: the traditional value system ("modern Confucianism") – the "existing"; the socialist system of values (communism) – the "ruling"; And the Western value system is often considered as a "Status". Generally speaking, the elements of tradition and culture are part of the conceptual conception of Chinese communism that opposites, contradictions and conflicts will prevail forever and anytime, and there is a need for harmony and balance.

Traditional cultural values are embodied in Chinese diplomacy within the framework of harmony. Issues of preferring negotiations (but avoiding "give and take"), dialogues, compromise and consensus in decision-making are also rooted in the religious outlook (especially Buddhism), which calls for patience and an aspiration to avoid conflict. The rules of courtesy and respect are binding, and a real effort is made to avoid causing a "loss face" or to publicly embarrass even those in dispute. In the Code of Business and Diplomatic Conduct it is even permissible to lie "Polite Lies" that do not cause "loss face", and in some cases are even accepted and expected, and are therefore used. These behavior characteristics lead to a demonstration of patience and solutions to issues of discussion or dispute may take a long time. The processes themselves are also carried out in stages and in measured steps.

Position and activity by in the United States

For a long time, since the beginning of Chinese activities in the takeover of the South China Sea, the Obama administration has been passive in its position and concentrated mainly on diplomatic protests. Since October 2015, US Navy patrols in the region have been conducted in the form of a FONOP – Freedom of navigation operation. But the US Navy did not take any active action to prevent the movement of ships of the Chinese navy.

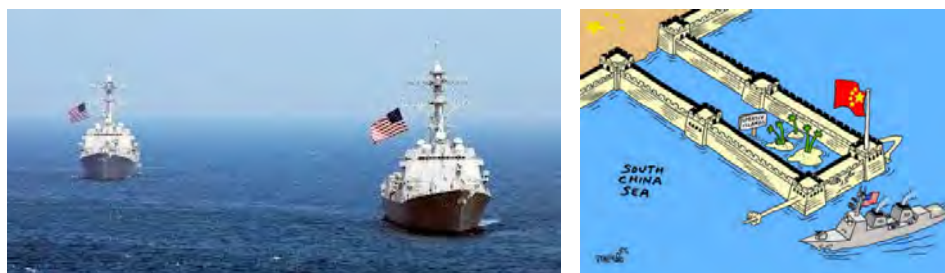


Figure 9 – Freedom of navigation operation – the only operational activity of the US Navy in recent years in regards to the conflict

Admiral Harry B Harris, who was commander of the US Army's Pacific Command, said that the patrols were not planned as military threat operations, but were intended to

protect the rights, freedom, and legality of the use of seas and airspace by all states in accordance with international law, So the FONOP in the disputed areas are being carried out because China's demands for sovereignty are illegal, and this is in stark contrast to previous statements and the US position in the dispute that it does not take sides or express a position on China's sovereignty claims.²²

The effectiveness and importance of the FONOP are also controversial regarding their purpose, how they are performed and how they are reported. In some cases they are defined by observers and commentators as provocation. The FONOP considers, for better or worse, the 12 mile area of the islands that the Chinese have declared as sovereign waters surrounding the islands. The Chinese, for their part, condemn the tours (once every few months) in harsh language and also claim that the FONOP damage the strategic understanding between China and the US.

The main conclusion of Asian countries, including China, from the nature of the US activity and the accompanying statements is the US is deploying "cannon ships diplomacy."

The China Daily newspaper referred to the conflicting statements made by Secretary of Defense and State Secretary in the Trump's administration: "Such comments are not as serious as they are a mish-mash of naivety, shortsightedness, eroded prejudice and unreal political fantasie ... The comments of the Secretary of State undoubtedly attest to the lack of understanding of the Asian culture and still diminish the status and capabilities of China".²³ The words of the Trump administration are defined as "speaking first and perhaps thinking later" in contrast to Confucius' position: "The exalted man acts before he speaks, and then speaks in accordance with his actions." As the Chinese have done in recent years.

During the November 9, 2017 Chinese President's visit to the US, the subject of the conflict and China's activities in the South China Sea was raised as a secondary issue in comparison to the crisis with North Korea. According to reports, there was honest exchange of views on the subject,²⁴ but apparently did not reach any agreement, and the position of the United States remained the same, namely, the demand for absolute freedom of navigation in accordance with international law (which actually exists), the cessation of construction on the artificial islands, and the searching for diplomatic negotiation in order to find a peaceful solution.

22 The Hypocrisy of US Freedom of Navigation Operations in the South China Sea. <https://thediomat.com/2015/11/the-hypocrisy-of-us-freedom-of-navigation-operations-in-the-south-china-sea/?allpages=yes&print=yes>

23 Tillerson's animosity toward China bodes ill if acted upon. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2017-01/13/content_27941924.htm

24 <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-trump-asia-china-southchinasea/u-s-has-frank-exchange-on-south-china-sea-during-trump-visit-idUSKBN1D910E?il=0>

At the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Conference in Manila in August 2017, the atmosphere toward China was very comfortable and "diplomatic," without any criticism of China's armaments the islands and its ongoing efforts to occupy, reclaim and expand its control in the region. Philippine President Duterte, who led a very moderate line, has prevented harsh criticism or disagreements. The result is that ASEAN is becoming virtually irrelevant to its impact on the situation, discussions and results on security in the region, and with the passage of time, ASEAN is becoming a second violin for China, instead of leading the fight for the rights of its countries in the region.^{25,26}

The demand of the four sand bars

Since the conflict began, China has achieved all its goals and has not withdrawn from any activity or position, despite the court's ruling in The Hague and the continued pressure and talks with the countries of the region and the US Navy's FONOP policy. Violates international law, takes control of islands and territories belonging legally to other countries, seams islands and lands, and establishes seven artificial islands on the ground and continues to arm them with anti-aircraft systems and anti-ship missiles, including control and communication systems, contrary to the promises of its leaders.

China recently changed the basis of sovereignty claims and replaced the "nine dashes" line with a new definition, the "four sandbars," to advance its territorial claims. So far, no practical or official responses have been received from anyone to the change China's position.

China's new legal justifications, which ostensibly support the demand for sovereignty, are no better or more persuasive than the arguments that were supposed to support the legality of the "nine dashes" line. Some scholars argue that the arguments are even weaker and clearly violate the UNCLOS Convention. The claim that these island groups belong to China was already published by it in 1992 within the framework of the law defining territorial waters and again in 2016 in white paper that disagrees with the Philippines' demands in the arbitration process and defines China as the sovereign "based on the internal waters of the four groups (S4), Territorial waters, the contiguous zone, the EEZ and the continental shelf [...] ". But despite the weaknesses of the new tactic, which replaces the "nine dashes line ", China is able to achieve several advantages for the continuation of the process and possible future negotiations. The demand based on the "dashes line" is unique and no state has claimed sovereignty on a historical basis, and therefore this approach is unacceptable. On the other hand, the use of the "law of the sea" and the use of UNCLOS terms, such as determining water areas around the islands, are more acceptable and may reduce international criticism.

25 World's eyes on Manila: What happened at ASEAN meetings? <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/08/09/1726110/worlds-eyes-manila-what-happened-asean-meetings>

26 Beijing's Asean diplomatic coup. <http://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/beijings-asean-diplomatic-coup>

The chance that China will enter into "give and take" negotiations is probably very low, since it is not part of Chinese tradition and culture of management. And the facts so far prove that the opponents will continue to complain and protest, including FONOP, and China will continue to do as it wishes, while China is gaining time and stabilizing the facts on the ground.



Figure 10 – A new definition of China's sovereign claims in the South China Sea – "The Four Sand bars"²⁷

Summary

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi warned at a press conference in Australia that "both sides, China and the United States, will lose from a military confrontation in the South China Sea, and both sides cannot afford it." He said China would continue its efforts to resolve differences by diplomatic means.

The basis of US policy in the South China Sea is support and backing for international law and the principle of freedom of navigation and in the sea (and airspace). China has claimed that it supports the freedom of navigation as well, but makes a distinction, mainly in the South China Sea, between ships and civilian aircraft and military vessels and aircraft.

²⁷ Beijing Adopts New Tactic for S. China Sea Claims. <http://freebeacon.com/national-security/beijing-adopts-new-tactic-s-china-sea-claims>

The agreements reached by the President of the Philippines with China, both economic and the return of Filipino fishermen to the fishing areas from which they were expelled by the Chinese, actually lifted the wind from the sails of the prosecution and the verdict. If the Philippines gave up, why should the Americans fight to evacuate the Chinese and even use military force to do so? The Chinese artificial islands have no military chance of confronting American forces, so it is highly doubtful whether the Chinese will indeed fight and try to protect them. Therefore, perhaps it is correct to conclude that the activity in the South China Sea is intended mainly for domestic purposes in China, to preserve and strengthen the Party's standing and authority vis-a-vis the citizens, in the spirit of the Asian culture and the system of government in China, and of course to be part of the overall maritime strategy for the benefit of the economy and trade, And in particular to maintain open and protected waterways for the supply of food and raw materials to a billion and a half citizens. Another reason for China's position and increasing its activity is the desire to complete the construction and arming of the islands as part of the Chinese strategy of anti-access area denial (A2 / AD).

In addition to its aggressive activities in the construction of the islands and its attempts to control the South China Sea, China maintains diplomatic and economic ties with all the countries in the region and is particularly concerned with developing relations and dependence with countries directly related to the conflict, including the sale and supply of arms and vessels.

China's activities in building and arming the islands, ASEAN conferences in recent years, the China Maritime Silk Road Initiative, agreeing to begin discussions on codes of conduct, China's new vision and the fact that China is "managing" the countries involved in the conflict, including the reduced importance of the issue and extensive economic and military assistance to various countries in the region – all of these factors actually determined China's success in freezing the situation and not requiring any changes or return. There is no doubt that China's policy, based on thousands of years of culture, has shown absolute superiority over the policies led by the United States in the region. And so we can conclude that the same policy will actually make the decisions making proses to stretch and the situation in the South China Sea is not likely to change soon.

Epilogue

Recently, a new reason has been created to increase tension between China and its neighbors to the west, with the publication of a new world map by the Chinese Ministry of Education which marked the "251 dashes line" in the Pacific Ocean, from Asia to the North and South American continents. According to this line, China appears to include the islands of Hawaii and Micronesia, and many other islands in the Pacific under its territory. The Chinese Ministry of Education has instructed the use of this map, which he claims is backed by documents from the Qing Dynasty, the last imperial dynasty of 1644–1911

And as Confucius said: " Study the past, if you would divine the future".



Figure 11 – The "251-dashes" line ²⁸

²⁸ <https://www.elitereaders.com/china-claims-hawaii-micronesia-new-map>