

A serious incident, which may not be unanswered

Since May 2nd 2014 serious encounters took place near the small Triton Island, part of the Paracel-Archipelago in so-called South China Sea, in Vietnam known as East Sea. A Chinese oil rig appeared together with about fifty ships. This Zone is part of the exploration area in district number 143 and officially located in the exclusive economic zone directly on the continental plateau of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. During incidents Vietnamese vessels were piled. People got injured as a result of this action and the use of water cannons.

Considering the current escalation we have to convey our sorrow of renewed conflicts between the People's Republic of China and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam again. Disagreements about the accurate definition of territories and sovereignty about the Paracel and Spratley islands cannot be solved by provocations, acts of violence and creation of accomplished facts.

International law has absolute priority over those conflicts. In case of boundary disputes the historical Sovereignty is decisive, which is based on state territories agreed in the past. For territorial waters also apply the principles, rules and suggestions of the „United Nations' Convention on the Law of the Sea“(UNCLOS) fixed in 1982 on the Conference in Montego Bay, ratified by China and Vietnam as well. China clearly violates international law concerning this point and puts under pressure its neighbours to implement its own position. This is unacceptable, especially for Vietnam: China questions a long practiced cooperativeness and violates agreements it has concluded with ASEAN states, particularly the „Declaration of Conduct“ (DOC) from 2002 that should implement a fair de-escalation of conflicts.

We appeal to the governance of China,

- to recall the oil rig HD-981 and the flotilla of ships trespassing Vietnamese sovereign territory immediately,
- to omit activities that intend the creation of accomplished facts by force and,
- to perform appointed commitments from 2002 which means to change behaviour and contribute to a fair regulation of conflicts.

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Association d'Amiteé Franco-Vietnamienne
Britain-Vietnam Friendship Society
Freundschaftsgesellschaft Vietnam (Germany)
Deutsch-Vietnamesische Gesellschaft (Berlin)
Swiss-Vietnam Friendship Association
Swedish Committee for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia
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