

MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Washington, DC
July 15, 2016

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THE NEXT ACT IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN WATERS

The [arbitration decision](#) released on July 12 regarding the maritime dispute between the Philippines and China marks the end of the beginning of a tense maritime drama. The ruling nullifies China's historic rights within the nine-dash line, and affirms the Philippines' claim to an exclusive economic zone stretching to a full extent of 200-nm into the disputed Spratly Islands. The regional reactions to the award provides an early insight into how the next act will play out.

For a series of short expert commentaries on this evolving discussion, check out [Voices | Maritime Awareness Project \(MAP\)](#).

KEY QUOTES

Outcome

“The tribunal’s award overwhelmingly favors the Philippines—a huge win for Manila. . . . The key question will be how China, and how others, especially the Philippines, responds.”

- **M. Taylor Fravel**, Maritime Awareness Project

China

“China faces a critical juncture. How it reacts will indicate its level of commitment to the peaceful and cooperative resolution of contentious disputes. . . . China’s actions in the South China Sea, along with its tougher treatment of international businesses in China and worldwide economic espionage, have all raised doubts about its commitment to the international system from which it has benefited for decades.”

- **Adm. (ret.) Dennis Blair**, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

Philippines

“There is a general understanding in the Duterte administration of the strong need to repair damaged political ties with China. . . . President Duterte is now counting on China’s goodwill.”

- **Rommel C. Banlaoi**, Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research

ASEAN

“No ASEAN member, including the Philippines, wants to enrage a bruised China further by calling on it to comply with the ruling.”

- **Ian J. Storey**, ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute

United States

"U.S. policy challenges after the award are significant. How to reassure allies and partners with America's enduring commitment to the region without giving China a pretext to overreact requires a deft mix of diplomacy and military presence. CNO Admiral Richardson's visit to Beijing on July 17 provides an early opportunity to continue that process."

- **Roy Kamphausen**, The National Bureau of Asian Research

INTERVIEWS

To facilitate an interview with the experts above or on the [MAP international expert panel](#), please contact Dan Aum, Associate Director for Government and Media Relations, at media@nbr.org or (202) 347-9767.

Rommel Banlaoi, Director of the Center for Intelligence and National Security Studies, Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research

Ja Ian Chong, Assistant Professor, National University of Singapore

Mikkal Herberg, Research Director of the Energy Security Program, The National Bureau of Asian Research

Nong Hong, Executive Director, Institute for China-America Studies

James Kraska, Howard S. Levie Professor of International Law, U.S. Naval War College

Tabitha Mallory, Fellow, The National Bureau of Asian Research

James Manicom, Independent Scholar

Rory Medcalf, Head of the National Security College, Australian National University

Shafiah Muhibat, Chief Editor, Indonesian Quarterly

Justin Nankivell, Associate Dean for Academics, Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

Kerry Lynn Nankivell, Associate Professor, Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies

Hong Thao Nguyen, Professor of International Law, Diplomacy Academy of Vietnam

Sumathy Permal, Senior Researcher, Maritime Institute of Malaysia

Ryo Sahashi, Associate Professor of International Politics, Kanagawa University

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