

# The 10th South China Sea International Conference: Cooperation for Regional Security and Development

The 10th International Conference on the South China Sea hosted by the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV), the Foundation for East Sea Studies (FESS) and the Vietnam Lawyers' Association (VLA) took place in Da Nang on 8-9 November, 2018.

On 8-9 November 2018, in Da Nang City, the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV), the Foundation for East Sea Studies (FESS) and the Vietnam Lawyers' Association (VLA) co-organized the 10th International Conference on the South China Sea themed "Cooperation for Regional Security and Development". This year's conference attended by more than 200 participants, bringing together many of the world's leading experts in the field. Marking the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inauguration of the Initiative, this year's conference moved beyond an annual review to take stock of transformations in the South China Sea across many sectors over the last decade.

Below is the detailed programme of the Conference with video for each session and links to panelists' presentations:

## PROGRAMME

| OPENING SESSION |  |
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- **Opening Remarks by Assoc. Prof. Vu Tung**, President of the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam
- **Welcome Remarks by Mr. Ho Ky Minh**, Member of the Standing Board of Da Nang Municipal Communist Party Committee, Vice Chairman of Da Nang People's Committee
- **Keynote Address by Lordship Kriangsak Kittichairasee**, Judge, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

## ***SESSION 1: South China Sea: Heart of Indo-Asia-Pacific Region***

**Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Nguyen Vu Tung**, *President of the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam*



The last decade witnessed the rise and confidence of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, which have a significant role in transforming the 21<sup>st</sup> century's Asia-Pacific international politics. Lying as a link between the Pacific and Indian oceans and the transiting point between the Asian landmass and the Indo-Pacific maritime theater, the South China Sea has seemingly been a fault line for the tectonic changes across the broader region.



this backdrop, this session looks into the geopolitical arena of the Indo-Asia-Pacific and trace down how significant the South China Sea competing geopolitical strategies. It also explores how South China Sea developments have interplayed with those in the East China Sea, Indian and Pacific and transformed regional geopolitical seascape.

### ***Speakers:***

- **Capt. (Dr) Gurpreet S Khurana**, Ex-Director, National Maritime Foundation ([Click for presentation](#))  
***“South China Sea: Geopolitical Connectedness to the Indian Ocean”***
- **Ms. Cleo Paskal**, Associate Fellow, Environment and Resources Department, Asia-Pacific Programme, Chatham House  
***“Island Chain Defense and South China Sea”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Mr. Michael Shoebridge**, Director of Defence & Strategy Program, and **Dr. Le Thu**, Senior Analyst, Australian Strategic Studies Institute

Policy Institute (ASPI), Australia

***“South China Sea in the Indo-Pacific Concept”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

- **Dr. Lee Jaehyon**, Director of the Center for ASEAN and Oceania Studies, ASAN Institute of Policy Studies, South Korea  
***“Maritime Disputes in the East/South China Seas and Nationalism”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

## ***SESSION 2: South China Sea in Spotlight: 10-Year Recap***

**Moderator: Ms. Cleo Paskal**, Associate Fellow, Energy, Environment and Resources Department and Asia-Pacific Programme, Chatham House



This session compares the state of affairs in the South China Sea today with those ten years ago. It is designed to draw up endurances and changes on the ground, in the assessments of different governments and in relations among claimants and other states concerned over related issues. It also explores different historiographies and narratives to identify similarities and gaps in mentalities, perceptions and interpretations, which then distorted reality and complicated the cycle of actions and reactions. Following ups and downs in the tension in the region.





panelists are required to identify major drivers behind those factual and mental changes.

***Speakers:***

- **Dr. Feng Zhang**, Fellow, Department of International Relations, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, Australia National University  
***“China’s Long March at Sea: Explaining Beijing’s South China Sea Strategy from 2009 to 2016”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Mr. Conor Cronin**, Research Associate, Maritime Transparency Initiative, Center for Strategic and International Studies, USA  
***“Obama, Trump, and the South China Sea: Navigating the Differences and the Ten Years”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Dr. Stein Tønnesson**, Research Professor, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway  
***“The Ten-Year Crisis in the South China Sea and How to End It”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Dr. Nguyen Hung Son**, Head, Bien Dong

Institute for Maritime Studies, Diplomatic Academy of Viet Nam, Viet Nam  
***“ASEAN and the South China Sea: the Last 10 years: Perception and Changes”***

***SESSION 3: Evolving Claims and Positions over the South China Sea Continuities and Changes***

**Moderator: Prof. Robert Beckman**, Head of Ocean Law and Policy Program, Centre for International Law, the National University of Singapore, Singapore



The session provides an updated assessment of developments with regard to concerned countries' positions and claims over the period in question. Panelists are required to dig in their heels, review countries' official statements and legislative acts, and map out continuities and changes in their application and interpretation of the law of the sea. As usual, factors figuring significantly in the firmness or flexibility are central to understanding countries' outlook and approach to the oceanic legal order. The claimant's response to the historic arbitral ruling of the case between the Philippines and China on July 12, 2017, is of particular interest as they provide food for thought on how rewarding legal actions would have been.



states' behavior.

### ***Speakers:***

- **Dr. Nong Hong**, Executive Director & Fellow, Institute for China - America Studies (ICAS), China

***“China’s Claims and Positions over the South China Sea: Continuities and Adaptions”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

- **Prof. Jay Batongbacal**, Director, Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, University of the Philippines, Philippines

***“A Forked Road: Change and Continuity in Philippine Law And Policy On The South China Sea”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

- **Ms. Jalila bt. Abdul Jalil**, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for the Straits of Malacca, Maritime Institute of Malaysia, Malaysia

***“Malaysia’s Claims and Positions over the South China Sea Features in the South China Sea”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

- **Assoc. Prof. Chi-ting Tsai**, Department of Political Science, National Taiwan University, Chinese Taipei  
***“Continuities and Evolution of Taiwan’s South China Sea Policy”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Ms. Nguyen Thanh Ha**, Vice Secretary General of the Viet Nam Society of International Law, Viet Nam  
***“Viet Nam’s Claims and Positions relating to the South China Sea as Developed in the last 10 Years”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

#### ***SESSION 4: Major Powers: Engagements or Disengagements?***

**Moderator: Dr. Nong Hong**, Executive Director & Senior Fellow, Institute for China America Studies (ICAS), China



The South China Sea is a body of waters of great importance as it straddles important Sea Lines of Communication. There exists an argument that the powers' naval presence and activeness in the region has prompted regional militarization and insecurity. Another genre of reasoning is that their involvement in regional affairs are attributed to anxieties over their own security.





potential impediments to freedom of navigation overflight as well as the existential challenge to the current legal. This session takes stock of major powers' positions over and policies to the South China Sea and explores the dynamic rationality behind these changes.

### ***Speakers:***

- **Dr. Patrick Cronin**, Centre for a New American Security, USA  
***“Averting a Major-Power Cold War in the South China Sea”***
- **Dr. Christopher Roberts**, Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra, Australia  
***“Australia’s South China Sea Dilemma: From Multifaceted Interests To Rapprochement: Evolving Policy Approaches”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Mr. Bonji Ohara**, Senior Fellow, International Peace and Security Department, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Japan  
***“Major Powers: Engagements or Disengagements?”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

- **Dr. Felix Heiduk**, Senior Associate, A Division, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Germany  
***“European Powers and the South Sea”***
- **Mr. Anton Tsvetov**, Project Lead at the Center for Strategic Research, Russia  
***“Russia’s Policy Towards the South Sea: Drivers and Limitations”***

## DAY 2

**Thursday - November 8, 2018**

### ***SESSION 5: Force Build-up in the South China Sea***

**Moderator: Prof. Carlyle Thayer**, University of New South Wales at the Australian Defense Force Academy, Australia



This session is devoted to discuss shifts in the of power and measure the risks for armed c the South China Sea. After a decade from Im Incident in 2009, the sea is more congested deployment of greater number of naval assets, law enforcement ships, militia flot different types of autonomous mediums. The and Paracels have been turned into fortres logistic centers, radar facilities and co



platforms. The panelists are tasked with evaluating different maritime capability components to gain competitive edges among different rival states, their strategic thoughts and strategies, and the potential for confrontations and conflicts.

### ***Speakers:***

- ***Mr. Derek Grossman***, Senior Defense Analyst, RAND Corporation, USA  
***“Overview of Military Force Build-up in the South China Sea”***
- ***Prof. You Ji***, Head of Department of Government and Public Administration, University of Macau, China  
***“Cooling Down the Spratly Dispute: Force Building Down and Confidence Building Up”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- ***Dr. Ha Anh Tuan***, Assistant Director, Diplomatic Academy of Viet Nam, Viet Nam  
***“Force Build-up in the South China Sea: Will Grey-Zone Strategy Paint a Better Future?”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

- **Dr. Swee Lean Colin Koh**, Research Fellow, Maritime Security Programme, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore  
***“Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance in the South China Sea”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))

## ***SESSION 6: Confidence Building, Preventive Diplomacy, and Dispute Resolution***

**Moderator: Mr. Robert Harris**, Assistant Legal Adviser for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, United States Department of State



This panel is designed to review the progress of confidence building, preventive diplomacy and dispute resolution efforts in the South China Sea. Despite simmering tensions over the last decade, some positive developments took place, including agreeing on the framework, ASEAN and China's substantive negotiation on the code of conduct in early 2018. The two sides already put in place guidelines for emergency and discussed the extent of the application of CUEs to the coast guard. The joint development and maritime delimitation are underway between different parties. Against this backdrop, panelists are tasked with taking





the most significant processes, probing the  
and stumbling blocks, and discussing their pro

### ***Speakers:***

- **Prof. Carlyle Thayer**, University of New South Wales at the Australian Defense Academy, Australia  
***“From Confidence Building, Preventing Escalation, Diplomacy and Dispute Resolution to ASEAN-China South China Sea Cooperation and Good Conduct”*** ([Click for Presentation](#))
- **Lieutenant General Nguyen Quang**  
Former Commander of the Viet Nam Coast Guard, Viet Nam  
***“Crisis Management at Sea”***
- **Dr. Jacqueline Joyce F. Espenilla**, I  
for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Se  
University of the Philippines, Philippine  
***“The Next Step for the Philippines  
China: Understanding the Hard Realities  
and Promising Possibilities of Joint  
Resource Development”*** ([Click for](#)

### Presentation)

- **H.E. Ambassador Pou Sothirak**, Ex-  
Director of the Cambodian Institute for  
Cooperation and Peace, Cambodia  
***“Confidence Building and Preventive  
Diplomacy in the South China Sea  
region”***

## ***SESSION 7: Emerging Disrupters to Maritime Order in the South China Sea*** ***Moderator: Dr. Stein Tønnesson, Research Professor, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway***



The session deals with newly arising problems that have the potential of disrupting the order in the South China Sea. Technological and scientific advances have not only opened up new frontiers of competition, such as cyber space or deep-sea mining, but also blurred the boundary between civil and military and between man and nature. Climate change and marine environmental degradation caused by destructive human activities are also of great magnitude, which would pose significant disruption to marine ecology with severe consequences for coastal communities and their economic activities. Denial and non-compliance may also



reciprocal outlawed responses, which systematically crack legal order at sea.

### ***Speakers:***

- **Dr. Shafiah Muhibat**, Head of Department of International Relations, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Indonesia  
***“Competition over Fishing Resources in the South China Sea”***

***“Force and Coercion in the South China Sea: Why does it matter in International Law?”***  
([for Presentation](#))

- **Prof. Raul "Pete" Pedrozo**, non-resident fellow, the Stockton Centre for the Study of International Law, US Naval War College  
***“Employment of Marine Unmanned Vehicles in the South China Sea”***  
([Presentation](#))

- **Prof. Robert Beckman**, Head of Ocean and Policy Programme, Centre for International Law, the National University of Singapore, Singapore

***“Non-compliance and Integrity of  
Maritime Legal Order”*** ([Click for  
Presentation](#))

***SESSION 8: Order and  
Disorder in the SCS: Recap  
and Forward***

**Moderator: H.E. Ambassador  
Le Cong Phung, Vice  
Chairman, The Foundation for  
East Sea Studies (FESS)**



The rule-based order in the South China Sea is facing a serious challenge. It can be replaced by a system based on power hierarchy, or a kind of order based on right and might, or even disarray. Which type of order would bring greater security, peace, and sustainability for the region? The session provides a ground for discussion on the nature of the transformations in the last decade and the prospect for peace and stability in the South China Sea in the decade to come. It is also tasked to draw lessons for improving management and regulation of the South China Sea for the sake of regional peace and prosperity.

- **Prof. Carlyle Thayer**, University of New South Wales at the Australian Defense



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|  | <p>Academy, Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dr. Feng Zhang</b>, Fellow, Department of International Relations, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australia National University</li> <li>• <b>Prof. Jay Batongbacal</b>, Director, Institute of Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea, University of the Philippines, Philippines</li> <li>• <b>Prof. Robert Beckman</b>, Head of Ocean Policy and Policy Programme, Centre for International Law, the National University of Singapore, Singapore</li> <li>• <b>Dr. Do Thanh Hai</b>, Assistant Director General, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, Viet Nam</li> </ul> |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Closing Remarks by Assoc. Prof. Nguyen Vu Tung</b>, President of the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |