

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL



NMMUN

INTRODUCTION:

Greetings Delegates!

It is our honour and pleasure to virtually welcome you all to the United Nations Security Council at the New Millennium Model United Nations Conference 2021-22. We are Aafreen Mohammed and Sai Karra, your Chairs, who are more than ecstatic to have you in our council. We will be there to guide and assist you throughout the course of your preparations and the council session itself.

However, we do expect you to thoroughly go through this guide so as to gain a general overview of the council you have been allocated to, as well as the issue to be debated upon. The agenda of the committee is very specific, hence requiring in-depth research from your side on all aspects of the issue that have been mentioned in this guide.

The objective of the guide is to give you a basic idea of what the issue at hand is and assist you in your research for the topics that will be debated upon in the committee session. Keep in mind, this guide is only to *facilitate* you and that it is your responsibility as delegates to find as much information as possible on the issue at hand and your country's stance on the matter. We suggest you start your research as early as possible and think about the topic in a pragmatic and holistic sense.

Since the conference will be held virtually this time, there will be only one topic which will be debated upon. We understand the anxiety some of you would be facing in light of the event being virtual, but just know that we will constantly be here to make sure your experience is enjoyable and fruitful.

As Chairs who were once delegates, we also realize that for a lot of the first-timer delegates this experience will be nerve-racking, but at the same time, you must keep in mind that this journey is a learning experience for everyone. You must make best use of this opportunity and understand as much as you can about the working and structure of a Model United Nations Conference. We guarantee that you will gain the skills of diplomacy and extempore speech and see yourself become more aware of the world you live in, with each passing MUN.

It is imperative you take into consideration that as delegates, the course of the council, its zest and pertinence are in your hands. As Chairs, we are there only to guide the debate, not be a part of it. The spirit of the United Nations and the art of diplomacy in a council can only be brought to justice when the Rules of Procedure are followed. So, we expect all of you to be well-versed in the same and follow it with the utmost diligence.

We sincerely hope you find this Background Guide helpful as an introduction to the topic of the committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We strongly encourage you

to analyse your Member State's policies and stances on the issue rigorously, enabling you to debate with valid points and confidence.

In addition, we would like you to keep your mindset open and request you to not limit your research to the areas highlighted in this guide.

We look forward to meeting you all virtually and making sure the conference is beneficial, enjoyable and packed with quality debate and great learning opportunities for everyone!

Best Wishes,

Aafreen Mohammed & Sai Karra

Chairs - United Nations Security Council

RESEARCH AND PREPARATION BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

While researching the issue at hand and particularly your country's stance on it, we advise you to gather information from as many credible sources or sites as possible. However, official United Nations sites and other government websites to look into your country's stance are more reliable. Do keep in mind that when you

are in a MUN conference, you are not giving your personal thoughts on the issue, but what your country's stance is.

Before the conference, every Delegate must be well-versed in all the aspects relevant to the issue. They must particularly look into and analyse the answers to the following questions:

- What is the background of the issue?
- What is your country's stance on it?
What are its causes and impacts of the issue?
- Who are its stakeholders and how are they being affected?
- How can the issue at hand be solved?

By looking for the answers to these questions, you will be well-acquainted with the understanding of the issue. Thinking of possible solutions to introduce in council beforehand is also something we would recommend.

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

Mandate:

The Security Council was created by the UN Charter, which came into effect on October 24, 1945. It shares an onus with the General Assembly for the UN's primary goal of maintaining international peace and security. Provisions in the UN Charter, however, show that the founders intended the Security Council to be the UN's leading body, charged with the most vital safekeeping

responsibilities. This is distinct in three ways.

First, the General Assembly can discuss issues linked with international peace and security only if they are not currently under deliberation by the Security Council.

Second, General Assembly resolutions are mere recommendations while Security Council resolutions are legally binding.

Finally, unlike other UN bodies, the Security Council can initiate measures to implement its resolutions.

When a threat to international peace surfaces, the Security Council first suggests that the nations involved come to a diplomatic resolution without its intervention. Sometimes the Security Council will conduct an IPan inquiry and assume the role of a mediator for the nations in an effort to achieve an agreeable settlement. It has used cease-fire directives, armed bystanders, and peacekeeping missions to help resolve disputes. If these procedures fail, the Security Council may resort to enforcement tactics like economic sanctions, travel bans, or military action.

Along with precedence on matters associated with international peace and security, the Council also has essential tasks related to the functioning of the UN. For example, the UN Secretary-General is appointed, and new members are accepted in the UN by the General Assembly only after counsel from the Security Council. Similarly, approval by both the Security Council and General Assembly is required to assign judges to the International Court of Justice. Any

amendments require a two-thirds vote in the GA and ratification by two thirds of the Members of the United Nations, including all the P-5 members.

From its first conference in 1946 till the present, the SC has been intensely critiqued. Most of the disapprovals have to do with the veto power of the P-5 countries. Just one P-5-member objecting to a draft resolution means that the resolution fails. This gives P-5 countries the ability to dodge criticism of their own guidelines and to target countries in opposition to their stances. The results are seen in three ways.

First, the P-5 members frequently hold closed meetings to select the issues to be put on the agenda and to draft resolutions for the consent of the whole Council, which they allegedly treat as a “rubber-stamp.”

Second, when rotating members are able to put entries on the agenda during the month-long presidency of the Council that each member enjoys, the P-5 are able to veto draft resolutions that are not to their liking. For example, the US vetoes resolutions critical of Israel, while Russia and China veto sanctions against governments such as Iran, Sudan, and Syria. As a result, the Council has failed to take action on many severe and persistent security problems.

Third, the P-5 is quick to act on issues that threaten their interests (such as the 1990 invasion of oil-rich Kuwait by Iraq) but slow to act on issues that do not affect them (such as the 1994 genocide in resource-poor Rwanda).

Powers and Functions

As per the United Nations Charter, the powers and functions of the security council are as follows:

1. To maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations;
2. To investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction;
3. To recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement;
4. To formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments;
5. To determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken;
6. To call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression;
7. To take military action against an aggressor;
8. To recommend the admission of new Members;
9. To exercise the trusteeship functions of the United Nations in "strategic areas";
10. To recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to

elect the Judges of the International Court of Justice.

INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENDA

ISSUE- South China Sea Conflict

The South China Sea is a waterway in the Western Pacific Ocean, bordered by Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

This sea is packed with fisheries, natural gas and oil reserves and maritime trade routes to name a few of its geopolitical and economic advantages.



With the South China Sea being surrounded by several Southeast Asian states and considering its exigent importance in the economic context, it is no surprise that all these countries have

competing claims of sovereignty over the region, the most truculent of which being from the People's Republic of China and the Philippines. The disputes are further entrenched by rampant nationalism, as each claimant attaches symbolic value to the South China Sea islands that far exceeds their objective material wealth. Moreover, the disputes are also tinged by great power politics as

China and the United States begin to jostle each other for control of the international order.

The claimants have argued bitterly over the “true” history of these island chains. Some have tried to ground their modern claims by proving a long and unbroken record of national control over claimed features. These states assert that, for example, their nationals fished around the islands of the Sea or used them for shelter from storms. In particular, Beijing has taken an active role in subsidizing archaeological digs to find evidence of exclusive Chinese usage of the Sea’s many features since time immemorial. However, it is hard—if not impossible—to wade through these partisan claims, many of which constitute pure propaganda.

This matter is yet to be resolved and is of pertinent importance as it could lead to the ignition of a potential broader regional conflagration. Solutions to the issue must be formulated as soon as possible, in a way that it is accepted by all the stakeholders and the international community.

HISTORY OF THE AGENDA

The South China Sea disputes are some of the most prominent territorial disputes in the international system, and some with the highest stakes attached to them given the strategic importance of the sea for global trade. The disputes are linked to the aftermath of

the Second World War and the establishment of new borders following the ending of the Japanese occupation of Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. The ambiguities surrounding where territorial lines would be drawn regarding the islands of the South China Sea were not wholly addressed by the San Francisco Treaty at the conclusion of the war with Japan. This left open the question of under whose authority this strategically important region would fall that would only become more contested throughout the Cold War. The significant history of the region is best broken down into three areas of significance: the nine-dash line, the resource wealth of the region, and the Sino-Vietnamese Wars.

The first signs of trouble regionally regarding the dispute over who controlled the islands of the South China Sea arose from the Chinese declaration of the nine-dash line in 1947. This declaration asserted the whole of the islands of the South China Sea were historic Chinese territory and the terms of the San Francisco Treaty did not apply to Chinese authority as it was not part of the negotiations. The nine-dash line has been a key part of the justification of Chinese action throughout the region and has been routinely criticized as an outsized representation of Chinese authority. Still, the nine-dash line has become linked to Chinese identity and is routinely used domestically as a nationalistic rallying cry despite the international chagrin it usually warrants. Importantly, this broad reaching claim inspired other states surrounding the sea to make similar wide sweeping claims and to come into conflict with

China over those claims.

Though the importance of the South China Sea from a shipping perspective is relatively apparent, what did not become apparent until the 1960s was the potential for oil reserves under its waves. Given the potential of natural resources like oil to fuel economic growth, the presence of oil within the region is a major boon to control of the South China Sea. The estimated 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in easily accessible areas fuelled the dispute over the South China Sea. In that case, the region was quickly transformed from an area of consideration for just its strategic location critical to economic growth to a potential region to assist in making major economic success. Furthermore, as the populations of states surrounding the sea have grown, the fisheries within it have become increasingly important for the future of feeding growing populations.

All these actions came to a head during the Sino-Vietnamese Wars which followed the unification of Vietnam in 1979. This set of conflicts included major battles on the land border and several battles in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin. For the disputes at sea, the most important battle occurred over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. Known as the Johnson Reef Skirmish, the Vietnamese navy lost three vessels and several men while the Chinese navy lost only one man in return. This conflict demonstrated the power of the Chinese military against regional opposition and reinforced previous losses Vietnam had suffered at

the Battle of the Paracels in 1972.

Thus, this dispute served as a warning to others in the region for engaging militarily against China without aid or assistance from another great power.

Individually, any of these reasons would be enough to propel states towards a territorial dispute of significance; however, the culmination of these factors is lending itself into heightening tensions surrounding one of the most strategic shipping lanes on the planet.

KEY TERMS & CONCEPTS

What is the South China Sea?

The South China Sea is a marginal sea of the Western Pacific Ocean. It is bounded in the north by the shores of South China (hence the name), in the west by the Indochinese Peninsula, in the east by the islands of Taiwan and north-western Philippines (mainly Luzon, Mindoro and Palawan), and in the south by Borneo, eastern Sumatra and the Bangka Belitung Islands.

Which areas of the sea are disputed?

Islands, reefs, banks and shoals in the South China Sea, including the Paracel Islands, Pratas Island and the Verreker Banks, Macclesfield Bank, Scarborough Shoal and the Spratly Islands

between the PRC, Taiwan, and Vietnam, and other parts of the area also contested.

What is the economic importance of the South China Sea?

Being one of the busiest waterways with one-third of the world's maritime shipping trade passing through it, the South China Sea harbours nearly US\$3.37 trillion in trade every year. The sea also accounts for about 80 percent of China's energy imports and 39.5 percent of China's total trade. Moreover, huge natural gas and oil reserves are suspected to lie beneath its seabed. Its lucrative fisheries are crucial for the food security of several Southeast Asia countries, adding to the region's tremendous economic and geostrategic importance.

Why is the South China Sea disputed territory?

The South China Sea is surrounded by several Southeast Asian countries like the Philippines, Indonesia and Taiwan, to name a few, who all have competing claims of sovereignty over it.

These claims are becoming more pressing due to the region's growing importance in terms of trade, food security and natural resources.

Which countries have claims over the region?

The South China Sea disputes involve both island and maritime claims by several sovereign states within the region, namely Brunei, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

What is the nine-dash line?

The nine-dash line—at various times also referred to as the ten-dash line and the eleven-dash line—refers to the undefined and vaguely located demarcation line used by China and Taiwan, for their claims of the major part of the South China Sea. The claim encompasses the area of Chinese land reclamation known as the "Great Wall of Sand".

This nine-dash line area claimed by the People's Republic of China covers most of the South China Sea and overlaps with the exclusive economic zone claims of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

What is UNCLOS and what role does it play in the South China Sea conflict?

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is an international treaty which was adopted and signed in 1982 which lays down a comprehensive regime of law and order in the world's oceans and seas. The convention also provides the framework for the development of a specific area of law of the sea. Its main objectives include;

1. Promoting the peaceful use of the seas and oceans,
2. Facilitating International Communications,
3. Enabling equitable and efficient utilisation of ocean resources, protecting and preserving the marine environment,
4. Promoting maritime safety.

On 12 July 2016, an independent arbitral tribunal established under UNCLOS published a clear and binding ruling on China's claims vis-à-vis the Philippines case against China over the South China Sea. However, the Chinese government has chosen to ignore this ruling, deeming the dispute over the region as unresolved by the international community.

What previous actions were taken by the UN to combat the issue?

Since the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) came into effect on 16th November 1994 have contributed to a substantial portion of UN policymaking regarding maritime regulations and developing a framework for maritime dispute resolution. As part of these policies, several sub-organizations have been set up to assist states in navigating territorial disputes.

- The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea:
Among all the frameworks set out by the UNCLOS, the Tribunal has had the most success in addressing issues of maritime territorial disputes. Based in Hamburg, Germany, it has had a history of success in addressing disputes between signatories of the UNCLOS, with 12 multilateral agreements having been reached, regarding delineation of maritime boundaries, marine resource exploitation, etc.
- United Nations General Assembly Resolution 72/249:

This resolution initiated the development of an international binding mechanism on conservation, sustainable use of marine biological areas beyond national jurisdiction to improve the preservation of these areas. While less relevant for the territorial issues of the South China Sea, action such as this assists in the development of legal frameworks to protect fisheries and assists in preserving the economic benefits of fishery access for all interested states.

- UNGA Resolution 74/19:

This resolution mentions efforts to assist in the peaceful resolution of disputes, particularly pertaining to legal conferences to discuss norms and behaviours that could be presented as part of such activity while also reaffirming traditional UNCLOS structures like the International Tribunal for the Law of the Seas and the International Court of Justice.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

1947: China Marks South China Sea Claims

China, under the rule of the nationalist Kuomintang party, demarcates its territorial claims in the South China Sea with an eleven-dash line on a map. This claim covered the majority of the

area. Later on, this eleven-dash line came to be known as the nine-dash line, which China to this date invokes as its historical basis for its territorial claims in the South China Sea.

1951: Treaty of San Francisco

The United States and forty-seven other nations sign the Treaty of Peace with Japan in San Francisco, officially ending World War II. Japan renounces all claims to Korea, Formosa (Taiwan), the Pescadores, and the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

1974: China Claims Paracel

A year after the Paris Peace Accords, which ended U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, Chinese forces occupied the western portion of the Paracel Islands, planting flags on several islands and seizing a South Vietnamese garrison. Vietnamese troops flee south and establish the first permanent Vietnamese occupation of the Spratly Islands. Meanwhile, Beijing builds a military installation, including an airfield and artificial harbour, on Woody Island, the largest of the Paracels. After the reunification of Vietnam, the newly formed Socialist Republic of Vietnam upholds the South's former claims to the Spratlys and Paracels. To this day, China maintains around one thousand troops in the Paracels.

1976: The Philippines Discovers Oil Field

After an extensive exploration program, the Philippines finds the Nido oil field off the coast of Palawan Island, marking the first oil discovery in the Northwest Palawan Basin. In 2012, the IMF noted

that the Philippines' petroleum industry may have "significant potential" in the South China Sea, which is adjacent to the Northwest Palawan Basin.

1982: UNCLOS was Established

The United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS, culminates in a resolution that defines the rights and responsibilities of nations in their use of surrounding waters based on exclusive economic zones and continental shelves. However, UNCLOS does not address sovereignty issues related to the South China Sea.

1988: China Sinks Three Vietnamese Ships

After roughly a decade of relative calm in the South China Sea, China and Vietnam clash on the Johnson Reef, marking China's first armed conflict over the Spratly archipelago. The Chinese navy sinks three Vietnamese vessels, killing seventy-four sailors in one of the most serious military confrontations in the South China Sea. Vietnam responded by occupying several reefs to monitor China's moves.

1992: China Passes Law on Territorial Sea

China passes the Law on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone, which lays claim to the entire South China Sea based on its historical right to the area dating from the Xia dynasty, which ruled between the twenty-first and sixteenth centuries BCE.

2002: ASEAN & China Code of Conduct

China and the ten ASEAN states reach an agreement on the ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, a code of conduct that seeks to ease tensions and creates guidelines for conflict resolution. The agreement came after six years of negotiations. China's signing marks the first time it accepts a multilateral approach to the issue.

2009: Malaysia & Vietnam Submit Claims to UN

Malaysia and Vietnam file a joint submission to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf to extend their continental shelves beyond the standard two hundred nautical miles from their coastlines, renewing friction over maritime sovereignty in the South China Sea.

2010: US Affirms Interest in South China Sea

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton reiterates Washington's neutrality on sovereignty in the South China Sea in a speech at an Asian regional security meeting in Hanoi but affirms American interests in the "open access to Asia's maritime commons."

2011: Philippines Renames South China Sea

In response to a spate of skirmishes with Chinese vessels, the Philippine government begins referring to the South China Sea as the West Philippine Sea in all official communications and in October 2012 signs an administrative order asserting its "inherent power and right to designate its maritime areas."

2012: Vietnam Passes Maritime Law

Vietnam passes a maritime law asserting its jurisdiction over the disputed Spratly and Paracel Islands, demanding notification from any foreign naval ships passing through the area.

ASEAN Fails to Issue Communiqué

For the first time in its forty-five-year history, ASEAN fails to issue a communiqué at the conclusion of its annual meeting in Cambodia. Its ten members reach an impasse over China's claims in the South China Sea, and member countries disagree over whether to include the territorial issue in the joint statement.

2013: Philippines Files UN Arbitration Over China's Sovereignty Claims

The Philippines initiates an international arbitration case under UNCLOS over Chinese claims of sovereignty to the Spratly Islands and Scarborough Shoal originating from the April 2012 clashes, acting on decades of stalled attempts at resolution. China rejects the process, forcing the court and its arbitration to continue without its participation. The case marks the first time a country has brought a claim against China under UNCLOS regarding the issue.

2014: Vietnamese & Chinese Ships Collide

Vietnam dispatches naval vessels in an attempt to stop China from establishing an oil rig in contested waters near the Paracel Islands.

The encounter quickly escalates as China sends forty ships to protect the rig, and several vessels collide.

2016: Tribunal Rules Against China's South China Sea Claims

The Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruled in favour of the Philippines in a case opened in 2013 against the People's Republic of China. The tribunal finds that China's declared "nine-dash line" has no legal basis for its claims to historic rights to resources in the South China Sea. The court also rules that none of the land features fit requirements under the UN Convention on the Law and the Sea (UNCLOS) to generate a 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone for China; many of the features are the result of extensive Chinese land reclamation. The court says Beijing violated its obligations as a member of UNCLOS, saying its island-building activities harmed the marine environment and its vessels' unsafe practices heightened navigational risks. China's foreign ministry says it "neither accepted nor recognizes" the court's ruling.

2020: Tensions Rise in The South China Sea Amid the Pandemic

China more aggressively asserts its claims in the South China Sea as countries in the region battle the coronavirus pandemic. In February, a Chinese naval ship reportedly aimed its weapons control system at a Philippine naval ship in the Spratly Islands. In April, Vietnam lodges a formal complaint over China's actions after a Chinese vessel rams and sinks a Vietnamese fishing boat near the Paracels. Soon after, Beijing establishes two administrative

districts that cover the Paracel and Spratly Islands; the Philippines and Vietnam denounce the move.

Standoff Between Chinese, Malaysian, Vietnamese Ships Ends

A nearly six-month standoff involving Chinese, Malaysian, and Vietnamese ships in the South China Sea ends after a Malaysian drillship at the center of the dispute leaves the area. The ship had been exploring oil and gas fields in waters claimed by all three countries. Tensions peaked in April when a Chinese survey ship entered Malaysia's exclusive economic zone. The incident prompts the United States to send naval ships through the waters and call on China to end its "bullying."

U.S. Declares Chinese Claims 'Unlawful'

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo issues a statement that most of China's claims in the South China Sea are unlawful. Specifically, Washington rejects all of Beijing's claims that extend beyond twelve nautical miles from Chinese shores, including in waters off Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

STANCES OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

CHINA: The country claims "Indisputable sovereignty" over the islands in the South China Sea, notably the Spratlys and the Paracels.

Furthermore, it claims jurisdiction over all relevant waters, including: the

nine-dash line area, the Vietnamese coast, the Sea area north of Borneo, the South China Sea islands, the Sea area north of the Natuna Islands, the Sea area west of Palawan and Luzon and finally the Luzon Strait.

In terms of addressing UN bodies regarding the disputes, China has submitted documentation to UNCLOS regarding the extent of its claims in the South China Sea for sole economic access under the Convention. China remains committed to protecting its holdings regionally and defying international efforts to calm the situation.

THE PHILIPPINES: The country is in a tough position with regards to the South China Sea, with significant territorial claims to the Spratly Islands. Over the past twenty years, the Philippines have submitted cases to UNCLOS for consideration and worked with China to bring a case of arbitration before the International Court of Justice. Despite a courtroom victory, and increased military spending as part of a more aggressive stance, the Philippines are in a lurch due to the failure of China to abide by the ruling of the International Court of Justice with no true resolution to the territorial dispute over the contested islands.

MALAYSIA: Malaysia lays claim to a number of islands in the southern part of the Spratly archipelago, which is included in its

200-mile EEZ as defined by UNCLOS. It currently actively occupies 5 bodies, some of which have been reconstructed using land reclamation and equipped with an airstrip and a dive resort reportedly to promote tourism.

Even though Malaysia and China maintain a strong bilateral relationship, there has been a gradual increase from the start of the decade to take a harder stance on what Malaysia claims are violations of its Exclusive Economic Zone.

VIETNAM: Vietnam claims maritime jurisdiction over the Spratly Islands and the Paracels included in its 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone.

Vietnam's bitter relations with China, specifically over this issue, have led to several clashes, the most severe one being an armed conflict in 1988 on the Johnson Reef.

TAIWAN: Taiwan claims sovereignty over all the island groups in the South China Sea and jurisdiction over adjacent waters: Spratlys, Paracel, Pratas and Macclesfield Bank. Moreover, Taiping Island, also known as Itu Aba amongst various other names, is the largest formation within the Spratlys and is currently administered by Taiwan. It is also claimed by China, the Philippines and Vietnam.

UNITED KINGDOM & FRANCE: The United Kingdom and France are primarily concerned with international principles and guidelines, in this case freedom of navigation operations (FONOP), and, over the years, have been increasingly critical of China's assertion of South China Sea territory.

UNITED STATES: The United States' stance on territorial disputes in the South China Sea is that it does not become involved in any such disputes.

However, concerns of Chinese aggression regionally have sparked concerns about freedom of navigation and the threat of a regional war between China and major non-NATO allies has garnered American interest. The US Navy regularly patrols the South China Sea and has worked with several regional governments on arms deals and in other international forums on security issues. Even though USA maintains a fairly neutral stance, it has had growing concerns over the dispute in recent times.

RUSSIA: Although Russia's official position on this issue is that of preserving the principles of international law, the country has a direct interest in the region, regarding the freedom of navigation and the global oil markets. The price of Russian oil exports is heavily

influenced by events in the South China Sea, through which most of the oil to Asia passes.

Russia, being in a strategic partnership with China on many fronts, tends to be on the same page with China in the Security Council and beyond.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

It is highly encouraged that all delegates answer the following questions during their research process before the conference:

1. How can future disputes over the South China Sea be prevented?
2. What can the UN do to put an end to the dispute?
3. How can Member States further cooperate with the UN towards the effective implementation of solutions?
4. What can your country do to aid the situation?
5. How can the competing sovereign claims of all the countries be settled?
6. How do alliances impact the possible actions that can be taken by each party involved?

SUGGESTED MODERATED CAUCUS TOPICS

1. The role nations, and/or the international community can play to ease regional tensions, facilitate greater cooperation and reduce the potential of armed conflict.
2. Justification of China's territorial occupations in the South China Sea.
3. USA's increased involvement within the South China Sea territorial disputes.