



Situation Room

**** SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE ****

Period under review: from 3 June 2021 to 9 June 2021.

[This report is based on publicly available sources to describe a changing situation. Information subject to change.]

Situation analysis recap:

- Malaysia's foreign ministry said it would summon China's ambassador after the airspace intrusion by 16 Chinese military planes near the country's Sarawak state near Malaysian-administered Luconia Shoals, a fishing ground in the disputed South China Sea.
- The recent flight by Chinese military planes over contested waters in the South China Sea, off Malaysia's coast, is believed to be a sign of demonstration of Beijing's growing ability to assert territorial claims against its neighbours.
- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) said on Tuesday, 8 June that the foreign ministers of Southeast Asia and China agreed during a meeting to exercise restraint in the South China Sea and avoid actions that could escalate tensions. The sides also confirmed their commitment to the renewal of negotiations on the Code of Conduct, a legal framework to avoid the escalation of tensions, which started in 2002 and were suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 epidemic.
- The European Union has reiterated its support to the ASEAN-led crafting of the Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, which aims to prevent territorial disputes from escalating into an armed conflict due to the extremely complicated nature of the various territorial claims in the region.
- Jens Stoltenberg, Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will present his NATO 2030 plan at the alliance summit on 14 June. According to Stoltenberg, NATO 2030 calls for the alliance to be the unique and indispensable forum for transatlantic consultations on all issues that affect transatlantic security, including for instance, on Syria, Iran, or the South China Sea.

Sources/Further Reading:

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China's military flight over Malaysia waters 'aimed at showing dominance'. (5. June 2021). *The Economic Times*. Available at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/chinas-military-flight-over-malaysia-waters-aimed-at-showing-dominance/articleshow/83254994.cms>

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Malaysia to summon Chinese envoy after airspace 'intrusion'. (3. June 2021). *South China Morning Post*. Available at <https://www.scmp.com/video/asia/3135831/malaysia-summon-chinese-envoy-after-airspace-intrusion>

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