

## Call for respect of territorial integrity and peace

Seventy years ago the August Revolution led to the proclamation of independence of Vietnam by President Ho Chi Minh on the Ba Dinh square in Hanoi. On September 2, the Vietnamese people and friends of Vietnam around the world celebrated the anniversary of this event, appreciating as well the outstanding role of this president who gave everything for independence and at the same time was working for a just peace.

Today Vietnam is facing the aggravation of long-standing tensions with China.

With great concern we note that China is pursuing its expansion policy into the East Sea (South China Sea), increasingly militarizing this region. Since the end of 2013 this process has been accelerated, in recent months at an even more alarming pace. China claims 90 percent of the East Sea. On the Truong Sa (Spratley) archipelago, which is under Vietnamese sovereignty, it has brought in huge quantities of sand on several islets and rocks in order to create artificial islands. On the Vietnamese archipelago Hoang Sa (Paracel), which China occupied by military force long ago in 1974, it erected massive constructions.

At present, on the reef Chu Thap transformed to a gigantic island the airport with a length of 3'125 meters is ready for operation. The two other airports on the expanded reefs Vanh Khan and Subi are in construction. At the same time China installed a variety of military and technical equipment on the island Chau Vien (Hoa Duong) and other four new artificial islands, i.e. Tu Nghia (Dong Mon), Gac Ma (Xich Qua), Gaven (Nam Huan) under Vietnamese sovereignty and Ken-nam (Tay Mon) belonging to the Philippines, transforming these into actual bases at a distance of 1400 km from the Chinese mainland.

With this policy of fait accompli, provocation and annexations, none of which are recognized internationally, China is changing the status quo in the East Sea and flouting international law. It violates UNCLOS, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982, which it co-signed. Thus China jeopardizes peace, stability and shipping in the region.

We, organizations of friends of Vietnam, working for a constructive and harmonious development, seeking peace and justice, cannot tolerate this dangerous escalation.

We, therefore, raise our voice

- to protest against these annexations and modification of the status quo of the Paracel and Spratley archipelagoes in the East Sea;
- to demand respect for
  - the sovereignty of Vietnam and all riparian states,
  - the Declaration of Conduct between the ASEAN States and China,
  - the international law,
  - peace,

- unimpeded shipping;
- to support Vietnam and the other riparian states in the safeguarding of their sovereignty and integrity;
- to soon open constructive negotiations of China with the ASEAN;
- to campaign for peace and justice, for a world without war.

In order to establish a lasting stable relationship between China and Vietnam it is essential to obtain a binding agreement on the limitation of their maritime borders in the same way the two countries a few years ago achieved a delimitation of their terrestrial borders.

Recently the two countries established a mixed interparliamentary group to seek a definite solution to the tracing of their maritime borders. We call on the parties to relaunch and speed up coordination and negotiation work in order to permit this second intergovernmental commission to reach the same result as was found for their common terrestrial borders.

With this in mind, we address the international community and UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon with the urgent plea to stand up for the respecting of international law and a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

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*Basler Frauenvereinigung für Frieden und Fortschritt*

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