Joint Statement on the Tenth Anniversary of the Philippines-China South China Sea Arbitral Tribunal Award

12.7.2026 - | Auswärtiges Amt

The text of the following statement was released by the Governments of the United States of America, Australia, Canada, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, New Zealand, the Republic of the Philippines, Romania, Slovenia, and the United Kingdom on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Philippines-China South China Sea Arbitral Tribunal Award.

We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific that is peaceful, stable, and rules-based, anchored in international law, and commemorate the 10th anniversary of the July 12, 2016, Arbitral Tribunal's landmark and unanimous decision on the South China Sea constituted under Annex VII of UNCLOS.

We reaffirm that maritime disputes must be resolved peacefully and in accordance with UNCLOS. We reaffirm that the Award rendered ten years ago by the Arbitral Tribunal is a significant milestone and is final, legally binding, and definitive between China and the Philippines with respect to the maritime entitlements and claims addressed by the Arbitral Tribunal.

We reaffirm the Arbitral Tribunal's decision that there is no legal basis for China's expansive maritime claims in the South China Sea, including those based on „historic rights". We underscore the importance of upholding freedom of navigation and overflight, as well as other internationally lawful uses of the sea, as reflected in UNCLOS.

We reiterate our strong opposition to any destabilizing or unilateral actions including by force or coercion that threaten peace and stability in the region. We reaffirm our strong opposition to the use of coast guard, military, and maritime militia forces to harass, obstruct, or intimidate lawful operations by other States at sea or in the air, and in so doing endanger the safety of personnel and fishermen and seriously degrade regional peace and security. We urge the parties to abide by the 2016 Award and resolve disputes peacefully through dialogue and other lawful mechanisms in accordance with international law.

We remain steadfast in our support for a free and open Indo-Pacific and reiterate our commitment to promoting our shared vision with ASEAN of the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, cooperation, and prosperity driven by vibrant lawful commerce.

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