

After Trump: Sino-Vietnamese Relations, Sino-US Relations and Regional Security

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Video Presentation to

Emerging Vietnam 2020

HSC Securities

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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Outline of Presentation

1. Vietnam's Foreign and Defence Policy
2. Sino-Vietnamese Relations
3. Sino-U.S. Relations
4. Regional Security

1. Vietnam's Foreign and National Security Policy

- Multi-directional foreign policy
 - Politburo Resolution No. 13 (May 1988)
- Diversification and multilateralization with all countries and economic organisations
 - 7th National Party Congress (1991)
 - Post-Cambodia conflict
- *Vừa hợp tác, vừa đấu tranh*
- Cooperation and Struggle (2003)
 - *đối tác* (partner of cooperation)
 - *đối tượng* (object of struggle)

International Integration

- Proactive and active international integration
 - ASEAN and ASEAN-led institutions
 - APEC, World Trade Organisation
 - UN Peacekeeping (South Sudan)
 - Non-Permanent Member UN Security Council
- Independence, self-reliance, co-operation and development

17 Strategic and 12 Comprehensive Partnerships

South Korea,
Spain, UK, Germany,
Italy, Singapore,
Thailand, Indonesia,
France, Malaysia,
Philippines, Australia.
New Zealand

*comprehensive partner



Partnership
Hierarchy

Comprehensive Strategic
Cooperative Partnership

Comprehensive Strategic
Partnership

Strategic Partnership

Comprehensive Partnership

Maritime Strategy Towards the Year 2020 (Chiến lược biển Việt Nam đến Năm 2020).

- Fully integrate the economic development of Vietnam's coastal provinces and territorial sea with marine and hydrocarbon resources in Vietnam's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf.
- This strategy demonstrates the importance of Vietnam's Exclusive Economic Zone to its future economic development

From 3 to 4 No's Defence Policy, 1998-2019

Vietnam consistently advocates neither joining any military alliances, siding with one country against another, giving any other countries permission to set up military bases or use its territory to carry out military activities against other countries nor using force or threatening to use force in international relations.

- *Defence White Paper 2019*

2. Sino-Vietnamese Relations

- 1991 Normalisation of relations post-Cambodia conflict
- 2008 – Strategic Partner
- 2009 – Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
- 2013 – Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership
- Joint Steering Committee
- Theoretical Seminars & Strategic Defence Dialogue
- Border Defence Friendship Exchange Program
- Joint patrols in Gulf of Tonkin

The South China Sea Dispute

- 1974 China seizes western Paracels
- 1988 Naval skirmish Johnson South Reef
- 1992, 1994, 1996 – Vanguard Bank/Wa'an Bei 21
- 2009 – Nine Dash Line
- 2014 – Mega oil rig Hai Yang Shi You 981
- 2017-18 – Vanguard Bank/Repsol of Spain
- 2019 – Vanguard Bank and Red Orchid (Rosneft)



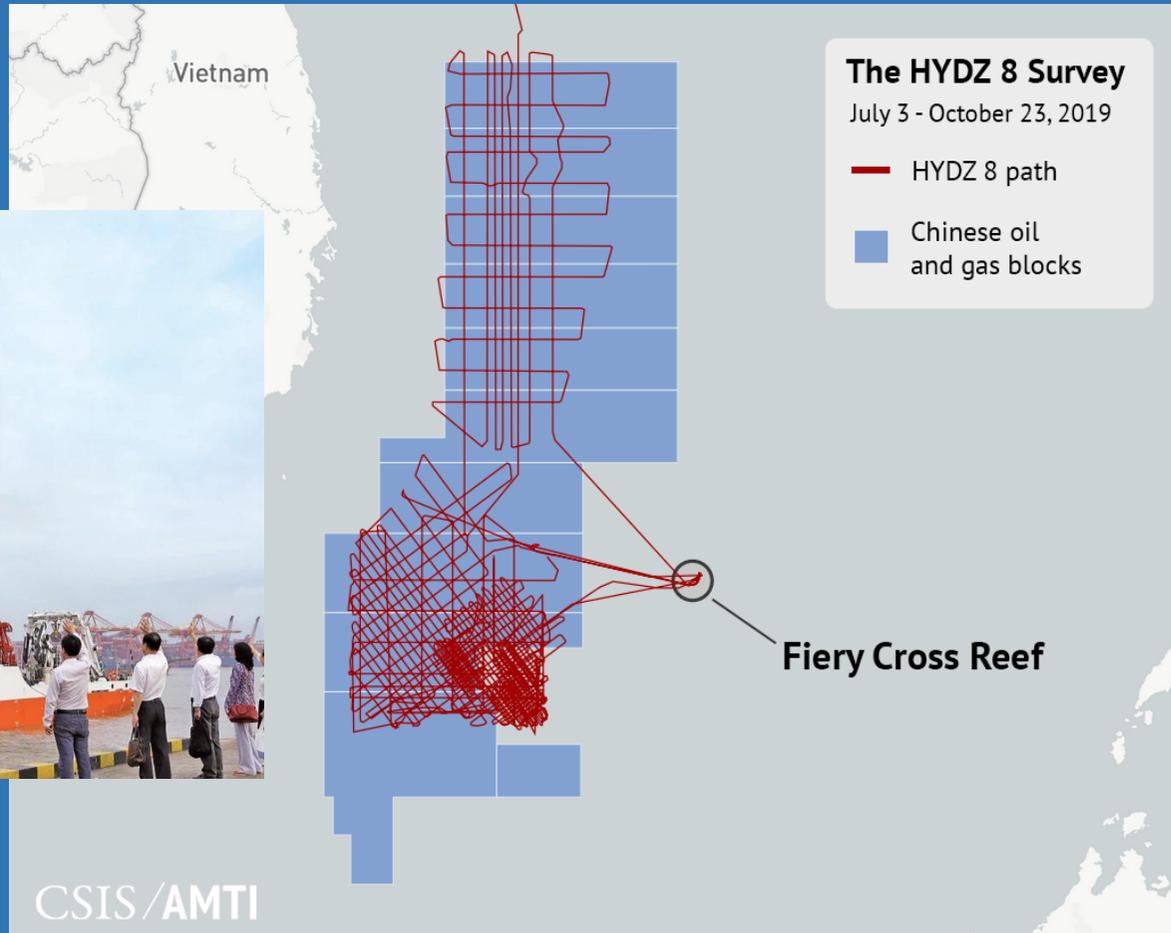
Vietnam's National Assembly adopts Law of the Sea of Vietnam July 2012

China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) issues oil blocks for international tender inside Vietnam's Exclusive Economic Zone

China Deploys Mega Oil-
Drilling Rig HYSY 981
to Vietnam's EEZ (2 May-
15 July 2014)



Vanguard Bank July –October 2019



Hai Yang Dizhi 8
survey ship

3. Sino-U.S. Relations



- Trade imbalance
- Market access
- State subsidies
- Intellectual property theft
- Commercial hacking
- Espionage in U.S.

China: 'Period of Strategic Opportunity'

- Century of national humiliation
- Chinese Dream – “Great rejuvenation of the Chinese people”
- Regional focus
 - Taiwan main priority
 - 1st and 2nd island chains, East China Sea, South China Sea
- Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) – EurAsia
- Expanding global interests
 - Sea lines of communications and port access

U.S.-China Strategic Rivalry



China has more than 1,250 ground launched ballistic and cruise missiles with range 500 to 5,500 km

Strategic Level

China's Military Modernisation

- In 2017, Xi Jin-ping announced the goal that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) was to become a “world-class” military by the end of 2049
- China seeks “to develop a military by mid-century that is equal to – or in some cases superior to – the U.S. military, or that of any other great power that the PRC views as a threat.”
 - Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Military and Security Developments Involving The People's Republic of China 2020: Annual Report to Congress* (September 2020), p. vi.

The PLA in 2020

- Largest Navy in the world
 - 350 ships and submarines
 - Including 130 major surface combatants
- Largest Coast Guard in the world
- Largest Land Force in the world
- Largest shipbuilder by tonnage in the world
- Third largest Air Force in the world

China Has Overtaken the U.S. in 3 Key Areas

- The PLA has overtaken the United States
 - shipbuilding
 - land-based conventional ballistic and cruise missiles
 - integrated air defence system
- In 2019, the PLAN was “largely composed of modern multi-role platforms featuring advanced anti-ship, anti-air, and anti-submarine weapons and sensors.”
 - *Military and Security Developments Involving The People’s Republic of China 2020: Annual Report to Congress*

Southern Theater Command

- Area of Responsibility
 - border security with mainland Southeast Asia
 - territorial and maritime disputes
 - security of sea lines of communication in the South China Sea
 - Assist Eastern Theater Command in Taiwan contingencies
- Most modern weapons and platforms including
 - 24 of the PLA Air Force's Russian-built Su-35s
 - first to receive the PLAN's H-6J maritime strike bomber
 - *Shandong* first domestically built aircraft carrier (J-15s jet fighters)

Yulin Naval Base, Hainan



14 SSK diesel
hunter-killer
submarines

2 SSN nuclear
attack
submarines

4 SSBN nuclear
ballistic missile
submarines

Woody Island, Paracels July 17, 2020



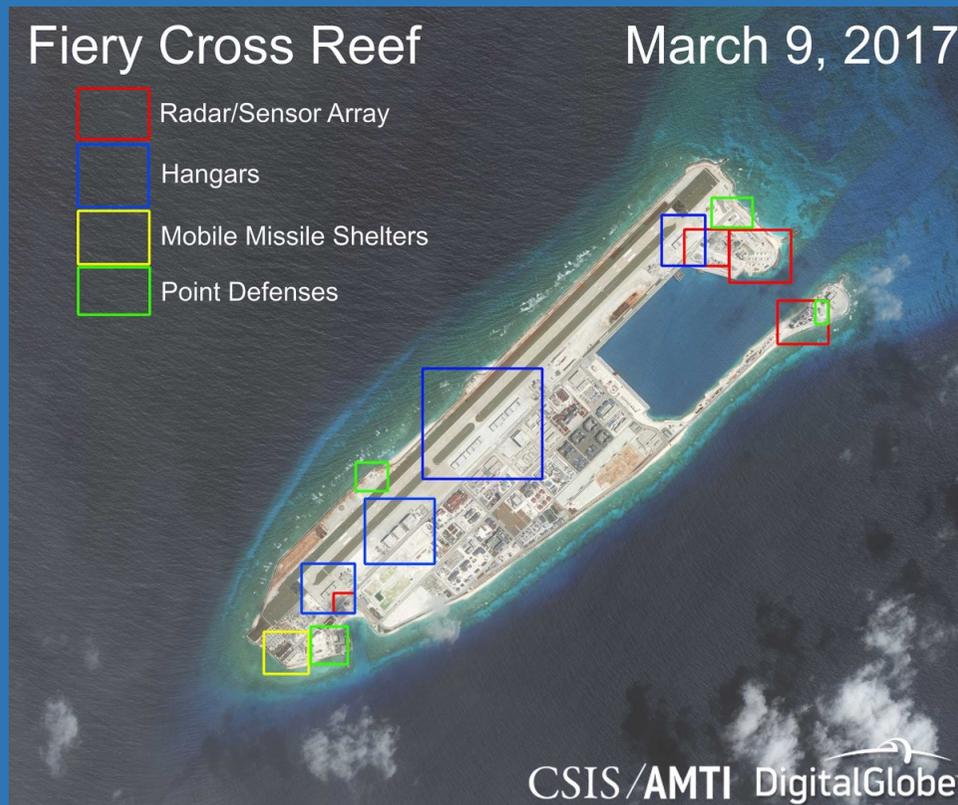
4 J-11B
fighter jets
&
4 JH-7
fighter
bombers

Operational Level Action-Reaction Cycle in the South China Sea

Fiery Cross Reef

March 9, 2017

- Radar/Sensor Array
- Hangars
- Mobile Missile Shelters
- Point Defenses



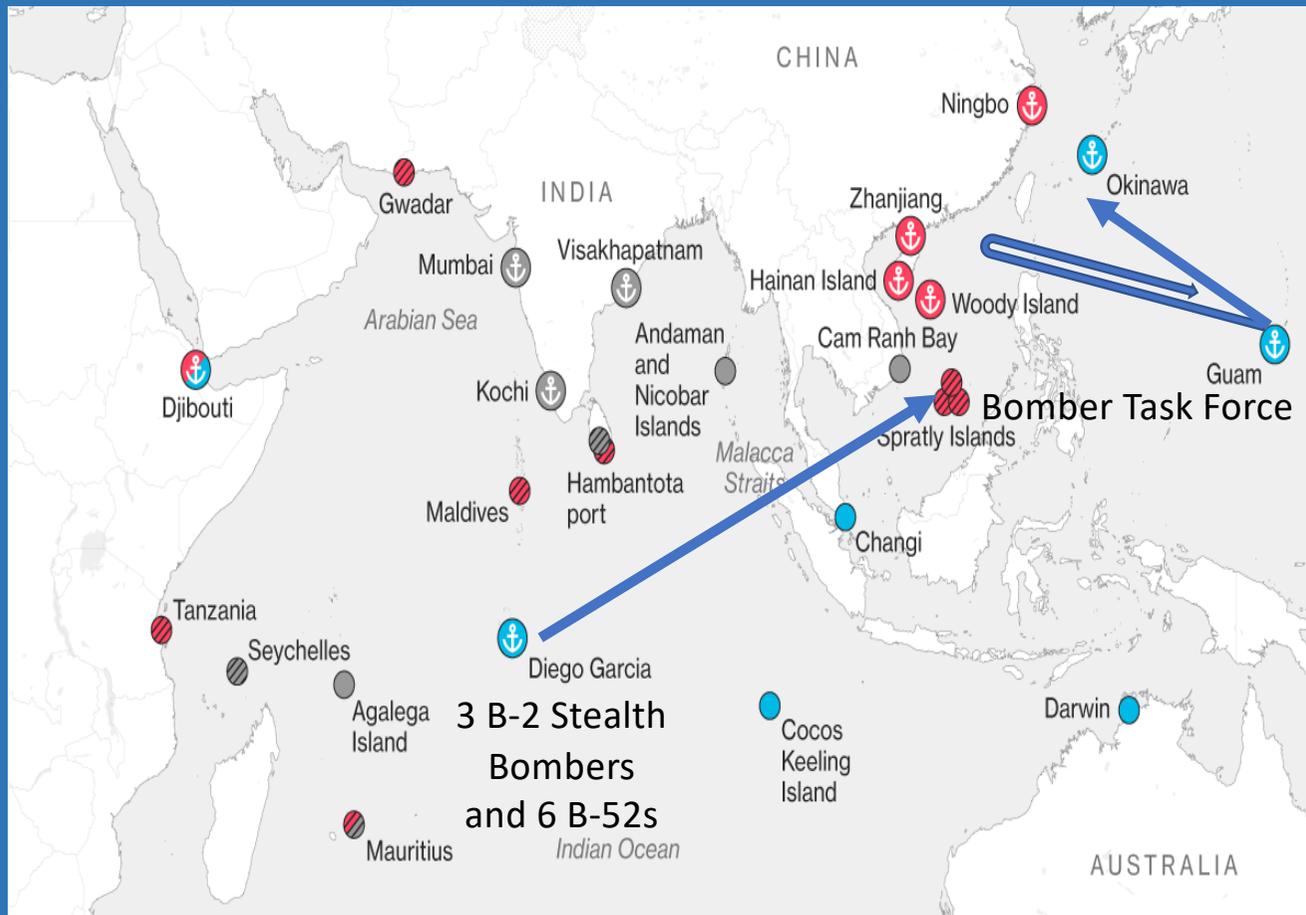
Construction and militarization of forward operating bases completed by early 2018:

- YJ-62 anti-ship missiles
- HQ-9 anti-aircraft missiles
- Military jamming systems
- Airfields on three reefs (3 km long)
- Docks and piers
- Administration buildings
- Communications facilities
- Barracks

United States: Free and Open Indo-Pacific

- U.S. National Security Strategy & National Defense Strategy
 - China and Russia as revisionist powers and strategic competitors
 - Networked alliances and strategic partners
- Free and Open Indo-Pacific
 - Freedom of navigation, free trade, finance to compete with BRI
- US National Defense Authorization Act of 2019
 - Funding for whole-of-government pushback against China's economic, security and political challenges

Strategically Predictable, Operationally Unpredictable



- **US Bomber Task Force** missions B-1B Lancer stealth bombers on Guam and B-2 & B-52s on Diego Garcia
- Continuous Naval Presence Patrols
- 27 Freedom of Navigation Operational Patrols

4. Regional Security

- Strategic competition between China and US will be the principal driver of change in the region
- Chinese military modernization in the Indo-Pacific will continue to accelerate
 - Expanding cyber, space and electronic capabilities
- China will become more assertive (Taiwan)
- Grey zone coercive activities will continue
- Rules-based order will be contested

Biden Presidency Time Line

- From now until inauguration day (20 January 2021)
 - Senate by-election in Georgia, stimulus package
- First 150 days in office
 - Cabinet approval by Senate
 - National Security Strategy
- After first 150 days
 - National Defense Strategy
 - Indo-Pacific Strategy

Biden Presidency

- Trump's transactionalism will end
- Bipartisan support for hard line against China on trade and economic issues, support for Taiwan
- Democracy and human rights/Predatory Economics
 - Hong Kong, Uighurs
- Reach out for collaboration
 - pandemic, climate change, denuclearization, INF talks
- China will remain a military competitor

Biden Presidency – Southeast Asia

- Fundamental U.S. national interests in Southeast Asia will not change
 - Trade, investment, alliance network, geo-strategic
- Support for ASEAN and ASEAN-led multilateral institutions
 - ASEAN Plus 1, ARF, ADMM Plus, East Asia Summit
- Continuity in South China Sea policy
 - FONOPS, naval exercises, maritime capacity building

Biden Presidency – Vietnam

- Comprehensive Partnership will be enhanced
- U.S. will pursue Vietnam as a strategic partner
- Mekong-U.S. Partnership will continue
- Trade imbalance and market access issues will persist
 - remove barriers to trade and investment
- Human rights issues will increase in salience

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