

Aff

We affirm

Our Sole Contention is ensuring peace in the South China Sea

Tensions are rising in the South China Sea. **Chaudhury 18** reports China's blatant disregard of maritime rules, militarization of artificial islands, and use of might over its weaker neighbours. Indeed, **Siva of Reuters** confirms countries such as Singapore and Vietnam are taking steps to bolster their own ability to defend themselves from China, turning the region into a dangerous flashpoint. While ASEAN and China have negotiated for a code of conduct, there is no enforcement or containment clauses, allowing China to expand unchecked, making this the strongest link into our framework

Affirming resolves this issue in 2 ways

First is through multilateral diplomacy

Pham of Forbes 17 writes China is dealing with each country in the region individually, giving them more bargaining power to assert their claims. In doing so, China has painted the US as a selfish country that reaps the benefits of maritime law without acceding. **Bower of CSIS 12** confirms China frames the US as hypocritical in the eyes of maritime neighbors. Acceding to UNCLOS reverses this sentiment as **Vanecko of the Naval War College 11** analyzes ratification shows US commitment to multilateralism and increases* cooperation with allies by giving an alternative to Chinese control. US leadership is key as **Gates of The Diplomat in 15** explains the US is "the only actor in the Asia Pacific with the power, resources, and relationships necessary to diffuse tensions and bring about an enduring solution." **Burgess of CSP 15** furthers multilateral diplomacy outside of UNCLOS helps influence Chinese behavior. This is critical as **French of the Atlantic in 14** concludes the more China sees a multilateral response to its military buildup, the more likely it is to turn towards diplomacy and decrease its aggression in the region. **Pejsova of the EU institute for Security Studies 15** concludes dialogue is the only way to resolve the South China Sea dispute.

Second is through our naval presence

McCoy of National Interest 18 reports China has viewed the lack of US response to recent incursions as the green light to continue their expansion. Indeed, As a result, **Majumdar of the National interest 17** finds naval overstretch has inhibited American naval operations in the western pacific. **Manicom of Balsillie 12** confirms US naval overstretch creates a perception

of* weakness, opening a window of opportunity for Chinese pressure and expansionism in the region. **Schachte of the Journal of international affairs 05** explains this has occurred as a result of constantly having to militaristically deal with more than a hundred unwarranted claims made by other countries like Japan, India, and Pakistan against vital American navigation. However, **Schachte** continues joining the Convention would allow the US to put these assertions to bed, without wasting naval resources. Decreasing the need for constant deployment is essential as **London of CNN 17** reports the US's seventh fleet, primarily deployed in the Western Pacific has been stretched too thin, unable to face the challenges rising in the Pacific. **Cooper 16** confirms naval presence is key to holding up international law and deterring China's current expansionism. Thus, **Talent of AEI 16** concludes removing this weakness would immediately have a deterrent effect on China.

Overall, acceding not only deters Chinese aggression but increases our ability to swiftly end conflicts as **Schachte** concludes the Convention allows U.S. forces to move without hindrance in the unlikely scenario that diplomacy was to fail and war broke out.*

Two impacts result from curbing aggression.

First is the economy

Glaser of CFR 12 writes over \$5 trillion of annual trade pass through the South China Sea and 1.5 billion people rely on economic activity in the region for food and jobs. Tensions are already harming this as **Vu of business insider 18** writes Chinese expansion hurts foreign investment, hurting trade in the region. Specifically, **Meng of Jonkoping University 18** quantifies in a 23 year analysis, that a 1% increase in tensions decreases regional trade by 0.05%.

Second is decreasing the propensity for conflict,

French '14 reports as China slowly expands they will likely make an example out of an American ally such as Vietnam, Japan, or the Philippines. **Wong of the Morning Post 18** concludes, as China continues its aggressive land grab, the risk of miscalculation and armed conflict will continue to increase in the region. The impact of even a small conflict would be devastating as **Stout of Time Magazine 14** reports China's current aggression is similar to the 1980 Vietnam invasion that took the lives of 50,000 people in just 6 weeks.

Thus we affirm.