

We affirm, Resolved: The United States should accede to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea without reservations.

Our sole contention is the South China Sea.

The major body of water off China's East coast is known as the South China Sea. Several countries in the region all have competing claims over whose area of water belongs to who. Instead of respecting each country's claim, China instead has been using military force to forcefully take over large regions of sea that does not legally belong to them.

This military situation becomes more and more volatile every day, escalating tensions. **Choudary of the Economic Times in 2018** writes that due to China's rejection of a rules based order, militarization of artificial islands, and dominance over smaller and weaker states the South China Sea is now a flashpoint.

Indeed, **Almond of the Diplomat in 2018** finds that China has militarized over 3,200 acres of the South China Sea since 2013.

Action is required **NOW** in order to stop tensions and conflict.

The **Odyssey Online in 2017** writes that if mediation doesn't occur, China will continue to snowball the region and tensions will boil over.

Fortunately, joining UNCLOS provides a solution. Joining UNCLOS forms a new, diplomatic multilateral approach to China.

In the status quo, countries hold the perception that the United States is not willing to participate in diplomacy and is rejecting any notion of multilateral dialogue.

**US Naval Institute finds in 2011** that due to us not being in UNCLOS, South China Sea countries perceive that the United States has different interests than themselves, thus weakening the effectiveness of multilateralism diplomacy.

Thus, **Moore from the University of Virginia** concludes that "If our country is viewed as unwilling to participate [in international agreements] we will not [be able to get] needed [diplomatic] assistance from others."

Fortunately, UNCLOS provides a better path forward. **Ashfaw of the Journal of Transnational Law and Policy in 2010** writes that joining UNCLOS would increase the US's soft power capabilities by showing others we are committed to the international community, concluding that ratification of the treaty would allow other countries to put their faith in our actions in the Seas, allowing diplomacy to flourish.

Thus, Once you affirm, we can now engage in multilateral diplomacy.

**Kyouk of the Wall Street Journal in 2016** writes that by joining UNCLOS, we gain the needed legitimacy to form a multilateral coalition of regional allies to put diplomatic pressure on China.

This is crucial, as multilateral pressure on China is the best way to stop Chinese expansion in the South China Sea. **Townshend of the Guardian in 2015** writes that this multilateral coalition would present a sovereign threat to China's influence in the region, by politically isolating China and depriving them of what they care most about, their political leverage over regional countries.

Overall, **The Atlantic in 2014** writes that as China sees international opposition and isolation increase, the more likely they are to stop their aggression and resort to diplomacy.

The impact to stopping dangerous Chinese Expansion is preserving trade.

Status Quo tensions are causing trade to go down. This is because when tensions and the perception of conflict are high, the **Wall Street Journal in 2016** writes that shipping companies have to take longer routes to avoid the South China Sea, and also face higher insurance rates.

Indeed **Wang of EPC in 2015** finds that tensions between China and the Philippines over the South China Sea disputes had significantly reduced bilateral trade, directly proportional to the amount of tensions.

This is crucial as **Crabtree '16 of CNBC** writes that "over 5 trillion dollars worth of trade annually passes through the region, supplying a whopping 1.5 billion people with food and jobs,"

Even short term disruptions in trade can spike prices of basic food and push millions into poverty. **PBS** finds the last time food prices spiked it pushed 44 million into poverty.

*Thus, in the interest of diplomacy and peace, we affirm.*

a/t trump doesn't like multilat

The **EAF in 2018** writes that trump has good rels with ASEAN because he's continuing obama's policies and promoting more investment in the region

a/t diplo inc. tensions

- a) We put a ton of responses on unique, so this turn literally doesn't matter bc tensions are already at all time high
- b) Literally not true, diplo reduces tensions, if anything this is offense for us because this aggression is happening in the status quo, only feeding our narrative

- 1) Sq is becoming every intense
- 2) Countries want to stop china but all have different interests
- 3) Countries won't work with us bc they don't trust our positions
- 4) UNCLOS restablishes trust in these countries
- 5) Forms multilateral coalition which hurts CH's political leverage
- 6) CH stops agressing

a/t political isolation

## **Contention Two is reducing tensions in the South China Sea.**

The status quo is becoming more volatile every day. Choudary of the [Economic Times in 2018](#) writes that due to China's rejection of a rules based order, militarization of artificial islands, and dominance over smaller and weaker states the South China Sea is now a flashpoint. Indeed, [Almond of the Diplomat in 2018](#) finds that China has militarized over 3,200 acres of the South China Sea since 2013.

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Fortunately, affirming in today's round and joining UNCLOS provides a solution. This comes by promoting multilateral cooperation.

In the status quo, countries hold the perception that the United States is not willing to participate in international institutions and is rejecting any notion of multilateral dialogue.

Specifically, **Moore from the University of Virginia** writes that our allies are disappointed by our unilateral disengagement from ocean affairs caused by our absence from UNCLOS.

This effect can be seen in the South China Sea, as the **US Naval Institute finds in 2011** that due to us not being in UNCLOS, regional actors perceive that the United States has different interests than themselves, thus weakening the effectiveness of multilateralism diplomacy.

Thus, **Moore** concludes that "If our country is viewed as unwilling to participate [in international agreements] we will not [be able to get] needed [diplomatic] assistance from others."

Fortunately, UNCLOS provides a better path forward. **Ashfaw of the Journal of Transnational Law and Policy in 2010** writes that joining UNCLOS would increase the US's soft power capabilities by showing others we are committed to the international community, concluding that ratification of the treaty would allow other countries to put their faith in our actions in the Seas.

Once you affirm, US is now capable of forming a multilateral coalition of regional allies to put diplomatic pressure on China.

**Kyouck of the Wall Street Journal in 2018** furthers that as result of increasing its legitimacy by acceding to UNCLOS, the US would now be capable of creating a coordinated regional response to Chinese Aggression in the Sea.

This is crucial, as multilateral pressure on China is the best way to stop Chinese expansion in the South China Sea. This is because China's biggest interest is maintaining their political leverage over regional countries. Thus, **Townshend of the Guardian in 2015** concludes that a multilateral response to China would *deprive* them of their political leverage in the region, forcing them to stop their South China Sea Aggression.

The impact to stopping dangerous Chinese Expansion is preserving trade.

Status Quo tensions are causing trade to go down. This is because when tensions and the perception of conflict are high, the **Wall Street Journal in 2016** writes that shipping companies have to take longer routes to avoid the South China Sea, and also face higher insurance rates.

Indeed **Wang of EPC in 2015** finds that episodes of tension between China and the Philippines over the South China Sea had significantly reduced bilateral trade, and that the reduction had been directly proportional to the level of tension.

This is crucial as **Crabtree '16 of CNBC** writes that “over 5 trillion dollars worth of trade annually passes through the region, supplying a whopping 1.5 billion people with food and jobs,”

Even short term disruptions can spike prices of basic goods and push millions into poverty. **PBS** finds the last time food prices spiked it pushed 44 million into poverty.

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This is crucial, as multilateral pressure on China is the *best* way to stop Chinese expansion in the South China Sea.

**Townshend of the Guardian in 2015** writes that this multilateral coalition would present a sovereign threat to China’s influence in the region, by politically isolating China and depriving them of what they care most about, their *political leverage* over regional countries.

Thus, **The Atlantic in 2014** writes that no one country can stop China, but when countries work in concert, they will be able to tie down China and *force* them to follow the rules.

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Thus, the Atlantic concludes that the more China sees a coordinated response to its military buildup, the more likely it is to turn toward diplomacy, and to stop seeking overwhelming superiority in the region.

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