

US Wants China To End Land Reclamation Projects In South China Sea

Bernama

Aug 5, 2015

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5 (Bernama) -- The United States (US) wants China to end the provocative land reclamation projects in the South China Sea and work out a peaceful and effective resolution to the disputes.

Its Secretary of State John Kerry said the US shared the frequently expressed desire of ASEAN members to preserve the peace and stability of the South China Sea.

"We want to ensure the security of critical sea lanes and fishing grounds, and we want to see that disputes in the area are managed peacefully and on the basis of international law," he said in his opening remarks at the ASEAN-US Ministerial Meeting here Wednesday.

Kerry, who is leading the US delegation to the Post Ministerial Conferences and Related Meetings, also informed the ASEAN ministers that his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi earlier today had been good.

"I hope very much that at this meeting, over the course of today and tomorrow, we will find a way to move forward effectively together, all of us," he said.

According to reports, China's land reclamation in contested waters had irked Southeast Asian nations.

China, Taiwan and ASEAN members, namely the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei, had wrangled over ownership and control of the South China Sea, a resource-rich and busy waterway, in a conflict that had flared on and off for decades.

Tensions flared last year when China began work to build artificial islands in the Spratly Islands, amid fears the actions could impede freedom of navigation and overflights in a major transit area for the world's oil and merchandise.

Washington had also called for a halt to aggressive actions by China and other claimants to allow a diplomatic solution to the rift.

Yesterday, Malaysian Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman had urged ASEAN senior officials to intensify their consultations regarding the disputes so that a Code of Conduct (CoC) could be established as soon as possible.

The CoC is a set of rules that would put in place mechanisms to avoid conflict in the contentious resource-rich South China Sea.

-- BERNAMA

Copyright © 2015 BERNAMA

Source : <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v8/newsindex.php?id=1158602>