

《英语新闻:China praised for restraint in dealing with South China》

JAKARTA, March 20 -- China takes credit for its consistent policy of settling territorial and maritime dispute in the South China Sea through peaceful negotiations, Indonesian political analyst Dewi Fortuna Anwar said during Indonesia- sponsored annual informal defense dialogue opened here on Wednesday.

"We hope that China will remain consistent on its position and an agreement can be reached to assure that military power must not be adopted in settling dispute in the South China Sea," Dewi told Xinhua.

Dewi, deputy secretary for political affairs at Indonesia's vice president office, said that the existence of dispute was a fact with overlapping claims.

"It's not easy to settle this problem. What is more important now is preventing this dispute from leading to open conflict between the claimants," Dewi added.

She said that the uphill negotiation on a binding code of conduct for claimant countries is underway.

She called on all claimants to restrain from taking provocative measures that could jeopardize the ongoing peace dialogue.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff of Chinese People's Liberation Army Sun Jianguo emphasized that a war must not occur in the South China Sea over conflicting claims.

He also made clear China's position that the dispute should be settled through peaceful negotiations based on respect of historical evidence and international law while boosting maritime cooperation and peaceful development.

Meanwhile, Admiral Harry B. Harris, the commander U.S. Pacific Fleet, pointed out the need of dialogue to settle dispute.

He added that the United States does not take sides on this issue, urging all parties to settle the territorial dispute in accordance with international law.

Indonesia's ambassador-at-large for sea and maritime affairs Hasjim Djalal urged all parties to take cooperative stance instead of confrontation as the South China Sea is essential to the economy of each claimant country as important shipping lane and vast deposit of oil and natural gas.

The two-day Jakarta International Defense Dialogue on " Building Maritime Collaboration for Security and Stability" was opened by Indonesian Vice President Boediono and attended by delegates of 46 countries.