

《中国与东盟国家达成“南海行为准则”框架》

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周四，中国与东盟国家达成了“南海行为准则”框架，这是和平解决中国南海问题的重要里程碑。

Beijing, ASEAN affirm framework for behavior in South China Sea

China and ASEAN countries on Thursday approved a draft framework of the South China Sea Code of Conduct, marking a milestone in peacefully resolving the South China Sea issue.

The 14th Senior Officials' Meeting on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, held in Guiyang, capital of Guizhou province, approved the draft.

All parties have agreed to manage and control their differences under the framework of regional regulations, the Foreign Ministry said in a news release.

China and ASEAN member states spoke highly of the significance of the approval of the code of conduct framework draft, saying it is "an important interim achievement in the entire negotiation of the COC", according to the news release.

The meeting was co-chaired by Vice-Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin and Permanent Secretary of Singapore's Foreign Ministry Chee Wee Kiong.



File Photo of Yongxing Island, home to the government of Sansha, China's southernmost city. [Photo/Xinhua]

China and ASEAN countries signed the declaration in 2002. They started to work on the COC in 2013.

Liu said at a news conference after the meeting that the framework takes care of the interests of all parties and has provided "a flexible political environment" for the next phase of consultation on the COC.

All countries involved have agreed not to release the framework document, but to maintain it as an internal document at this time since the consultation will continue and they do not want any external interference, Liu said.

"Against the backdrop of economic globalization, China and ASEAN countries should continue making our regional rules to guide our own actions and protect our common interests," Liu said.

In Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said on Thursday that "it is very inappropriate" that the joint statement made by Japan and New Zealand this week involves the South China Sea.

People have to question the real concern of Japan, which spares no effort in attempting to cause a flaring of so-called tensions that do not exist at all given the current situation, Hua said at a news conference.

Chee said at the joint conference with Liu Zhenmin that countries attending Thursday's meeting are encouraged to see that the situation in the South China Sea has been stable.

The high-level officials also approved on Thursday the results from a test run of a hotline for senior diplomats and a document related to establishing three technical committees.

Sources with the Foreign Ministry said the three committees focus on navigation security and search and rescue technology cooperation, maritime scientific research and environmental protection, and fighting maritime cross-border crime.

Ruan Zongze, vice-president of the China Institute of International Studies, said the approval of the COC draft framework means that discussion on measures to work through the South China Sea issue and expand marine cooperation is back on track.

"Although the COC won't directly solve the South China Sea issue, it will create favorable conditions for peace and stability there, and for future settlement of the problems."

