

駐亞特蘭大台北經濟文化辦事處
Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Atlanta
1180 West Peachtree St., NW, Suite 800, Atlanta, GA 30309
Tel: (404) 870-9375 Fax: (404) 870-9376

July 14, 2016

The Honorable Nikki Haley
Governor
State of South Carolina
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley,

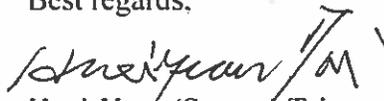
I'm writing to let you know of recent developments regarding territorial disputes in the South China Sea. The Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruled in favor of the Philippines in its arbitration case against mainland China over the South China Sea. The Hague-based international tribunal ruled that mainland China's nine-dash line claim over the disputed waters is invalid. The tribunal also ruled that the features occupied by China in the Spratly Islands are not capable of generating maritime zones as the reefs have been heavily modified by reclamation and construction.

This decision is completely unacceptable to the government of the Republic of China. The tribunal's decisions have no legally binding force on the ROC, because in the text of the award, the ROC is referred to as "Taiwan Authority of China," demeaning the status of the ROC as a sovereign state. Secondly, Taiping Island was not originally included in the Philippines' submissions for arbitration, yet the tribunal took it upon itself to expand its authority, declaring ROC-governed Taiping Island, and other features in the Nansha (Spratly) Islands occupied by Vietnam, the Philippines, and Malaysia, all to be rocks that "do not generate an exclusive economic zone." Furthermore, although the ROC is entitled to all rights in accordance with International Law and the Law of the Sea over the South China Sea Islands and their relevant waters, the tribunal did not formally invite the ROC to participate in its proceedings.

The South China Sea Islands are part of the territory of the ROC and it will take resolute action to safeguard the country's territory and relevant maritime rights. The ROC urges that disputes in the South China Sea be settled peacefully through multilateral negotiations. The ROC is willing, through negotiations conducted on the basis of equality, to work with all States concerned to advance peace and stability in the South China Sea.

My colleagues and I are grateful for your continuing friendship and support for Taiwan. Feel free to call me with any questions or comments.

Best regards,


Hwei-Yuan (Steven) Tai
Director General