

Maritime Security and the Protection of Philippine Territorial Waters

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Abstract

The sea acts as an essential bridge linking the Pacific and Indian oceans, holding great significance due to its major role in trade and military routes connecting East Asia to Europe and the Middle East. Covering over 3 million square kilometers (1.16 million square miles) on the western edge of the Pacific, the South China Sea (also known as the West Philippine Sea) stands as a focal point. This research aims to assess the maritime security level in Malampaya, particularly in terms of human resources. It includes the installation of EDCA sites, Philippine Rise, and southern backdoor security. Through focused group discussions, the study concludes and outlines recommendations. It highlights the limited overall capability of the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) and PCG (Philippine Coast Guard) in defending against threats in maritime and air environments in the said area. Moreover, safeguarding the security of major areas such as the Camago Malampaya Petroleum Resource Area, Mindanao Southern backdoor and the Ayungin Shoal remains a challenge. Furthermore, a call for increased budget allocation to procure proper equipment and military hardware is emphasized. This investment aims to fortify deterrence against potential military intrusions, particularly from nations like China, thus safeguarding the Philippines' sovereignty, maritime security, safety, and interests. It will also prevent future terrorist attacks, particularly in the southern Mindanao area and sea borders from our neighboring countries.

Keywords: Maritime Security, Maritime Safety, Maritime Cooperation