

# Business Groups Statement Julian Felipe Reef Issue

**14 April 2021** - The undersigned business organizations support Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, other government officials, and many groups in calling on China to withdraw their vessels from Julian Felipe Reef.

Julian Felipe Reef is historically and by law undisputed Philippines territory, as was most clearly established in the 2016 ruling based on the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Seas. Our exclusive right over the Julian Felipe Reef carries with it the utilization of, and the obligation to protect, its economic benefits, such as its rich marine life and mineral deposits, for the well-being of each and every Filipino.

China and the Philippines share many things in common including being subjugated by colonizers and having their natural resources plundered. Now that China is strong economically and militarily, we call on China to refrain from becoming an imperial power. In 1974, Deng Xiaoping said “If one day China should change her color and turn into a superpower, if she too should play the tyrant in the world and everywhere subject others to her bullying, aggression and exploitation, the people of the world should expose it, oppose it and work together with the Chinese people to overthrow it.”

We call on the Chinese authorities to respect the sovereignty of the Philippines and other neighboring countries for it is only through peaceful co-existence that we can achieve prosperity for all. (END)

