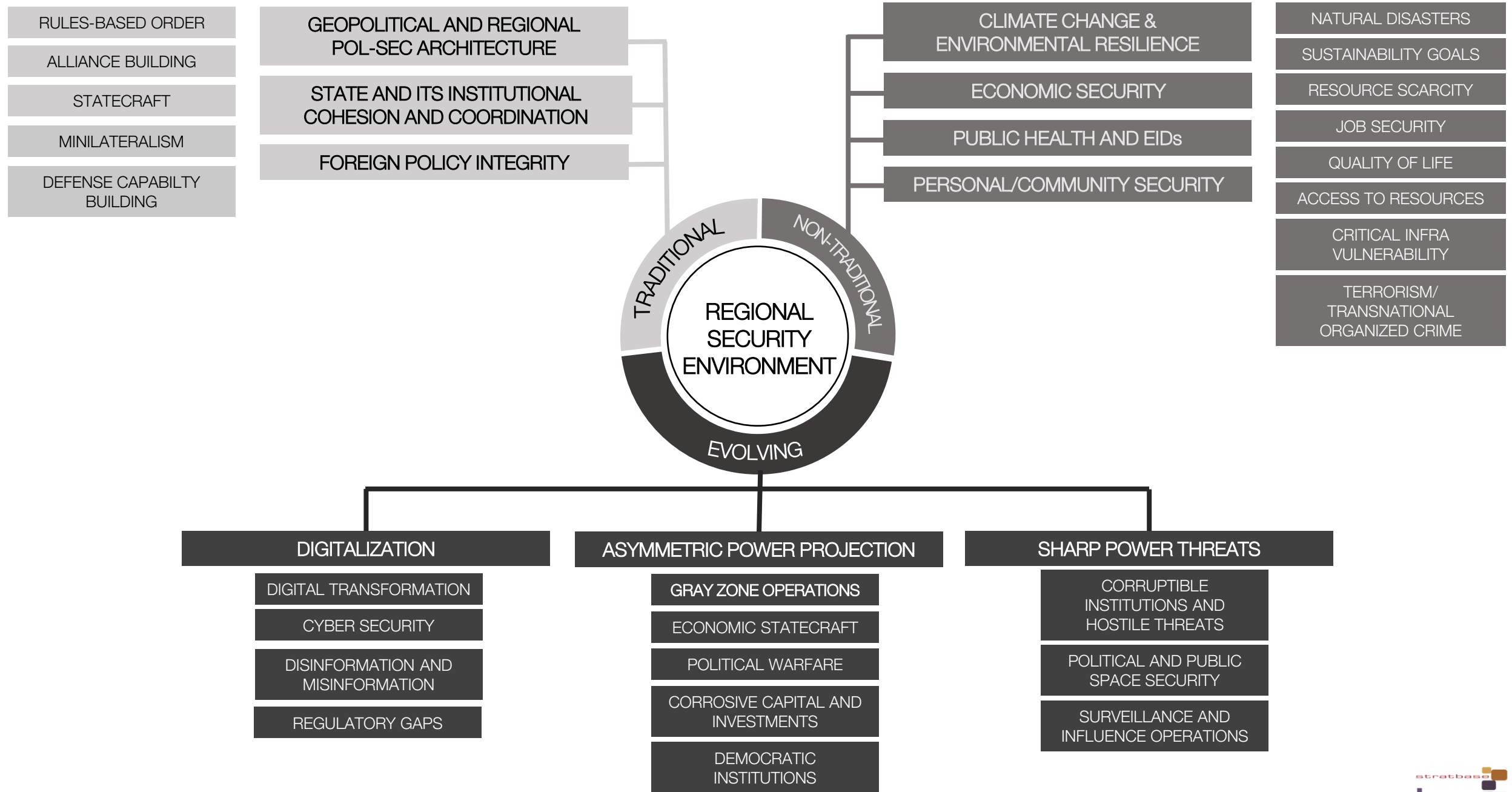


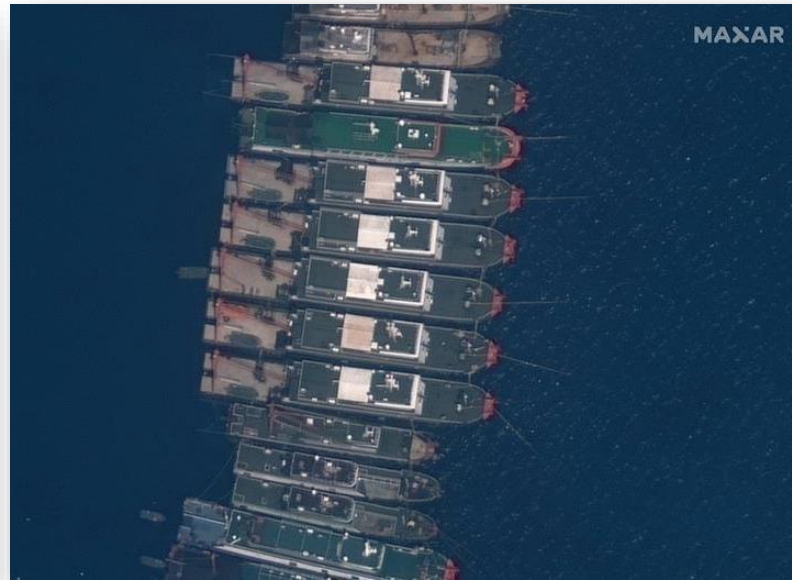
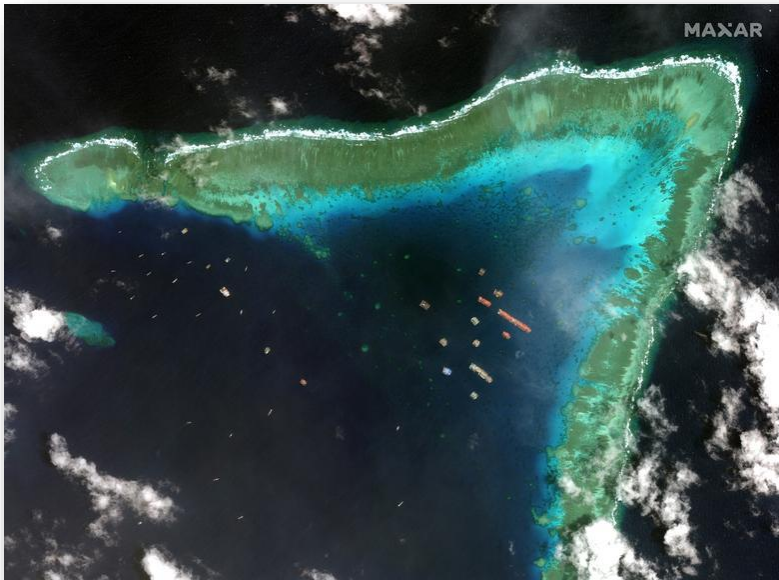


**Stratbase ADRI Foreign Policy Forum:
The Indo-Pacific Discussion Series**

Maintaining a Rules- Based Maritime Order

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (Manila Time)
14 April 2021 (Wednesday)





The Chinese incursion in Julian Felipe Reef on March 2021

Satellite Image Source: Similarity



“ China has recently enacted an alarming law that authorizes the Chinese Coast Guard to demolish structures on features it claims and use weapons against foreign vessels that ‘illegally’ enter its territory. While laws like these are nothing new, concerns revolve around how China may abuse the language of its domestically institutionalized and regulated law to justify the country’s aggressive actions at sea.

A New Threat to National and Regional Security

Philippine Daily Inquirer, February 2021

A portrait of Sec. Delfin Lorenzana, a man with glasses and a blue suit, speaking at a podium. In the background, several flags are visible, including the Philippine flag. An inset image in the top right corner shows a large blue and white ship, likely a Chinese fishing vessel, on the water.

“ We call on the Chinese to stop encroaching into our sovereign territory and immediately recall these ships violating our maritime rights.

Sec. Delfin Lorenzana
Department of National Defense

A portrait of Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr., a man with glasses and a dark suit, speaking at a podium.

“

Then tell them to move out. All of them.

If they're really fishing the fish are all gone; they're just fouling the water with waste. Nobody fishes by lashing ships together. Last time that was done was the Persian invasion of Greece recorded by Herodotus. We've seen the movie.”

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr.
on Chinese Foreign Ministry's remark that China does not plan to keep a “permanent presence” at the Julian Felipe Reef

April 7, 2021


PHOTO: SENATE PRIB

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Secretary Blinken's Call with Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Locsin

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken spoke today with Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Teodoro Locsin, Jr. Both expressed their shared concerns with the massing of PRC maritime militia vessels in the South China Sea, including at Whitsun Reef, and reiterated their calls on the PRC to abide by the 2016 arbitration ruling issued pursuant to the Law of the Sea Convention. Secretary Blinken also reaffirmed the applicability of the 1951 U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty to the South China Sea. Secretary Blinken and Secretary Locsin welcomed enhanced bilateral and multilateral cooperation on the South China Sea. Secretary Blinken also discussed the Administration's efforts to combat rising hate and violence against Asian-Americans.

 **Ambassador of Japan in the Philippines** @... · Mar 23

The South China Sea issues are directly related to peace & stability and a concern for all. Japan strongly opposes any action that heightens tensions. We support the enforcement of #RuleOfLaw in the sea & work with the int'l community to protect the free, open, and peaceful seas.



Steven J. Robinson AO
@AusAmbPH

Australia supports an **#IndoPacific** region which is secure open and inclusive. The South China Sea – a crucial international waterway – is governed by international rules and norms, particularly UNCLOS. We remain concerned about destabilising actions that could provoke escalation.

Readout of Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III Phone Call With Philippines Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III spoke with Philippines Secretary of National Defense Delfin Lorenzana on the phone today, to reaffirm their shared commitment to the U.S.-Philippines alliance.

Secretaries Austin and Lorenzana discussed the situation in the South China Sea, and the recent massing of People's Republic of China maritime militia vessels at Whitsun Reef. Secretary Austin reiterated the U.S. commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific, rooted in international law, including the U.N Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Secretary proposed several measures to deepen defense cooperation between the United States and the Philippines, including by enhancing situational awareness of threats in the South China Sea.

The two leaders also affirmed the value of the U.S.-Philippines Visiting Forces Agreement. They pledged to stay in close contact.

“

The Philippines is not alone in its fight to maintain the freedom of the seas and uphold a rules-based maritime order for the Indo-Pacific region. **Like-minded states with shared democratic values have expressed the same concern over China's actions in the West Philippine Sea.**

In the fight to secure the West Philippine Sea, the Philippine government must **stop downplaying China's expansionist agenda and must remain steadfast in reasserting our sovereignty.** The Philippines must leverage and strategize through multilateral alliances to protect our territorial integrity and maritime rights.





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