

Vietnam's Settlement of Border Disputes – Reviewing the Progress Made and Assessing Remaining Challenges

By Ramses Amer and Nguyen Hong Thao

Abstract

The main aim of this paper will be to analyse the progress made and the remaining challenges relating to Vietnam's border disputes. The paper will review the progress in resolving border with a focus on developments since the 1990s and also address the remaining challenges posed by the unsettled disputes. The settlements reached will be assessed in order to identify both the differences and similarities in the processes leading to the agreements and the legal principles applied and generate from the agreements. Thus, both the legal, political and geo-strategic dimensions will be examined as will environmental and resource aspects. In addressing the remaining unsettled disputes the management of them will be a core dimension. The challenges the unsettled disputes pose to Vietnam's relations with neighbouring countries will also be discussed.

Bios

Ramses Amer, PhD and Associate Professor in Peace and Conflict Research, is Senior Research Fellow, Center for Pacific Asia Studies (CPAS), Stockholm University, Stockholm, and Coordinator of the Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research. Major areas of research are a) security issues and conflict resolution in Southeast Asia and the

wider Pacific Asia and b) the role of the United Nations in the international system. He is the author of *The Sino-Vietnamese Approach to Managing Boundary Disputes*, Maritime Briefing, Vol. 3, No. 5 (Durham: International Boundaries Research Unit, University of Durham, 2002). He is co-editor, with Carlyle A. Thayer, of *Vietnamese Foreign Policy in Transition* (Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies; and, New York: St Martin's Press, 1999) He has also contributed to international journals and to books and has written reports on issues of Southeast Asian Affairs and on the United Nations.

Nguyen Hong Thao, PhD in Law, Hanoi National University, Hanoi, Vietnam. Major areas of research are: Public International Law, Law of the Sea, International Organizations and Environmental Law, International Economic Law. He is the author of *Le Vietnam et ses différends maritimes dans la mer de Bien Dong (Mer de Chine méridionale)* (Paris: Pédone. 2004); and, *Le Vietnam face aux problèmes de l'extension maritime dans la mer de Chine méridionale* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Septentrion Presses Universitaires, 1997). He has also published several articles about the South China Sea disputes. He has participated in several of the international Conferences in the quality of legal expert. He has also contributed to international journals on maritime issues.