

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2090
ANSWERED ON-17.12.2015

South China Sea dispute

2090 Dr. K.P. Ramalingam

- (a) whether India has asked the parties involved in South China Sea dispute to learn from the successful arbitration of India's maritime territorial dispute with Bangladesh under United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether China's nine dash line claims almost the entire South China Sea and Beijing continues to maintain that UNCLOS does not have the mandate to deal with territorial issues; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken by Government to convince all other parties involved in South China Sea dispute?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

- (a) In his remarks at the 10th East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur on 22 November 2015, Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi said, "India and Bangladesh recently settled their maritime boundary using the mechanism of UNCLOS. India hopes that all parties to the disputes in the South China Sea will abide by the Declaration on the Conduct on South China Sea and the guidelines on the implementation."
- (b) Sovereignty over the reefs, islands and adjacent territorial waters in South China Sea is disputed between many countries in the region. India is not a party to this dispute. China has not given precise geographical definition of its claims in the South China Sea. China is a party to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Premier Li Keqiang, in his speech at the 10th East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur on 22 November 2015, said that the countries directly concerned should peacefully settle sovereign and jurisdictional disputes through friendly consultations and negotiations in accordance with universally recognized principles of International Law, including UNCLOS of 1982.
- (c) India's position on South China Sea issue is consistent and has been reiterated bilaterally and in multilateral fora on several occasions. India supports freedom of navigation in international waters while maintaining that sovereignty issues must be resolved peacefully by the countries which are parties to the dispute in accordance with accepted principles of international law, including the United Nations' Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982. India has also taken note of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct which inter alia states that 'the Parties undertake to resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means, without resorting to threat or use of force.'