



# PRESS RELEASE

No.: VTG  
Date: 22 Aug 2011

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**Reference: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Strategic Assessment**

## PHILIPPINES AND NEW ZEALAND HOLD DEFENSE AND SECURITY TALKS

The Philippine Department of National Defense (DND) hosted the inaugural defense and security dialogue with New Zealand on 04 August 2011 in Manila. Meant to bolster defense ties and with exchanging views on each other's defense policies as one key step, the dialogue complements existing military cooperation between the Philippines and New Zealand through the Mutual Assistance Programme (MAP) Talks.

In the dialogue, the PH and NZ delegations headed by Defense undersecretary Pio Lorenzo Batino and Secretary of Defense John McKinnon, shared their views on the situation in the West Philippine Sea (WPS). Both sides noted that it is necessary for claimant countries to abide by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and adhere to the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), if peace and stability in the area were to be maintained.

Also discussed were the situation in the South Pacific, New Zealand's commitment in Timor Leste, Philippines-United States (US) defense engagements, the Five Power Defense (FPD) Arrangements, Philippine participation in the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations, New Zealand Defense Force's (NZDF's) peacekeeping and conflict prevention efforts.

Prospective areas of deeper defense cooperation were also examined particularly on peacekeeping operations as well as education and training. The PH and NZ co-chair the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM)-Plus Expert Working Group on Peacekeeping. A planning meeting where the two defense ministries charted the direction of the EWG for the next three years followed the next day.

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