May 27, 2015, Honolulu, Hawaii - The US expressed alarm on unilateral activities that are inconsistent with international law. Unilateral actions escalate tensions which may lead to actual conflict. The Secretaries emphasized that the rule of law should prevail with Secretary Ashton Carter expressing support for the Philippine use of international arbitration. Actions that could lead to accidents and untoward incidents due to miscalculations should be avoided. For the US, reclamation activities must stop and militarization of the area should be avoided. Secretary Carter reiterated that the US remains committed to the Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty.

Secretary Gazmin and Secretary Carter vowed to continue deepening bilateral defense and military relations through combined activities and regular policy consultations to ensure that positions and actions are coordinated. Both secretaries vowed to explore opportunities for developing each other’s defense posture.

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