

**NINETY-EIGHTH NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION
Cincinnati, Ohio
August 30, 31, September 1, 2016**

**Resolution No. 90: South China Sea Island Building
Origin: Maryland
Submitted by: Convention Committee on National Security**

WHEREAS, In the last 18 months, China has constructed more new island surface than all other nations have constructed throughout history and unlike other claimants, China has—at least briefly—placed military equipment on one of its artificial islands; and

WHEREAS, The South China Sea is international water and sovereignty in the area should be determined by the United Nations Convention on Laws of the Sea (UNCLOS); and

WHEREAS, UNCLOS states that countries can't claim sovereignty over any land masses that are submerged at high tide, or that were previously submerged but have been raised above high tide level by construction; and

WHEREAS, Control of the South China Sea would allow China to dominate a major trade route through which most of its imported oil flows; and

WHEREAS, It would also allow China to disrupt, or threaten to disrupt, trade shipments to all countries in East and Southeast Asia as well as deny access to foreign military forces, particularly the United States; and

WHEREAS, The floor of the South China Sea may contain massive oil and natural gas reserves and sovereignty over the region could give China a level of energy security and independence far beyond what it currently possesses; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By The American Legion in National Convention assembled in Cincinnati, Ohio, August 30, 31, September 1, 2016, That The American Legion urge Congress to use aircraft and naval vessels to assert freedom of navigation in the region, as demonstrated by the recent passage of the USS Fort Worth combat ship and the flight of the U.S. Navy P8 Poseidon surveillance aircraft, over the Chinese construction at Fiery Reef; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support strengthening regional allies through intelligence gathering and surveillance capabilities, and provide them with updated military hardware to counter China's technical advantages in both quantity and quality.