

Vietnam willing to talk to Manila about UN maritime claim

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HANOI: Vietnam yesterday said it is willing to talk to the Philippines to seek measures that are in line with the interests of both countries, after Manila last week filed a claim with the United Nations to an extended continental shelf in the South China Sea.

“Vietnam once again affirms its sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos in accordance with international law,” Foreign Ministry spokesperson Pham Thu Hang said in a statement posted on a government website, referring to the Paracel and Spratly Islands.

Vietnam and the Philippines are among the claimants to parts of the South China Sea, a busy global maritime waterway almost all of which is claimed by China.

The Philippines last week filed a claim with the UN to an extended continental shelf in the South China Sea, where US\$3 trillion worth of trade passes annually, and believed to be rich in oil and natural gas deposits, as well as fish stocks.

“Coastal states, when submitting their outer continental shelf boundaries, need to respect the legitimate rights and interests of other relevant coastal states with opposite or adjacent coastlines,” Hang said. **Reuters**