

Pentagon Calls Out China Coast Guard Sinking of Vietnamese Fishing Vessel

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Defense Department spoke out against the recent actions of the China Coast Guard that violated the accepted norms of maritime freedom of navigation and sovereignty.

“The Department of Defense is greatly concerned by reports of a China Coast Guard vessel’s collision with and sinking of a Vietnam fishing vessel in the vicinity of the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea,” the department said in an April 9 statement.

“The PRC’s behavior stands in contrast to the United States’ vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region, in which all nations, large and small, are secure in their sovereignty, free from coercion, and able to pursue economic growth consistent with accepted international rules and norms. The United States will continue to support efforts by our allies and partners to ensure freedom of navigation and economic opportunity throughout the entire Indo-Pacific.

“The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the importance of the rules-based international order, as it sets the conditions that enable us to address this shared threat in a way that is transparent, focused, and effective,” the statement added. “We call on all parties to refrain from actions that would destabilize the region, distract from the global response to the pandemic or risk needlessly contributing to loss of life and property.”