

Viet Nam's statement on SCUFN 34

1. On September 8, 2020, Viet Nam Hydrographic Office (VHO) submitted 70 proposals for naming of undersea features to the Sub-Committee on Undersea Features Names (SCUFN). Viet Nam's submissions are made in accordance with the procedure and technical guidance of International Hydrographic Organization and the GEBCO SCUFN.

2. The East Sea (South China Sea) bordered by Malaysia, Viet Nam, China, Philippine, Indonesia, Brunei and all coastal states to the East Sea are state party to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982). Like other country, Viet Nam is of the view that the UNCLOS 1982 is the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereignty, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones. We, therefore, believe that coastal States should be given priority for naming of undersea features which are located within their maritime zones established under the UNCLOS 1982. Our above-mentioned position has been presented during the 32nd and 33rd Meeting of the SCUFN. However, our position has not been recorded and reflected in the record of the last meeting.

3. All features submitted by VHO to SCUFN on September 8, 2020 are entirely located within Viet Nam's Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf established in conformity with the UNCLOS 1982. The Malaysia's representative confirmed and shared this fact. There exists no overlapping entitlement or dispute with China over this area.

4. Viet Nam is fully aware of the scientific nature of the SCUFN. However, due to China's statement relating to sovereign question over the Viet Nam's Hoang Sa (Paracel) Islands and the Truong Sa (Spratly) Islands, Viet Nam had to respond by reaffirming that Viet Nam has ample historical evidence and legal basis to affirm its sovereignty over the Hoang Sa Islands and the Truong Sa Islands in accordance with international law. Viet Nam also has sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction over its maritime zones established in accordance with UNCLOS 1982.

5. China has no legal basic, whatsoever, to make any claim over the area, the baselines or the group of islands in the East Sea (South China Sea), including Viet Nam's Hoang Sa Islands and Truong Sa Islands, cannot be drawn by joining the outermost points of their respective outermost features. As affirmed in relevant case law, the maritime entitlement of high-tide features in the Hoang Sa Islands and Truong Sa Islands shall be determined in accordance

with Art 121(3) of UNCLOS 1982. This position of Viet Nam has been enunciated in the Note Verbale N° 22/HC-2020 circulated in the United Nations in 30 March 2020 and in various documents circulated at the United Nations and submitted to relevant international bodies. Basically, Viet Nam's position is shared by states both within the region and beyond.

6. By submitting proposals for naming of undersea features to the CUFN, VHO wishes to make its contributions to the standardization of geographical names of undersea features in the East Sea, thus, encouraging the use of standardized names on maps, charts, scientific publications and documents for universal reference. Hence, VHO kindly requests the SCUFN members to consider our submission and proposal.