

REMARKS ON LAUNCHING OF EBOOK

Justice Antonio T. Carpio

Good afternoon to everyone. Thank you for attending this launch of my eBook, “The South China Sea Dispute: Philippine Sovereign Rights and Jurisdiction in the West Philippine Sea.” I am truly honored by your presence.

First, I wish to thank with gratitude all those who made this eBook possible. I start, of course, with Secretary Albert del Rosario, a true Filipino patriot, who invited me in 2015 to conduct a lecture tour to explain to the world the South China Sea dispute from the Philippine perspective. This eBook is mainly based on those foreign lectures, as well as on my lectures here in the Philippines. Secretary del Rosario will be remembered as the courageous Foreign Secretary who filed the landmark arbitration case against China. Thank you, Secretary del Rosario.

I thank the ambassadors, officials and staff of our foreign embassies and missions in the countries where I delivered my lectures. We can truly be proud of our Foreign Service officials and personnel who never fail to advance, promote and protect our national interests. I can attest to this.

I wish to thank the Filipino community of Law of the Sea advocates, and national security analysts, who shared with me their insights on the South China Sea dispute. We all have one common purpose - to defend, protect and preserve Philippine maritime entitlements in the West Philippine Sea.

I wish to thank the lawyers and staff in my office for their dedication and sacrifice in helping me produce this eBook.

Without the contributions and insights of all these people, whom I have specifically acknowledged by name in the eBook, this eBook would not have been possible.

I thank Mr. Mel Velasco Velarde, an IT entrepreneur, who did not hesitate to bid for the 1734 Murillo Velarde map, and donate it to the Filipino people, to show to the world that Scarborough Shoal and the Spratlys were already part of Philippine territory since at least 1734. The 1734 Murillo Velarde map is on exhibit here today - the very first exhibit of this particular map in the Philippines. The map arrived from London only six days ago. Thank you, Mel, for your generosity and patriotism.

I wish to thank my family, my wife Ruth, my number one critic, and my children Ronnie and Audrey, for their understanding and support during the time that I had to devote my attention, and almost all my free time, on my lectures and this eBook.

Of course, my lecture tour abroad would not have been possible without the approval of the Supreme Court *En Banc*. I wish to thank my esteemed colleagues in the Court for granting my request for time to do the lecture tour.

The purpose of this eBook is threefold.

First, this eBook is intended to inform the Filipino people about the vast maritime areas and rich natural resources that they own in the West Philippine Sea under international law. Once the

Filipino people realize that these maritime areas and resources belong to them and to future generations of Filipinos, as affirmed with finality by an UNCLOS arbitral tribunal, then the Filipino people will never allow any government administration, any government agency, or any government official to give away or compromise these maritime areas or resources in favor of a foreign state in violation of the Constitution.

Second, this eBook is intended to inform other coastal states of the world that it is in their national interest to help the Philippines protect Philippine maritime entitlements. That is why Vietnamese, Bahasa Indonesia, Japanese and Spanish versions of this eBook will be released later. For if China can grab for itself the maritime entitlements of the Philippines in violation of international law, then other coastal states may also lose their maritime entitlements to their more powerful neighboring states. This would end the rule of law in the oceans and seas of our planet.

Third, this eBook is intended to convince the Chinese people that the nine-dashed line has no legal or historical basis. That is why a Mandarin version of this eBook will be released hopefully before yearend. The Chinese government will not comply with the ruling of the arbitral tribunal unless the Chinese people understand that the nine-dashed line is baseless. If the Chinese government complies with the arbitral ruling today, when the Chinese people still believe, although erroneously, in the correctness of the nine-dashed line, that will only de-legitimize the Chinese government in the eyes of the Chinese people.

I believe that, like all other peoples of the world, the Chinese people are inherently good, but their government has drilled into their minds that they owned the South Chinese Sea since 2,000 years ago. This is, of course, utterly false and the world will never accept this. Once the Chinese people realize the falsity of the nine-dashed line, they themselves will be too ashamed to press the nine-dashed line claim before the world. That will be the time when the Chinese government can comply with the ruling of the arbitral tribunal.

Gen. Jose Almonte once said that there are only two ways for China to comply with the ruling of the arbitral tribunal. Either China itself voluntarily complies with the ruling, or world opinion forces China to comply with the ruling. World opinion matters because China needs the world to survive – China needs to export, and to import, to keep its economy going. China wants the respect of the world as a responsible world leader.

This eBook addresses these two ways of how China can comply with the ruling. Once the Chinese people understand that the nine-dashed line has no legal or historical basis, then they will in time give up, on their own, the nine-dashed line. And once the other coastal states of the world understand that they may be the next victims of the same maritime encroachment by their more powerful neighbors, they will, to protect their own national interest, join in convincing China to comply with the ruling.

Now, why an eBook and not a physical book? This book in its printed form can never be distributed in China. It will be banned. The only way this book can reach the Chinese people

is in electronic format through the Internet, and through multiple download sources. So, this eBook is downloadable for free at the website of the Institute for Maritime and Ocean Affairs, the website of the murillovelardemap, other download sites for free books, as well as the websites of several educational institutions in the Philippines.

A book in electronic format, downloadable for free in several websites, is the fastest way to distribute the book worldwide. In the Philippines, where Internet penetration is a little over 60% of the population, the distribution will hopefully be fast and widespread. So, everyone can read this eBook in his or her smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop. The high-resolution version of this eBook is interactive – if you click on a photo or map – it will bring you to the online source.

However, for those of you here who prefer to read this eBook in hard copy, we have printed, only for this occasion, 300 hardbound copies as a Launch Issue.

Thank you, happy reading, feast your eyes on the 1734 Murillo Velarde map, and enjoy the rest of the evening.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!