

## Experts call for ASEAN unity on South China Sea

Written by vuquangtiep

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US still plays critical role in security, but needs to clarify strategy.



Experts who gathered at a forum to discuss issues surrounding the South China Sea on Oct. 25 expressed concerns about increasing pressure from China. While they agreed on the importance of U.S. influence in the region, some called for unity within the ASEAN as the key to fending off Chinese aggression.

Julio Amador III, deputy director-general of the Foreign Service Institute in the Philippines, highlighted the importance of the U.S. for ASEAN members that are claimants in the South China Sea issue, at the Asia-Pacific Geo-Economic Strategy Forum in Singapore on Tuesday.

"The U.S. is still our security guarantor. Without the U.S.'s guarantee, individual ASEAN countries will be forced to make a choice and we may not like [it]," he said during a panel discussion at the event organized by Nikkei, the Center for Strategic International Studies, and the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

While acknowledging the U.S.'s role in the South China Sea, Zack Cooper, senior fellow for Asian security at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, noted that the current U.S. administration needs to clarify its strategy on the issue.

Read more at [Nikkei](#)

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