



Review of PH-US defense treaty urged amid 'new security challenges'

By Darryl John Esguerra

August 28, 2024, 3:37 pm

Share

Share 71



National Maritime Council Spokesperson Vice Adm (Ret) Alexander Lopez. *(PNA File Photo)*

MANILA – The National Maritime Council (NMC) believes it is about time the Philippines and the United States (US) review their over seven-decades-old Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) to make it more responsive to the modern security landscape.

The MDT, signed in 1951, dictates that the Philippines and the US would support each other if attacked by an external party.

According to NMC spokesperson Alexander Lopez, the defense pact may be revisited to make it "relevant to the new security challenges."

"Sa atin lang, 1951 pa 'yung Mutual Defense Treaty. Since then, the strategic landscape has changed so much. So, maybe it's high time now to make the review," Lopez, a retired military official, told reporters in a media interview in Malacañang on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. said the interpretation of the MDT, especially the provision regarding an armed attack, must be tailored and broadened for it to become more responsive to China's illegal activities in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

'Nobody buying China's narrative'

Meanwhile, Lopez also belied China's claims that Filipino personnel fell overboard and were rescued by the Chinese Coast Guard (CCG) following an incident at Escoda Shoal over the weekend.

According to Lopez, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has evidence that the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) vessel, the BRP Datu Sanday, encountered aggressive and dangerous maneuvers from multiple CCG vessels while en route to Escoda Shoal, a coral reef formation just some 70 nautical miles off mainland Palawan and is deep within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

He also denied that it was BRP Datu Sanday that intentionally rammed the CCG vessels as claimed by China.

"Nobody is buying that narrative. Kasi ang kanilang audience is basically domestic, samantalang tayo ay factual (Their audience are just their people while us, our basis are factual accounts) and we are even appreciative of the response of the international community condemning the harsh actions, aggressive actions, life threatening actions perpetrated by the Coast Guard vessels," Lopez said.

The NMC mouthpiece also said that it is not sensible that BRP Datu Sanday, a smaller vessel compared with those deployed by the CCG, initiated the skirmish. (PNA)

Related Articles



Filipinos favor well-reviewed products, user-friendly e-shop platforms

September 1, 2024 6:09 pm



Media, gender equality body reconstituted for gender mainstreaming

August 30, 2024 10:05 pm



SC validating report of data breach

August 28, 2024 5:53 pm



VP Sara declines defense of 2025 budget proposal

August 27, 2024 9:15 pm

Comments