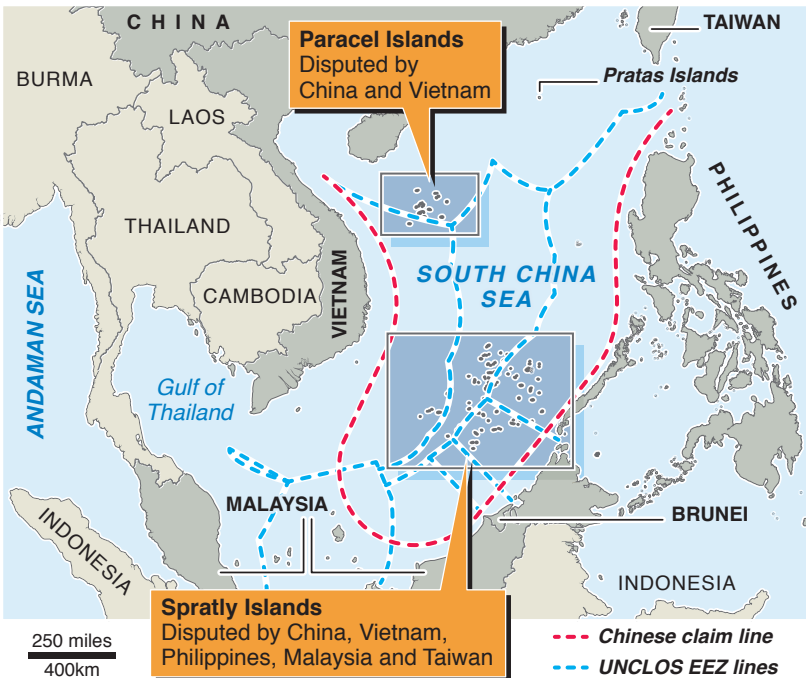


South China Sea maritime dispute



UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea – 1982 agreement which sets out rights and responsibilities of nations in their use of the world's oceans, establishing national maritime borders such as **EEZ** (Exclusive Economic Zones)

CONFLICTING INTERESTS

■ **China:** Has signed UNCLOS but says Paracel and Spratly islands have been Chinese since ancient times

■ **Malaysia:** Says its claims are based on 1979 map defining its continental shelf boundaries

■ **Philippines:** Issued decree in 1978, asserting its claim to region. Occupies several Spratly Islands

■ **Taiwan:** Claims Paracel, Pratas and Spratly islands and has built airport on Itu Aba in Spratlys

■ **Vietnam:** Hanoi has ratified UNCLOS but occupies dozens of Spratlys, some with military bases

■ **Brunei:** Claims part of South China Sea as its EEZ, including Louisa Reef in Spratlys. Occupies no islands