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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
FORT GEORGE G MEADE, MARYLAND 20755-6000

October 14, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Members of the United States Congress

FROM: Nathan Bronson
Director

SUBJECT: **Developing Weather Situation and International Relations in
the South China Sea Update #2**

Typhoon RBS has continued to intensify and all vessels have been cautioned to take cover at the nearest port. A small handful of ships have needed to divert into the territorial waters claimed by the PRC near the Paracel Islands, with some even requesting refuge at its ports. Many of these vessels have been granted safe harbor at these ports as a humanitarian gesture by the PRC, including vessels with ports of origins from Vietnam, The Philippines, and Malaysia, all countries that claim sovereignty to parts of the South China Sea.

However, the PRC has refused the request of one vessel from Taiwan any humanitarian assistance. Instead, the Chinese Navy blocked the vessel's ability to navigate to safer waters. The US Navy has been monitoring this situation and has announced that it will enter the disputed territorial waters to render assistance to this vessel in distress. The Chinese Navy has countered that any unauthorized intrusions into its territorial waters will be a violation of its sovereignty and deemed to be a hostile action, and could constitute a declaration of war. The US Navy is in the process of determining the best course of action.