

**Thesis Topic**

**The South China Sea Dispute: A Critical Analysis of the Maritime Conflict**



**Hamza Yaqoob**

**01-155152-025**

**Supervisor**

**Dr. Azhar Ahmad**

**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**BS International Relations**

**Islamabad**

## **Abstract**

*The overall purpose of this research is to focus on and examine the South China Sea issue and reasons behind the fragile nature of the dispute, as well as the strategic significance of the overall region for international shipping and trade. Importantly, this research endeavors to propose a potential solution to the maritime dispute from various different sources. As any prospective solution would have an impact, this research will also investigate into the effects of possible solution on the regional as well as international economic and security environment. The primary reason which forced me to choose this topic was the significance of South China Sea as an important waterway in the structure of international shipping and trade; hence, the overall international commerce as well security would largely be impacted by the controlling of this vital and strategic trade route. In addition, the region is estimated to have one of the biggest natural gas and oil reserves as well as large magnitude of seafood which is crucial for the populations of the region. As the issue has the potential for a military escalation to occur, it is important to assess the overall conditions in order to move towards a viable and peaceful solution.*

**Keywords:** South China Sea, Maritime dispute, International Shipping, Trade, Economics, Security, Peaceful resolution, regional dispute.

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## **List of Acronyms**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| UNCLOS | United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea          |
| ARF    | ASEAN Regional Forum                                 |
| ICJ    | International Court of Justice                       |
| ASEAN  | Association of Southeast Asian Nations               |
| SCS    | South China Sea                                      |
| CBM    | Confidence Building Measures                         |
| EEZ    | Exclusive Economic Zone                              |
| PRC    | People's Republic of China                           |
| SLOC   | Sea Lane of Communication                            |
| DOC    | Declaration of Conduct of Parties in South China Sea |

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my supervisor Dr.Azhar Ahmad who has been a tremendous mentor for me. I would like to thank him for his encouragement throughout my research and for allowing me to grow as a research scientist. His advice on research as well as on my career has truly been invaluable.

I would also like to thank my faculty of International Relations, Professor Dr.Adam Saud, Professor Dr. Irfan Qaisrani, Ms. Sanabil and Ms. Saira Nawaz for their continual support and advice. I also want to thank the overall faculty for their productive comments and suggestions. All of them have been there to support me ever since I've started working on this thesis.

A special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my mother and my siblings for all of the sacrifices that they have made on my behalf. Their prayers for me were what sustained me this far.

Finally, I thank my God Almighty, for letting me through all the difficulties. I have experienced His guidance day by day. He is the one who has been besides me throughout my life and will remain till the end. I will keep on trusting Him for my future.