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**Committee of 100 Calls for Calm, Cooperation, and Negotiations
Surrounding Events in the South China Sea**

(New York, NY, July 21, 2016) -- The Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruled last week on the dispute between China and the Philippines in the South China Sea. China has rejected the tribunal's assertion of jurisdiction. The United States has sent its highest-ranking naval admiral to China for talks. China and the United States have conducted naval exercises in the region. They have elevated activities.

The current situation has origins dating back centuries; it did not arise overnight. These territories have been subject to competing claims since the 1970s. The matter, however, has become increasingly contested. It is about much more than a legal case. It raises complex and profound issues of sovereignty, security, and rights.

The recent decision has surprised some observers in substance and scope. It was worded strongly. Beijing and Taipei have disagreed with the outcome and tone.

Since the issuance of the opinion, there has been apprehension about potential military actions. There are many risks presented. Yet a positive

outcome can be achieved. The various nations can work together directly, respectfully, and thoughtfully.

The Committee of 100 (C-100), a group of prominent Chinese Americans, urges all parties to recognize the importance of cooperation. A non-profit organization founded to promote positive relations between the United States and China, C-100 urges sustained discussion of these sensitive issues.

The most important bilateral relationship in the world today is between the United States and China. We should not allow momentary tensions to endanger the friendship and the economic potential between them, nor with other Asian countries. The United States and China have had constructive dialogue enabling cultural exchange and increased trade that has benefited the peoples of both nations as well as the world, for several generations since normalization of diplomatic relations. There is much more to the interactions of these societies than this single issue that has been in the news and many have a stake in ongoing progress.

Among the most difficult but most necessary aspect of international relations is perceiving matters from another's perspective. Committee of 100 was established to play a bridge-building role. Chinese hold deep feelings about the South China Sea. Americans are anxious about global change. An appreciation of these dynamics, and the potential for misunderstanding, is a realistic, practical approach.

It is paramount to maintain peace, through reasoned communications, while the process continues to resolve the controversies that have arisen. Leadership has remained calm, avoiding provocation. That spirit of peace will enable progress. There is every expectation that negotiations will occur.

The Committee of 100 calls upon all nations involved to engage in direct talks with one another. Our shared future depends on it.

The Committee of 100 is an international non-partisan leadership organization of prominent Chinese Americans in business, government, academia, and the arts. For over 25 years, the Committee has been committed to a dual mission of promoting the full participation of Chinese Americans in all fields of American life, and encouraging constructive relations between the peoples of the United States and Greater China. Learn more: Committee100.org.

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