

To enhance fighting skills, China's air force flies combat patrol over SCS

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In an attempt to improve its fighting ability, China's air force conducted a combat air patrol over disputed areas of the South China Sea. The admission to the activity was made by the Chinese air force itself.

The announcement comes after Beijing said it wanted to tamp down tensions following its strong rejection of an international tribunal that ruled that its claim to virtually all of the South China Sea has no legal basis.

The announcement today didn't mention when the exercises took place. Last month, after the July 12 ruling, the air force said that it had conducted patrols over the South China Sea and would make it "a regular practice."

In a statement, air force spokesman Senior Col Shen Jinke said the patrol was "to enhance combat capabilities to deal with various security threats" and to safeguard the country's sovereignty.

(With AP inputs)