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By JOSEPH G. LARIOS

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CHICAGO (*jGLi*) – After exactly ten months to the day, the Filipino Americans will hold simultaneous rallies again on May 11 before the Chinese Consulate and Chinese Embassy across the United States led by the same group, the U.S. Pinoys For Good Government (USP4GG), to protest China's recent aggressive encroachments on the Philippines's Scarborough Shoal.

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Loida Nicolas Lewis, national chair of USP4GG of New York, New York, on Thursday (April 26) called on Filipinos throughout the world to mount demonstrations in front of China's global embassies and consulates to protest

China

's recent intrusion into the

Philippines

' Scarborough Shoal. It was also last July 11 when USP4GG mobilized Filipino Americans and held simultaneous rallies

against

China

for the first time.

China considers the Scarborough Shoal, which is only 124 nautical miles from the Philippines' Zambales province, to be its "inherent territory" even though it is more than 500 nautical miles from the nearest

China

port

of

Hainan

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The territorial dispute over the Scarborough Shoal, which China calls the Huangyan Island and the Philippines refers to as the Panatag Shoal, has escalated in the past month as a result of these developments:

- Chinese navy ships recently confronted the Philippine navy vessel, BRP Gregorio del Pilar, when it sought to apprehend Chinese boats illegally fishing in the area. The Chinese fishing boats were found to contain corals, rare fish and live baby sharks, illegal cargo under Philippine law.

- Chinese navy ships have fired on and harassed unarmed Philippine fishing boats and exploration vessels, forcing them to withdraw.

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- Chinese navy ships have dropped steel posts and navigation buoys with Chinese markings in the water.

China's *Global Times*, published by the Chinese government's *People's Daily*, reported that China is prepared to engage in a small-scale war at sea with the Philippines

In its April 25 editorial, *Global Times* threatened that "China should select the most arrogant provocateur, conduct comprehensive strikes, and exert pressure economically, politically and militarily. If the water overwhelms China's knees, other countries will find their necks in the water."

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To diffuse the potential for war, the Philippines' Secretary of Foreign Affairs Albert Del Rosario proposed that the two countries bring their territorial dispute to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) but this proposal was immediately rejected by China

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Rodel Rodis, national president of the US Pinoys for Good Governance (USP4GG) of San Francisco, California, called on the Global Filipino Diaspora Council (GFDC) representing 12 million Filipinos scattered in 220 countries throughout the world to support the Philippines' sovereign claim to the Scarborough Shoal which has been in Philippine maps since 1743.

“A strong showing of support by Filipinos in the Diaspora will impress on China that it is not just confronting a small country

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in Asia that it can bully, but one that has concerned citizens throughout the world who can galvanize global public opinion against China,” Rodis said.

Ted Laguatan, USP4GG national spokesman, added: “We are calling on all Filipinos and all those others who believe in freedom and the right of every country to control its own destiny to join us in a global demonstration at Chinese embassies and consulates in the United States and around the world at 12 noon on Friday, May 11.”

Meanwhile in Chicago, Illinois, Yoly Tubalinal, publisher-editor of *Fil Am Megascene*, and Marlon L. Pecson, both members of USP4GG of Chicago, are appealing to Fil Ams to join the rally in front of the Chinese Consulate at 100 West Erie Street next May 11 at noon.

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For more information, log on to www.usp4gg.org or www.epeoplepower.ph

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