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MM on China-Japan spat

It's fair for smaller countries to turn to international conventions
 By Jeremy Au Yong



Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew supports the use of international conventions to solve border disputes. -- PHOTO: ST/FRANCIS ONG PG

MINISTER Mentor Lee Kuan Yew supports the use of international conventions to solve border disputes, especially when the countries involved are not of equal standing.

By way of illustration, he said it was 'fair' for smaller countries like Vietnam to resolve disputes with China using conventions like Unclos - the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

He made the point at a dialogue of the Russia-Singapore Business Forum yesterday, when he was asked by former Japanese senator Kotaro Tamura to comment on the ongoing China-Japan dispute.

Mr Tamura, in his question, made his feelings clear, describing China as a 'teenager' in its handling of the situation.

Adding that China was also pushing around other countries like those in South-east Asia, he asked if it was a good idea for countries with potential border problems to team up and take China into a multilateral negotiation.

Mr Lee, in his response, noted that multiparty negotiations had been proposed by United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in a visit to Vietnam this July.

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