

6-24-2016

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Recommended Citation

Bert Chapman. "Geopolitical Implications of the Sino-Japanese East China Sea Dispute for the U.S." *Geopolitics, History, and International Relations*, 9 (2)(2017): 15-54.

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Geopolitics, History, and International Relations 9(2)
2017, pp. 15–54, ISSN 1948-9145, eISSN 2374-4383

GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SINO-JAPANESE EAST CHINA SEA DISPUTE FOR THE U.S.

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ABSTRACT. Much analysis on Asian strategic challenges facing the U.S. has justifiably emphasized the South China Sea (SCS). This has also been reflected in 2016 presidential campaign debate on the SCS as an emerging area of U.S. foreign and national security policy concern. The East China Sea (ECS) is at least as important for the strategic interests of the U.S. and its allies given the tension between China and Japan over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, potential energy resources in this body of water, increasing defense spending by adjacent geographic powers, the area's importance as a maritime international trade route, and the possibility that communication failures and miscalculation by interested powers could result in military conflict. This work will examine the historical background of this conflict, international legal issues and claims, public opinion within China and Japan, the response of U.S. presidential administrations to this conflict, and how the U.S. Congress has examined it and sought to influence U.S. diplomatic and military responses to this event, and includes recommendations for U.S. and allied military action against China if war occurs. It concludes by making recommendations for the U.S. to maintain candid communications with China, support its strategic interests and those of our allies against Chinese assertiveness, and how to justify an assertive geopolitical stance to domestic and international opinion.

Keywords: geopolitics; East China Sea; Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands; China; Japan; United States; U.S. Congress; Air Defense Identification Zone; Western Pacific Ocean; military preparedness

How to cite: Chapman, Bert (2017), "Geopolitical Implications of the Sino-Japanese East China Sea Dispute for the U.S.," *Geopolitics, History, and International Relations* 9(2): 15–54.

Received 18 May 2016 • Received in revised form 21 June 2016
Accepted 21 June 2016 • Available online 15 July 2016

Introduction

Much attention has been given to the (SCS) as a potential source of international conflict due to its potentially large mineral resources, its location adjacent to significant international trade routes like the Straits of Malacca, and China's aggressively claiming portions of this body of water by building and weaponizing islands in the SCS.¹ The (ECS) is of comparable international economic, political, and strategic significance to the SCS because activities in its waters and airspace affect the U.S., China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan while serving must be a key focal point of the U.S. Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAMGC) which must be augmented with requisite funding, force augmentation, equipment, and strategic doctrine. Such concrete support is critical if the U.S. and its allies must engage and triumph in a military conflict with China.²

The (ECS) is an economically and strategically important body of water in the Western Pacific Ocean. With maritime geospatial coverage consisting of approximately 482,000 square miles, it is bordered by the Yellow Sea to the north, the SCS and Taiwan to the south, Japan's Ryukyu and Kyushu islands to the east, and China's mainland to the west including the major city of Shanghai. China, Japan, Taiwan, and the U.S. all have acute geopolitical interests in these waters which are currently administered by Japan. Territories of particular concern are a series of islands called the Senkaku Islands by Japan, Diaoyu Islands by China, and Diaoyutai Islands by Taiwan which are part of the Ryukyu island chain administered by Japan. These eight uninhabited islands (the largest being two miles long and less than a mile wide) are barren, but sovereignty over them is a matter of acute geopolitical contention between these countries under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates the ECS contains nearly 200 million barrels of oil in proven and probable reserves and 1–2 trillion cubic feet of proved and probable natural gas reserves. If estimates of these oil reserves are true and they can be extracted, China would no longer have to import them from the Persian Gulf region or SCS consequently diminishing the chances of its energy supply lines to potential disruption. Tides in this region during December 2015 ranged from -0.1 feet to 6.6 feet indicating an area affected by monsoonal winds, typhoons, strong storms, and local winds, and a growing population which can significantly influence regional aviation, meteorological, and shipping activity.³

During 2013 trade between China and Japan was \$182.11 billion and trade between Japan and China was \$129.88 billion, trade between China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the U.S. which is primarily seaborne and can cross through the ECS in 2015 was \$598.1 billion between China and the

U.S., \$193.6 billion between Japan and the U.S., \$115.3 billion between South Korea and the U.S., and \$66.6 billion between Taiwan and the U.S. representing a cumulative total of \$973.6 billion and 35.1% of U.S. international trade in 2015 with these four countries being among the top 9 U.S. trading partners. Besides ports in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan in proximity to the ECS, major Chinese ports whose merchandise is carried from locations adjacent to the ECS though the ECS to global markets include Dalian, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Ningbo, Qingdao, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Tianjin which currently rank among eight of the world's 14 busiest ports in container rankings according to the World Shipping Council.⁴

Figure 1 East China Sea Region



Source: National Public Radio

Historical Background

Both China and Japan have significant historical claims to ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Beijing claims that the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) regarded the islands as part of its maritime territory and included them on maps. China also claims the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) placed these islands under Taiwan's jurisdiction. However, while Chinese fishermen may have used the islands for temporary sanctuary, China never established permanent civilian or military settlement on the islands and permanent naval forces did not patrol adjacent waters.⁵

Japan contends there is no territorial dispute to these islands and maintains it claimed them in January 1895 when the Japanese Emperor Meiji approved an ordinance annexing them. Tokyo argues that the islands were uninhabited and there was no evidence that China ever controlled them which China and Taiwan reject. The May 1895 Shimonoseki Treaty ended the 1894–1895 Sino-Japanese War and saw China cede Taiwan and related islands to Japan although the treaty does not mention these islands which were not discussed during the negotiating sessions.⁶

Japan retained control over these islands through World War II when it relinquished authority over Taiwan in October 1945 without mentioning the disposition of these islands. The U.S. began administering the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in 1953 as a result of the 1951 peace treaty with Japan which did not mention these islands, but alluded to other islands reverting to Chinese control or claimed by China. Article 3 of this treaty gave the U.S. sole powers of administration of Nansei Shoto south of 29° north latitude which includes these islands.⁷

The U.S. administered Nansei Shoto and other Ryukyu Islands until they were returned to Japan under the Okinawa Reversion Treaty which was signed on June 17, 1971 and entered into force on May 15, 1972. The period leading up to this agreement saw the 1968 publication of a report by the United Nations Committee for the Coordination of Joint Prospecting for Mineral Resources in Asian Offshore Areas maintaining that there could be significant energy deposits under the ECS. The potential presence of such deposits attracted acute interest from China, Japan, and Taiwan and has heavily influenced their subsequent interest in these waters.⁸

Increasing military expenditures by adjacent countries, numerous incidents involving China and Japan in these waters, and growing pressure on the U.S. to maintain international freedom of navigation and air space in the region, have heightened the ECS' influence as an emerging international crisis region with some analysts observing that pre-World War I strategic historical analogies correctly describe this region. Other analysts stress the greater likelihood of its emergence as a future international region of crisis and potential conflict. Divergent perspectives also exist on the appropriateness of the pre-World War II Munich appeasement analogy to China's strategic rise and military assertiveness.⁹

U.S. Presidential Administration Reactions

The U.S. has not taken an official position on Chinese, Japanese, and Taiwanese claims to these islands. In written testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on October 20, 1971, State Department Acting Assistant Legal Adviser Robert Starr maintained that returning administrative rights to

Japan did not prejudice legal claims by other countries and that the U.S. regards conflicting claims to these islands as a matter to be resolved by the countries directly concerned.¹⁰

However, this rhetorical diplomatic nuancing stands in contrast to the 1960 U.S. Japan Security Treaty whose Article 5 implicitly contains language saying that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are part of Okinawa and that the U.S. is responsible for their defense. This was reaffirmed by Secretary of State William Rogers and Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard in congressional testimony on the Okinawa Reversion Treaty.¹¹ Subsequent U.S. presidential administrations have reaffirmed that the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are covered by the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty as demonstrated by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Armitage on February 2, 2004, during remarks in Tokyo;¹² Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on October 30, 2010, in Hanoi;¹³ and by President Barack Obama during an April 24, 2014, Tokyo press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.¹⁴

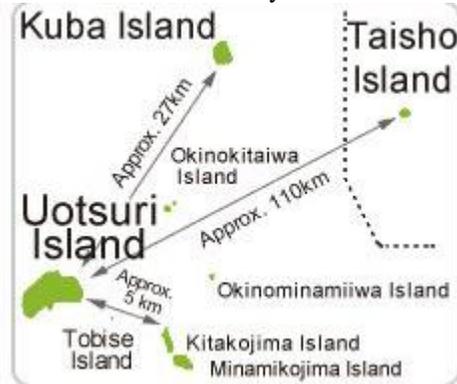
This U.S. commitment was further documented in U.S.–Japan Defense Cooperation guidelines on April 27, 2015 stressing that the U.S.–Japan Security Treaty and U.S.–Japanese alliance fundamentals are unchanged. These guidelines stressed that Japan has primary responsibility for its national defense; that both governments will share and protect information and intelligence while maintaining common situational awareness against potential threats to the ECS; that U.S. and Japanese defense forces will maintain and strengthen deterrence and defense against ballistic missile launches, aerial incursions, and maritime threats; and coordinate responses to military attacks against Japan across the combat spectrum.¹⁵

Figure 2 Uotsuri Island in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands



Source: Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Figure 3 Detailed Map of Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands



Source: Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs

International Legal Issues

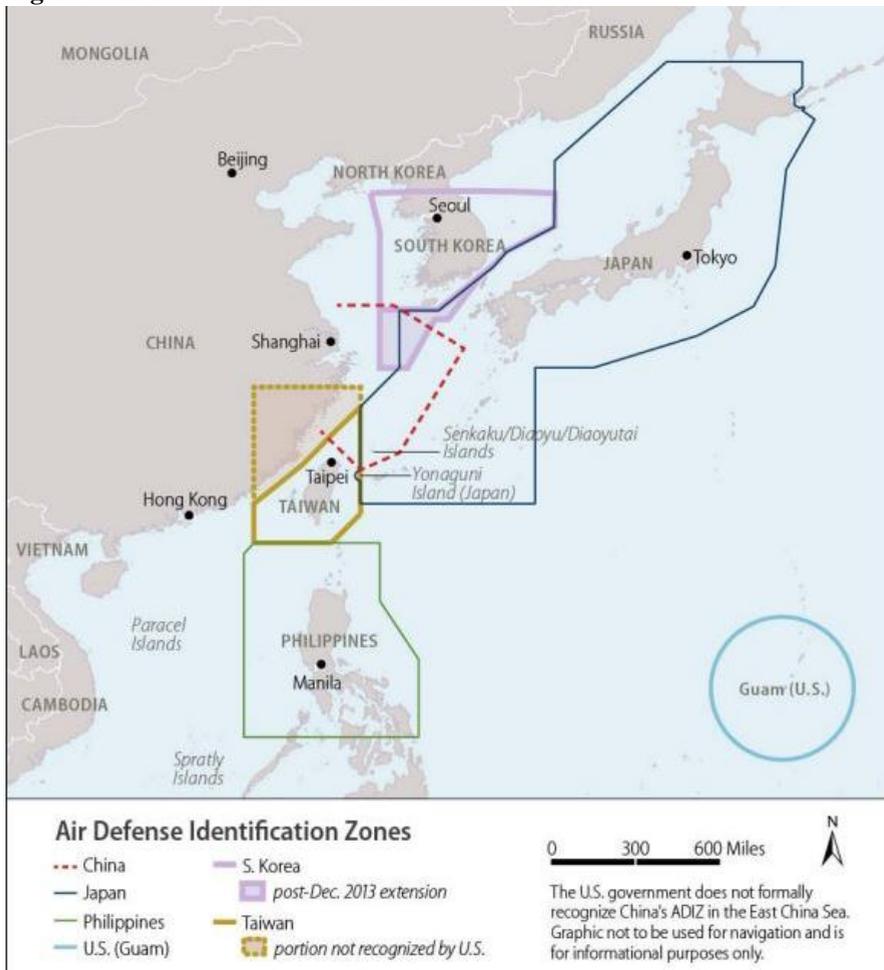
Numerous international legal issues affect the ECS and the concerns of adjoining countries including China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Besides disputing over the territorial sovereignty of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, Beijing, and Tokyo disagree over ECS maritime boundaries. China claims the entire continental shelf to the Okinawa Trough while Japan claims the same shelf to a median line between its undisputed territory and Chinese territory. Beginning in the 1970s, China has been exploring and building pipelines on and around its side of the median line in disputed waters containing oil and gas deposits. During the 2000s, both countries began pursuing a bilateral agreement over exploiting undersea hydrocarbon resources.¹⁶

Skepticism over the utility of international law to Chinese and Japanese claims over these islands has been expressed because the United Nations Commission on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) general rules fail to easily accommodate the ECS' unique geography, international customary law on territorial acquisition encourages the "display of sovereignty" and penalizes states appearing to acquiesce to a rival's territorial claims, the vagueness of customary international law encourages parties to advocate international legal norms benefitting their national interests, and both China and Japan have hesitated to have their claims adjudicated by an international legal body for fear of an adverse ruling which could produce negative domestic political repercussions. Although a 2008 law review analysis maintained Japan's claim might be stronger if submitted to International Court of Justice arbitration, enough uncertainty remains to prevent either Beijing or Tokyo from engaging in such action.¹⁷

In June 2008, both countries reached agreement on jointly exploring for gas and oil in two of the fields (Chunxiao/Shirabaka) close to or straddling the median line Japan claims as the rightful boundary between China and Japan's 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs). These are defined by (UNCLOS) as area extending from a country's coastline up to 200 nautical miles from the edge of a country's territorial sea which ends 12 miles from its coastline. The Sino-Japanese joint development states it does not prejudice either side's legal claims in the region.¹⁸

However, the cooperative atmosphere of the 2008 mineral resources development agreement was set aside by China's November 23, 2013 decision to establish an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the ECS.

Figure 4 Air Defense Identification Zones in East Asia



Source: Congressional Research Service

ADIZ's, as this map indicates, have been established by surrounding regional countries. An ADIZ consists of airspace beyond a country's sovereign territory in which a country requires identifying, locating, and air traffic control of aircraft flying in this airspace due to national security concerns. No international law governs ADIZs, although various legal standards such as freedom of navigation remain. Beijing did not consult with the U.S. and other affected countries about this decision which implied that China would use force against aircraft failing to follow its ADIZ guidelines. Probable reasons for Beijing declaring this ADIZ include challenging Japanese administration of ECS islands, bolstering China's claims to these islands, and protesting U.S. military surveillance activities in this area.

The U.S. criticized China's declaration as destabilizing and increasing regional conflict risks, announced that it did not accept the ADIZ, and the U.S. military continued flying its aircraft through the ADIZ without notifying China or responding to Chinese requests for identification. However, the Federal Aviation Administration distributed Chinese requirements for flying in this ADIZ to commercial airlines as part of its Notices to Airmen (NOTAM) announcements. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan oppose the Chinese ADIZ, which overlaps their existing ADIZs, and continue existing military practices in the ADIZ.¹⁹

China may have intercepted some Japanese military aircraft in this ADIZ in 2014. This ADIZ has not appeared to disrupt commercial aircraft traffic, but on July 25, 2015, Beijing turned back Lao Airlines flight QV916 traveling from South Korea to Laos as it entered the ECS ADIZ with China claiming this happened due to noncompliance with its ADIZ regulations.²⁰ Japanese air scrambles to intercept Chinese aerial intrusions into Japanese airspace have also increased steadily from 2010–2015 as the following chart demonstrates:

2010	96
2011	156
2012	306
2013	415
2014	464
2015	571 ²¹

China opposes using median lines to delineate maritime boundaries and seeks to use its sovereignty claims in the SCS by applying them to the ECS to keep potential opponents at long range from its coast, intimidate them with its military power, and create a *Mare Nostrum* (our sea) perception of adjacent waters. China also objects to U.S. military activities in the ECS which have produced incidents in 2001 and 2009, even though UNCLOS' Article 58 is intended to preserve the right of states to conduct military operations in

EEZs. Since Beijing has designated the waters from Japan's Southwest Islands to Taiwan as its First Island chain and the route from the Bonin Islands to Mariana, Guam, and Palau as its Second Island Chain, potential Sino-Japanese conflict over these regions is not likely to be resolved easily and will affect the U.S. due to Guam being a U.S. territory with significant military bases and extensive regional U.S. strategic interests. Washington plans to place military training facilities on Pagan and Tinian in the Northern Marianas which is a U.S. Commonwealth. The U.S. also has a long-standing commitment to international freedom of navigation (FON) and regularly criticizes China for restricting FON in the ECS and elsewhere through excessive straight line baselines; falsely claiming jurisdiction of EEZ airspace; restricting foreign aircraft flying through an ADIZ without intending to enter national airspace; and domestic law criminalizing surveying activity by foreign entities within an EEZ.²²

Regional Defense Spending

This topic's geopolitical importance is further magnified by increasing defense spending by regionally adjacent ECS powers, the area's important to international trade routes, and its proximity to vital U.S. interests including maintaining alliances with Japan and South Korea and the imperative for the U.S. to have unfettered access to these waters to defend its ties with these countries and prevent hegemonic aspirations by China. According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), China accounts for 19.8% of global defense spending increases with other Asian countries accounting for 9.4% of these increases. Its defense spending increased from \$131 billion in 2014 to \$146 billion in 2015. Beijing's active duty military personnel numbers 2,333,000, its naval cruisers, destroyers, and frigates number 73; its tactical aircraft number 1,866, and its attack/guided missile submarines number 56 far ahead of both South Korea and Japan.²³

China, Japan, and South Korea account for nearly 62% of Asian defense spending with Chinese spending representing 41% of region's overall expenditures. China's 2015 defense white paper stresses the rhetoric of a "Chinese Dream" to enhance China's military strength. Other characteristics of this document include safeguarding China's security and interests in new domains; safeguarding national territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests; seizing the strategic initiative in military struggle; and shifting the PLAN and PLAAF emphasis from offshore waters and territorial airspace defense to open seas protection, building a combined multifunctional and efficient marine combat force structure, incorporating offensive capabilities into air operations, building an air-space defense force capable of operating in highly informatized operations, and boosting strategic early warning, air strike, air

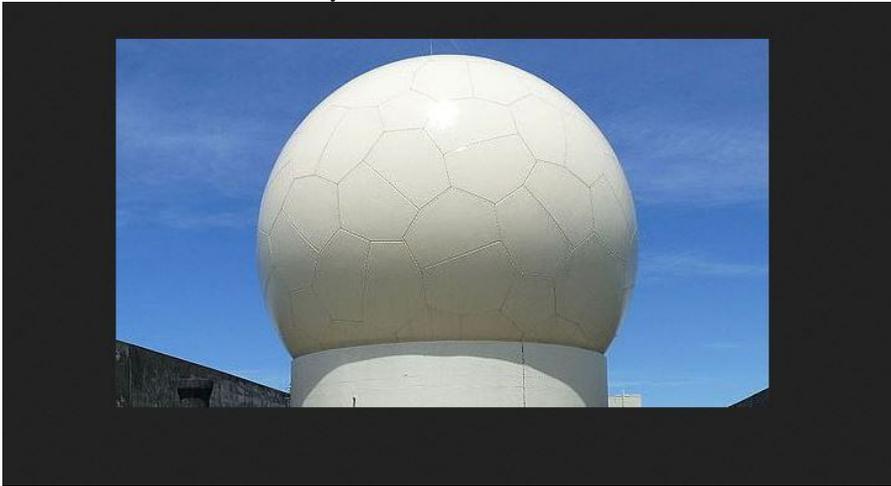
and missile defense, information countermeasures, information operations, and strategic protection and combat support capabilities.²⁴

During 2015, Japan's Ministry of Defense (MOD) requested a 2.2% budget increase in 2015 marking the fourth straight year of consecutive defense budget increases. New government guidelines were implemented allowing Tokyo greater latitude to use force to defend the U.S. even if Japan is not directly attacked but believes its own security is endangered. These guidelines enable Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) to protect U.S. shipping, intercept ballistic missiles, and provide logistical support if war occurs.²⁵

A 2013 Japanese MOD planning document stressed the growing threat of North Korean military provocations such as ballistic missile tests and emphasizing increasing Chinese maritime military assertiveness including intrusions into Japanese territorial waters and airspace and establishing an ADIZ. This document recommended responding to these developments by enhancing intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance resources, strengthening and expanding the U.S. alliance by joint training exercises, realigning U.S. force structure in Japan, defeating attacks on remote islands by securing air and maritime superiority through military interdiction, and effectively responding to ballistic missile and cyber attacks through multi-layered defenses.²⁶

Specific quantitative enhancements to Japanese Self-Defense Force (JSDF) proposed in this document included increasing the number of destroyers from 47–54; submarines from 16–22; and fighter planes from 260–280.²⁷ Japan possesses extensive underwater, shore-based, and airborne maritime surveillance capabilities. These include undersea hydrophone arrays connected to shore stations with electronic intelligence (ELINT) systems for monitoring, identifying, and tracking submarine and surface traffic in Tokyo's internal straits and surrounding seas. Some of these assets are operated jointly with the U.S. Navy and are critically important to the U.S. These submarine detection assets could prove decisive in any submarine confrontation, but have vulnerable facilities making them attractive targets to Beijing in a conflict. Their presence produces the possibility of escalation involving U.S. forces and possible use of nuclear options.²⁸

Figure 5 Japan’s Yonaguni Island Radar-80 Miles South of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands



Source: Maritime Executive

Significant attention and financial resources are devoted to remote island defense in Japan’s FY 2016 defense budget as reflected in this statement: “In order to respond to attacks on remote islands, the MOD will develop continuous surveillance capabilities, ensure and maintain air superiority and maritime supremacy, enhance rapid deployment and response capabilities such as transportation and amphibious operation capabilities, and strengthen the infrastructure for C3I capabilities.” Specific programmatic activities involved in these aspirations include:

- Developing coastal observation facilities on Yonaguni Island.
- Deploying mobile warning and control radar in Amani-Oshima.
- Conducting studies to determine desirable air defense posture in remote Pacific Islands.
- Acquiring 6 F-35A Joint Strike Fighter aircraft.
- Shifting fighter posture squadrons to develop readiness for air superiority.
- Ensuring and maintaining maritime supremacy by fixed wing aircraft, an Aegis equipped destroyer, and a maritime operations center; and
- Strengthening command, control, communications, and intelligence capabilities in the ECS.²⁹

Chinese and Japanese Public Opinion

This topic has garnered significant interest in Chinese and Japanese public opinion and in scholarly literature on the ECS. A search of the Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database revealed just six entries

on the ECS in 2005 and eight entries on this subject in 2006. Scholarly interest in this topic significantly increased between 2011 and 2015 with the number of entries on this topic significantly increasing between 2011 and 2014 before falling in 2015:

2011	21
2012	19
2013	22
2014	25
2015	12 ³⁰

A search of this database for entries on the Diaoyu Islands revealed six entries in 2005 and eight entries in 2006. A comparable spike in CNKI entries on this topic is reflected in the following table for 2011–2014 along with declining entries in 2015:

2011	21
2012	19
2013	22
2014	25
2015	12 ³¹

Recent decades have seen periodic incidents between Japan and China in the ECS which have attracted public attention and international reaction. In March and April 1978, members of Japan’s Diet (Parliament) opposed to a Peace and Friendship Treaty with China raised the matter of these islands and the nationalist Japanese Youth Federation (JYF) built a lighthouse on the largest of these islands symbolizing Tokyo’s claims. China responded by deploying a flotilla of more than eighty armed fishing boats circling the items but the desire of a People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) commander to conduct a major exercise was overruled by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping.³²

A 1990 dispute over these islands was influenced by Beijing’s 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown and the desire of Chinese leaders to show their strength at a time of international sanctions against China following this event. This was reflected in commemorations of the 150th anniversary of the Opium War and a museum exhibit in Beijing recognizing Chinese resistance to Japanese aggression between 1937 and 1945. The dispute began when Japanese media reported on September 29, 1990, that Japan’s Maritime Safety Agency (JMSA) was preparing to recognize the 1978 lighthouse as an “official navigation mark which the JYF had repaired in 1988–1989 to meet the technical standards necessary for official recognition. Taiwan made a written protest to Japan and China’s Foreign Ministry condemned recognition of the lighthouse on October 18, 1990, as violating Chinese sovereignty and

demanding Tokyo curtail nationalistic organization activities. Japan's Foreign Ministry reaffirmed Japan's claim to the islands.

On October 21, 1990, the JMSA repelled two boats of Taiwanese activists seeking to put a torch on the islands to symbolize Taipei's sovereignty. China's Foreign Ministry denounced Japan's actions and anti-Japanese demonstrations occurred in Hong Kong and newspaper articles excoriated "Japanese militarism." Taiwan held an emergency cabinet meeting, issued a statement protesting Tokyo's actions and reaffirming Taipei's sovereignty, and urged for the issue to be resolved diplomatically. Although Beijing's government was relatively quiet about this, students in Beijing heard about this incident through British Broadcasting Corporation and Voice of America broadcasts and protested the Japanese actions complaining about their own government's restrained response.³³

In 1992 China's National Peoples Congress enacted a "Law on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone." This statute held expansive aspirations toward Beijing's ownership of adjoining land territory and territorial waters with Article 2 asserting: "The territorial sea of the People's Republic of China is the sea belt adjacent to the land territory and the internal waters of the People's Republic of China. The land territory of the People's Republic of China includes the mainland of the People's Republic of China and its coastal islands; Taiwan and all islands appertaining thereto including the Diaoyu Islands; the Penghu Islands; the Dongsha Islands; the Xisha Islands; the Zhongsha Islands and the Nansha Islands; as well as all the other islands belonging to the People's Republic of China."³⁴

An additional crisis occurred in July 1996 when the JYF erected a solar powered aluminum lighthouse on the islands. A few days later Japan ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and declared a 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone including these islands. China had also ratified UNCLOS during this time period reaffirming what it saw as its sovereignty over the islands and Japanese national groups advocated that Tokyo claim the lighthouse as an official Japanese landmark. On July 29, 1996 Japanese Prime Minister Ryūtarō Hashimoto visited the controversial Yakasuni Shrine honoring Japanese war dead and on August 18, 1996, the Senkaku Islands Defense Association put a wooden Japanese flag next to one of the lighthouses.³⁵

Tensions were exacerbated when Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda reaffirmed Japan's claims with a Hong Kong newspaper with Ikeda asserting: "The Diaoyu Islands have always been Japan's territory; Japan already effectively governs the islands, so the territorial issue does not exist." Following September 9, 1996, JYF repairs of the typhoon damaged lighthouse, China's Foreign Ministry strongly protested to Japan warning that if Tokyo did not take measures to prevent "infringements" on Chinese sover-

eignty that this subject would become more serious and complicated. On September 13–14, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) practiced blockades and landings on islands off Liaoning Province which could be interpreted as warnings to Tokyo. Anti-Japanese demonstrations occurred in Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan with Hong Kong protestors presenting the Chinese government with 15,000 signatures urging a more resolute stand against Japan. Sino-Japanese diplomatic meetings over the next few months partially eased tensions though acute and lingering displeasure toward Beijing’s perceived softness on this issue rankled many in China.³⁶

Following a few years of quiescence, contentiousness over these islands flared up again during 2004–2005. During January 2004, two Chinese fishing vessels working in waters near these islands were attacked by Japanese patrol boats. March 2004 saw seven members of the China Federation for Defending the Diaoyu Islands land on Uotsori Island. These individuals were detained by the Japanese Coast Guard and deported to China two days later. Beijing protested Tokyo’s action which was supported by anti-Japanese activists who protested outside the Japanese Embassy in Beijing under close Chinese police supervision. In November 2004, the Japanese military drafted a contingency plan designed to defend remote southern islands off Kyushu and Okinawa from potential invasion.

In February 2005 Japan announced that the lighthouse built by Japanese activists was placed under national control and protection which China described as “a serious provocation and violation of Chinese territory.” This time period also saw Japan and the U.S. issue a joint regional security declaration stating that peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question was a shared strategic issue and in April 2005 Japan began allocating gas exploration rights in Chinese-claimed areas. In addition, individuals and organizations such as the China Federation to Defend the Diaoyu Islands began using emerging Internet social media and cell phones to unleash anti-Japanese protests which reached 40 Chinese cities, featured attacks on the Japanese Embassy and Japanese owned businesses, and were very difficult for Chinese authorities to control.

A sign of China’s response to these 2004–2005 developments was establishing a naval reserve fleet for ECS use and for deploying naval ships in the area to protect territorial sovereignty and signal its increased military resolve and assets to both Japan and the U.S. March 2005 saw the initiation of diplomatic efforts to ameliorate this dispute with Beijing seeking to partially meet protestors’ demands while preventing tensions from escalating out of control.³⁷

This dispute erupted again on September 7, 2010 when a collision occurred between a Chinese fishing trawler and two Japanese Coast Guard ships north of one of the disputed islands. As the Chinese boat attempted to flee, Japanese Coast Guard personnel boarded the Chinese vessel arresting the crew. Beijing

responded by sending a fishery law enforcement team to the region to secure fishery protection and the safety and property of Chinese fishermen. Protests occurred outside Japanese consulates in various Chinese cities under strict police control and on September 11, China postponed scheduled ECS negotiations with Japan. The crew was eventually released later that month and a high-level meeting between Chinese and Japanese leaders in Brussels in October helped ease tensions.

China initially responded by imposing what proved to be a temporary embargo on rare earth minerals to Japan, the United States, and European Union. These resources are possessed in near monopolistic abundance by China and are critical for civilian use in areas such as clean energy including hybrid cars and wind turbines and have military applications including weapons systems such as fins steering precision munitions. Any significant curtailment of their supply by China could have significant downstream global economic and geopolitical repercussions. This brief embargo resulted in cerium's price rising from \$5 per kilogram (kg) to \$67 per kg, neodymium from \$42 per kg to \$142 per kg and dysprosium from \$250 per kg to \$400 per kg.³⁸

Further tension between Beijing and Tokyo over the Senkaku/Diaoyu occurred beginning on September 11, 2012, when the Japanese government signed a \$26.1 million contract with private businessman Kunioki Kurihara to purchase three of these islands: Uotsuri, Kita-Kojima, and Minami-Kojima. This move was actually designed to thwart moves by nationalist Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara to purchase the islands with money collected in a national fund-raising campaign. Some segments of Chinese popular opinion erupted with thousands of Chinese protesting in eighty-five cities over a one-week period. These protests produced some violence against Japanese individuals and property. Japanese companies in China reported significant losses during this period with Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airways reporting that over 53,000 seat reservations were cancelled between September-November 2012 and Japanese automakers experienced a nearly 40% drop in sales. The economic impact of these protests lead International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde to warn that these protests could negatively impact the global economy given China and Japan's critical roles in international economics.³⁹

The 2012 Japanese Defense White Paper noted China's navy was seeking to protect and consolidate ECS maritime interests. This document noted that in June 2011 a record 11 PLAN vessels passed between Okinawa and Miyako Island into the Pacific Ocean as demonstrations of Beijing's naval capabilities in acquiring, maintaining, and protecting maritime rights and interests. These transits appear to represent attempts by Beijing to break through the first island chain extending from northern Japan south through the Ryukyu

Islands into the SCS and signaling displeasure with Japan. In early October 2012, China deployed seven warships through the Miyako Strait without alerting Tokyo as required by a preexisting agreement.⁴⁰

Japan has responded by stressing protection of its southwestern islands. In an interview with the *Wall Street Journal*, Japanese Defense Minister Satoshi Marimoto said “Japan has 6,800 islands, and territory that stretches over 3,300 kilometers [2,000 miles]; it’s necessary to have troops at its southwestern end to beef up our warning and surveillance capability.... We must defend without fail our sovereign rights and our land that includes the Senkaku Islands.... We must strengthen our overall defense capability in the southwest.” Japan has also shifted its defense posture to the west and southwest to accommodate North Korea’s increasing threat and China’s increasing ECS presence. This has resulted in Japan shifting its defense posture from static defense to dynamic defense requiring greater integration between the JMSDF, Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF), and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) if there is a Chinese attempt to retake the Senkakus or other Japanese islands.⁴¹

Following the aforementioned controversy over China’s November 2013 announcement of an ADIZ over the ECS, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the controversial Yakasuni shrine. In addition, contentious statements by Abe and various colleagues about Japan’s World War II activities in China have been detrimental to Sino-Japanese relations. Japan has requested that China withdraw patrol vessels from the area around these islands. However, Beijing has refused and sent maritime enforcement ships into the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands territorial seas 50 times in 2013 and announced plans to enhance its maritime presence and “safeguard sovereignty” during 2014 which was reflected with the following numbers of Chinese patrol vessels entering this area between January-June 2014:

January	72
February	36
March	65
April	84
May	49
June	42 ⁴²

China and Japan continue periodic diplomatic talks to keep their island territorial disputes from boiling over. However, both sides face pressure from nationalistic elements in their polities to maintain irredentist stands on this issue. At the same time there is also sentiment in both countries to avoid military confrontation due to the extent of existing economic ties and the high costs such a confrontation could produce for both countries domestically and internationally. A 2014 public opinion poll covering both countries found

that 63.7% of Chinese respondents favored more forceful demonstrations of effective control over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands but only 22.7% of Japanese respondents favor a more assertive response by their country. Additional revelations from this poll include 64.8% of Chinese believing this territorial dispute is the biggest irritant in these countries bilateral relationship while 58.6% of Japanese believe the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute is the biggest problem in their countries relationship. However, Japanese opinion is more pessimistic than Chinese opinion that historical bilateral problems between the two countries will be resolved regardless of what happens in the present or future between these countries. Finally, 70% of Chinese and 80% of Japanese expressed concern over deteriorating relations between their countries. An August 14, 2015, speech by Abe implied that there would be a bilateral Sino-Japanese effort to improve relations and stated that Japan had to honestly reckon with its past. He also noted that China should not challenge the international order and that Japan must balance between an authoritarian and revisionist China with one analyst noting that Japanese public opinion and international sentiment currently keep Tokyo from adopting more confrontational stances.⁴³

Congressional Reaction

As part of its constitutional legislative oversight and funding role, Congress has taken episodic interest in the ECS dispute between China and Japan in its hearings and legislation. An early example of the ECS being mentioned in a congressional committee hearing occurred during a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on June 7, 2005. During this hearing Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific Christopher Hill mentioned periodic grievances over Japan's wartime legacy erupting in China such as changes in Japanese history textbooks erupting in anti-Japanese violence. Hill also mentioned that despite greater Sino-Japanese trade integration that recent controversies over the Senkaku Islands, ECS energy exploration, China's position on Taiwan, and Beijing's opposition to Japan's aspirations for a permanent United Nations Security Council seat have chilled bilateral relations.⁴⁴

A January 13, 2010, House Armed Services Committee hearing saw the Navy's Pacific Command Commander Admiral Robert F. Willard noting Chinese vocal assertiveness about how their Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) relate to movement of their commerce, trade, and energy, the strategic value of the Straits of Malacca and other choke points between natural resource suppliers and Beijing, and how their expanding Air Force and naval capacity involves securing regional commercial interests. Willard went on to maintain how far this expansion of Chinese power projection capacity into the Asia-Pacific region, ECS, SCS, and Indian Ocean becomes remains to be

seen. This hearing also saw Rep. Randy Forbes (R-VA) express concern to Willard about China having an estimated 260 military ships in the Western Pacific as opposed to the U.S. having 180 military ships in these waters.⁴⁵

Comparable viewpoints between China and Taiwan on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands were reflected during a March 28, 2012, hearing when John Tkacik of the International Assessment and Strategy's Center Future Asia Project noted that Taipei's deep water ports and submarine bases in eastern Taiwan have enabled Chinese submarines to slip undetected into the Pacific's deepest maritime trenches and will likely provide a future home to Chinese diesel and electric submarines. He also stressed the Senkakus critical importance in defining the maritime depth of the East Asia, Japan, and the United States opposite an emerging Chinese superpower.⁴⁶

A May 10, 2013, paper prepared for the U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission stressed that China's Foreign Ministry declared the Senkakus/Diaoyus a "core interest" on April 26, 2013. This assessment determined that this declaration elevated these islands to the level of Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang in Chinese rhetorical national security emphasis which the Japanese determine indicates Chinese inflexibility on this matter. However, additional Chinese statements on this topic claim that these islands touch on core Chinese interests potentially indicating Beijing as being more flexible.⁴⁷

A December 11, 2013, hearing by the Commission on Security Cooperation in Europe produced some interesting historical analogies to describe the ECS strategic situation. National Endowment for Democracy President Carl Gershman maintained China's setting up an ADIZ established a "casus belli" with its Japanese and South Korean neighbors and the U.S. for future generations and referenced the *Economist* saying there were disturbing parallels between the Northeast Asian situation and the outbreak of World War I with the Senkakus playing the role of Sarajevo. Karin J. Lee, the Executive Director of the National Committee on North Korea noted that while Sino-Japanese Senkaku/Diaoyu tension has been high over the last year, the Inter-Korean maritime dispute over the West Sea's Northern Limit Line actually produced multiple military clashes, that North Korean progress in developing nuclear weapons and long-range missiles threatens regional insecurity, and that South Korean vows to retaliate against North Korean provocations by attacking their supporting forces and command leadership exacerbates regional tensions.⁴⁸

A joint January 14, 2014, hearing by the House Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committee saw Rep. Matt Salmon (R-AZ) stress the geopolitical importance of the ECS region with the following contention:

Over the last several years, we have seen increased aggressions in the disputed waters of the South China Sea, and more recently,

the East China Sea. As China has sought to expand their control of the region, U.S. allies are struggling to ensure their sovereignty is maintained and navigational rights to the South and East China Sea is protected.

Military and commercial access to the navigable waters of the South and East China Seas are critical to the security and economic viability of every country in the region. Strong U.S. allies, including Japan, Taiwan, and Philippines, Vietnam, South Korea, have come under increasing pressure from China to cede or temper these inalienable sovereign rights to the Chinese will. There must be a peaceful pass forward to protect the U.S. regional allies that ensures U.S. national security interests and avoids unnecessary conflict and aggressions.⁴⁹

Testifying at this hearing, Naval War College Professor Peter Dutton noted that ongoing Chinese regional maritime expansion dates back to 1840 when China quit dominating the Asian maritime system due to western intervention. He also contended that a key aim of Beijing's maritime strategy is expanding interior control over its Near Seas to eventually achieve a level of continental control it believes it needs to enhance its security interests. Dutton also observed that since December 2008 Chinese activities around the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands have sought to cast doubt on Japanese control of these islands, are conducted carefully to avoid provoking outright conflict with the U.S., and include non-militarized coercion involving direct and indirect application of national capabilities to alter the seaborne situation in Beijing's favor. He also maintained that China's ECS ADIZ is intended to control water and airspace approaching these islands to articulate a legally legitimizing narrative for controlling these islands.⁵⁰

Witness Bonnie Glaser of the Center for Strategic and International Studies contended that how Beijing manages these disputes is seen as a litmus test for its broader strategic ambitions and how the U.S. responds to China's increasing tendency to use coercion, bullying, and salami-like tactics to advance its territorial and maritime interests. Glaser went on stress there is high potential for escalation between China and Japan which could embroil the U.S. as a result of Washington's security treaty with Tokyo.⁵¹

A February 5, 2014, House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing on East Asian security topics saw Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) ask Assistant Secretary of State for Asian and Pacific Affairs Daniel Russel if there could be a mechanism for crisis prevention or management if events in the ECS threatened to escalate into a crisis. Russel responded saying that while area governments communicate capital to capital, that ships involved in such incidents should be able to communicate bridge-to-bridge instead of delegating decisions to junior officer in the heat of the moment to develop consistent rules for

reaching agreement on resolution mechanisms such as hot lines or standard operating procedures.⁵²

Russel also responded to a post-hearing question by Rep. Mel Brooks (R-AL) on whether the U.S. could take concrete steps to peacefully resolve the Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute by reaffirming the U.S. stance of not taking a position on sovereignty over these islands. He also stressed that the U.S. urges Beijing and Tokyo to prevent incidents, manage disputes peacefully, that both countries should establish effective crisis communication channels at the highest levels, and follow international law in resolving disputes.⁵³

Testifying again on this subject before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 4, 2014, Russel stressed the administration's belief that no party sought conflict in the ECS, but was concerned that unintended accidents or incidents could result in tensions escalating. He also emphasized that the U.S. wants good relationships between China and its neighbors. Michael Auslin of the American Enterprise Institute stressed that expanded U.S.–Japanese military exercises such as the recently concluded Iron Fist exercise in California involving the Marines and the JGSDF would help enhance Japanese military capability and gain credibility in protecting Japan's south-western flanks.⁵⁴

During Fall 2014, both the House and Senate passed resolutions (H. Res. 714 and S. Res. 412) calling for peaceful resolution of maritime jurisdiction disputes in the ECS and SCS and reaffirming strong U.S. support for freedom of navigation and other internationally legal uses of Asia-Pacific sea and airspace. This resolution cited numerous recent instances of Chinese restrictions on international air and maritime movement in the ECS and SCS.⁵⁵

Testifying before an April 15, 2015, hearing Bryan Clark of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, praised China for developing naval capability to enhance their maritime services, non-navy Coast Guard, and other non-military surveillance services which execute lawfare to implement Chinese maritime and territorial claims. Clark also expressed concern that the U.S. Navy and its regional allies are incapable of dealing with sub-conventional aggression by China and that Beijing hopes to use its low-level capabilities to gain preeminence in competing for ECS and SCS territories. He went on to emphasize that the U.S. and its allies need to alter their air defense capabilities by using smaller weapons with shorter range to destroy incoming weapons closer to U.S. and allied shipping. Clark also advocated that the U.S. and its allies should have ships capable of coercing China in coastal waters as Beijing has to Japanese and Philippine ships, that U.S. weapons should be smaller and more precise to obtain maximum firepower, and that these weapons should be ship carried and airborne.⁵⁶

Recent analyses note Beijing's regular and ongoing use of coercion by the PLAN and Coast Guard to influence and enforce its interpretation of the

ECS security environment. Beijing’s claims of its maritime environment encompass 3 million square kilometers of jurisdictional waters, 32,000 coastline kilometers, and 6,000 land features. China also believes that it is authorized to regulate foreign naval vessels and military aircraft in its EEZ which is opposed by the U.S. and many other countries.⁵⁷

A March 15, 2016, staff report by the U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission noted how Beijing uses both engagement and coercion to split ties and exploit differences in U.S. relationships with regional allies. China has sought to entice South Korea with promises of greater economic engagement at the expense of Seoul’s security relationship with Washington. Japanese and South Korean disputes over the Dodko/Takeshima islands in the Sea of Japan hamper U.S. efforts to produce a coherent Northeast Asian security policy.⁵⁸

China also makes use an asymmetric strategy called “Three Warfares” which seeks to counter the U.S.’ Asian presence and influence in a potential military conflict and allow Beijing to control and shape its own security environment. These three warfares and illustrative examples include:

<p>Psychological Warfare: Undermining enemy ability to conduct combat operations through deterring, shocking, and demoralizing enemy military personnel and supporting civilians.</p>	<p>Example: Espionage campaign against Taiwan seeks to weaken Taipei’s military morale. Spy cases can create an environment where acquiring Taiwanese defense secrets is perceived as inevitable.</p>
<p>Media Warfare: Influences domestic and international public opinion in Beijing’s favor for Chinese military actions and dissuading opponents from trying to counter China.</p>	<p>Example: On September 28, 2012, China purchases two page ads in the New York Times and Washington Post saying “Diaoyu (Senkaku Islands) Belong to China” after Japan purchased three islands from a private owner. Intended to influence U.S. public opinion and pressure Japan.</p>
<p>Legal Warfare: Using international and domestic law to claim legal high ground and assert China’s interests. May impede adversary’s operational freedom and shape operational space. Intended to build international support and manage potential political repercussions of Chinese military actions.</p>	<p>Example: Restricting activities of foreign ships and aircraft operating in or flying over China’s EEZ. Although UNCLOS permits foreign military ships and aircraft to conduct EEZ freedom of navigation and overflight, China’s expansive international law interpretation asserts the right to require foreign ships to obtain permission or provide notification before conducting innocent passage which is not allowed under UNCLOS.⁵⁹</p>

Analysis

During a June 22, 2011, national speech on the withdrawal of military forces from Afghanistan, President Obama unwisely claimed that “the tide of war is receding.”⁶⁰ He repeated this same fallacious turn of phrase during an October 21, 2011, White House press briefing on the drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq.⁶¹ Subsequent events in the Middle East, South Asia, Crimea and the Ukraine, and many other areas of the world, including the SCS and ECS demonstrate the delusional folly of these remarks.

Jakub Grygiel and A. Wess Mitchell have described how China has used the technique of probing to stake maritime and territorial claims in both the ECS and SCS to determine the response of the U.S. and its allies, along with the international community, to Chinese efforts to gain hegemony in these contested maritime spaces. They contend that probing involves determining if rumors of a rival country’s weakening are true and China and other revisionist states use probing to avoid direct military confrontation with existing great powers such as the United States. Revisionist powers such as China seek to alter the existing regional order without going to war and they engage in commercial pressure, diplomatic initiatives, and public awareness campaigns to promote their agenda. Levels of violence used are low and probing powers limit their activities to areas of less strategic interest to their rivals. Consequently probes are a calculated gamble instead of lashing out.⁶²

Probing powers may use civilian or paramilitary power to harass U.S. allies and avoid a direct confrontation with U.S. firepower. China has used its fishing and fishery enforcement fleets in this regard which makes it difficult for the U.S. to respond. For instance, a PLAN intrusion into disputed waters can be confronted by the U.S. Seventh Fleet unlike a probe by civilian Chinese fishermen. Revisionist powers such as China see probing as a way of deflecting attention and retaliation from status quo powers who may be militarily preoccupied elsewhere. These powers also seek to avoid directly military targeting areas of prime military concern to the U.S. and its allies such as national homelands and seek to stress U.S. supply lines and cause questions on the worth of engaging in military activity for seemingly insignificant island territories.⁶³

China is definitely interested expanding its maritime presence in the ECS. The map below demonstrates the importance of the first and second island chains in Chinese strategic planning with the ECS is included in this map.

Figure 6 First and Second Island Chains



Source: Bernard D. Cole, *The Great Wall At Sea: China's Navy Enters the Twenty-First Century* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2001), 165.

Ongoing events including China's naval buildup and aggressiveness in adjoining waters indicate that Beijing is interested in gaining greater influence, if not military superiority, in the first and second island chains region profiled in this map and that Neo-Mahanian thinking and aspirations are driving Chinese motivations.⁶⁴

Aggressive Chinese aspirations are also reflected in some Chinese military writings. Liu Mengfu's book *China Dream: Great Power Thinking and Strategic Posture in the Post-American Era* sees Sun Yat-Sen as an advocate for global Chinese cultural and military supremacy. Liu, a retired PLA Colonel, contends that Sun favored learning from the U.S. and then surpassing it and Liu also praises Deng Xiaoping's admonition that China should patiently build up its strength until it is ready to become a preeminent player on the global stage. Liu also believes Asia's Warring States Period is beginning with China, India, and Japan acting out China's 3rd Century Wars of the Three Kingdoms continentally; that China will eventually overtake the U.S., European Union, and Russia to achieve global economic and strategic hegemony; that China must become a military power to effectively maintain its security

as a market power and a civilized country's dignity; that China must have the ability to destroy the U.S. ability to ensure consistence, coexistence, common security, and development; that China be able to counter U.S. military intervention in the Taiwan Strait; make containing China unaffordable for the U.S.; and make it impossible for other nations to contain China. Other analyses of varying quality from Chinese and non-Chinese sources see China challenging or threatening U.S. strategic hegemony in the Western Pacific and comment on the unpredictable and evolving relationship between these two countries and adjoining ECS countries.⁶⁵

Another sign of China's increasingly assertive conduct was reflected in President Xi Jinping's November 29, 2014, speech to the Communist Party's Foreign Affairs Conference. In this address, he stressed the importance of military activity and using China's military to effectively apply Chinese power and influence to support a more ambitious foreign policy, restricting U.S. geopolitical influence, upholding Chinese territorial sovereignty, maritime rights, and supporting Beijing's positions in territorial and island disputes.⁶⁶

The PLAN has clearly been increasing its strength to coercively wield its increasing firepower and military capabilities to exert its will in the ECS and other maritime regions of contention.⁶⁷ China's ECS fleet is headquartered in Nanjing Province with its headquarters at Ningbo. Its latitudinal area of responsibility ranges from 23° 30' North to 35°10' North and contains major bases in Shanghai (surface ships), Wuhan (submarines) Xiangshan (submarines), and Zhoushan (surface ships). Its order of battle includes destroyer, frigate, landing ship, and submarine flotillas. PLAF assets in this province include a bomber division and fighter division along with a missile base and missile units. PLA assets in this province include the 1st, 12th, and 31st Group Armies who could be deployed in any potential operation against Taiwan or the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. China's active duty military personnel number 2,333,000, as of 2015.⁶⁸

Japan's active duty military forces numbered 247,150 in 2015 with 45,500 of these belonging to the JMSDF and 47,100 to the JASDF. Tokyo's 2015 Defense White Paper stressed emerging risks posed by China and North Korea and between May-September 2015 Japan's Diet passed legislation liberalizing Japan's ability to exercise collective self-defense, enhance Japanese non-combat logistical support for the U.S. and other allies, and removing the need to enact separate laws for each JSDF deployment providing logistical support to multinational forces. Japan's 2015 Defense White Paper announced plans to expand its combat aircraft from 349-360, aircraft warning squadrons from 20-28, its destroyer fleet from 47-54, and the submarine fleet from 5-6.⁶⁹

South Korean and Taiwanese forces could also conceivably be drawn into conflict in the ECS due to some of their economic and geopolitical interests

in these waters not coinciding with those of Japan and China and due to lingering historical animosity from the World War II era.⁷⁰

The U.S.' ECS military presence is dominated by the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet which is Washington's largest forward deployed fleet whose operational area extends from the India/Pakistan border to the Kuril Islands to Antarctica. This force consists of approximately 50–70 ships and submarines, 140 aircraft and approximately 20,000 sailors. Its flagship is the aircraft carrier *USS Ronald Reagan* and its surface combatants include 10–14 destroyers and cruisers with 11 of these being at Japan's Yokosuka Naval Base. These ships carry theater ballistic missile interceptors, long-range Tomahawk land attack missiles and anti-aircraft missiles. 7th fleet submarines are nuclear powered and the fleet contains 16–20 reconnaissance aircraft providing regional intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.⁷¹

Additional U.S. military forces readily accessible to deploy in the event of ECS contingency operations include assets on Okinawa and Guam. Okinawa's Kadena Air Base includes two fighter squadrons and one air refueling squadron, the Marine Corps Northern Training Area and Camp Courtney featuring the 3rd Marine Force Expeditionary Headquarters, Guam's Anderson Air Force Base and Guam Naval Base, 25,000 overall personnel in Okinawa, and Okinawa's Naha Military Port.⁷²

Conclusion

The ECS is part of Nicholas Spykman's Asian rimland and a potential shatterbelt for military conflict due to its proximity to China, Japan, Taiwan, and the Korean Peninsula and the international economic and strategic significance of the waters adjacent to these and other countries and their trade flows. This geopolitical significance and conflict potential is further augmented by the U.S.' historically enduring and contemporarily significant economic interests and military presence in this region along with Washington's explicit military alliances with Japan and South Korea and the implicit military defense of Taiwan from Chinese invasion contained in the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act.⁷³

The Obama Administration has heralded an "Asia-Pacific Pivot" in U.S. military force structure. However, this move has not been reinforced with funding, force augmentation, appropriate equipment, and requisite strategic doctrine. The Defense Department's Air and Sea Battle Doctrine, now called Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAMGC) has some useful characteristics which the U.S. should implement to strengthen its strategic position and those of its allies in the ECS. It is essential for the U.S. take the lead in successfully implementing and properly resourcing JAMGC in the intermediate future. Since China aspires to use Anti-Access

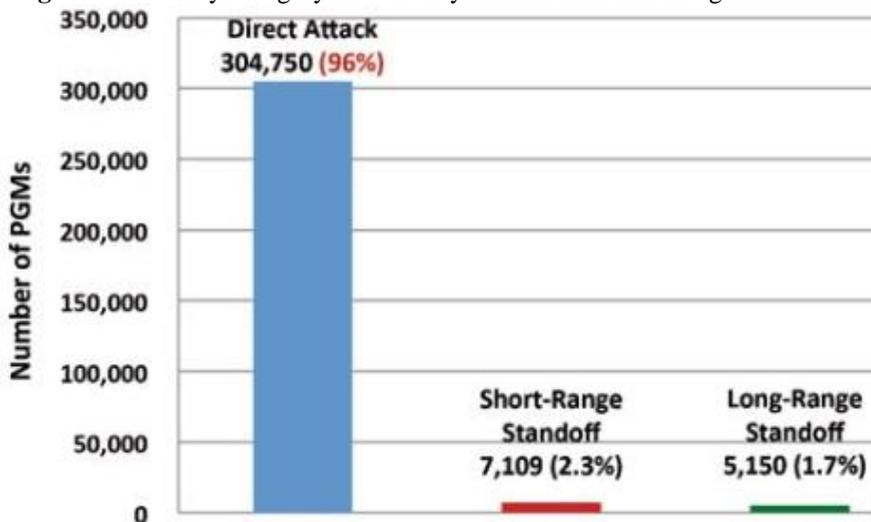
Aerial Denial (A2/AD) capabilities to deny U.S. access to the Western Pacific, the U.S. should focus on using airpower to defeat anti-ship weapons, naval power for neutralizing land-based threats against air and naval forces, and cyber operations to defeat space systems. The U.S. should operate under the policy that an opponent such as China will use its A2/AD capabilities with little or no warning against Western Pacific or even continental U.S. military assets requiring immediate and effective response.⁷⁴

The U.S. must include specific funding levels and specify overall operational purposes for JAMGC force structure planning and deployment in annual DOD budgets with both DOD and Congress playing collaborative roles to bring this about. National security strategy documents such as forthcoming *National Military Strategy of the United States*, *National Security Strategy of the United States*, and *Quadrennial Defense Review* documents must integrate JAMGC into their recommendations. Specific doctrinal guidance implementing JAMGC must also be incorporated into Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Electronic Library publications including *JP 3-0 Joint Operations*, *JP 3-01 Countering Air and Missile Threats*, *JP 3-03 Joint Interdiction*, *JP 3-05 Special Operations*, *JP 3-16 Multinational Operations*, *JP 3-30 Command and Control of Joint Air Operations* and *JP 3-60 Joint Targeting* along with relevant individual U.S. armed service branch doctrinal publications.⁷⁵

Additional attributes of successful strategy in the event of war with China include disrupting Beijing's command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) capabilities by denying them the ability to track and locate targets consequently precluding attack on friendly forces. The U.S. and its allies should also seek to decapitate hostile A2/AD assets reducing their strike launching ability and enhancing the survivability of friendly forces. In addition, developing and deploying conventional ballistic missiles and hypersonic delivery vehicles capable of reaching China away from its defensive envelope would circumvent Beijing's existing A2/AD network and give PLA planners and strategists new, difficult, and expensive technical and operational challenges. They could also attack Chinese coastal strategic assets, those within the Middle Kingdom's interior, use assets with have greater lethality against hardened or deeply buried targets. The U.S. and its allies should also attack China's cyber war assets including People's Liberation Army (PLA) Unit 61398 and enhance U.S. cyber defense capabilities against Beijing's strikes.⁷⁶

The following chart illustrates the increasing prevalence of precision guided missiles in U.S. weapons stocks from 2001–2014.

Figure 7 PGMS by Category Procured by DOD from 2001 through 2014



Source: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments

The U.S. and its allies should also develop an archipelagic defense architecture in disputed regions such as the ECS. Washington and its allies should seek to deny China the ability to control air and sea corridors around the First Island Chain. Air defenses in the First Island Chain should be augmented by employing army units with highly mobile and simple short-range interceptor missiles supported by Giraffe radar systems to detect targets. The U.S. Army and Japan could operate more advanced longer-range systems capable of intercepting Chinese cruise missiles and destroying advanced Chinese aircraft. Efforts should also be made to deny China the sea control prerequisite for launching offensive operations against these islands. This can be done by reinstating a coastal defense artillery force and the Navy can also lay and clear mines to restrict or allow transit through narrow seas and straits. Strengthening regional ballistic missile defense systems such as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) and Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) are also critical components of enhancing our regional strategic posture.⁷⁷

In the event of a Chinese invasion, a small number of U.S. ground forces could serve as a tripwire by mounting determined resistance. This would facilitate the time needed for U.S. air and naval forces to respond against China with long-range surveillance and air strikes. The U.S. can also augment its deterrent capability and combat readiness in these islands by strengthening existing battle network vulnerabilities such as satellites and non-stealth unmanned aerial vehicles which the PLA could target. Reducing the risk to this communications network by establishing underground and under the seabed fiber optic cables would allow U.S. and allied forces to safely receive

and transmit data from hardened command centers on land. In addition, island-based air defense and sea denial forces, along with antiship minefields, could protect cable lines running between the islands.⁷⁸

A January 2016 study by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) made four salient recommendations for the U.S. Asia–Pacific rebalance out to 2025. These are:

- Washington needs to continue aligning Asia strategy within the U.S. Government with allies and partners.
- U.S. leaders should accelerate U.S. efforts to strengthen ally and partner capability, capacity, resilience, and interoperability.
- The United States should sustain and expand U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific.
- The United States should accelerate development of innovative capabilities and concepts for U.S. forces.⁷⁹

This document also issued a clarion call for the U.S. to remain actively engaged in the ECS and Western Pacific with the following assertion:

The U.S. military is a stabilizing force in the region, helping to deter conflict on the Korean Peninsula and manage crises from the East China Sea through the Indian Ocean. Yet, the Chinese People's Liberation Army's anti-access/area denial capabilities that many once viewed as Taiwan specific, are rapidly expanding to the Second Island Chain and beyond, affecting not only an increasing number of U.S. allies and partners, but also U.S. territories such as Guam. Diversification of U.S. military posture remains critical not simply for resilience against challenges in Northeast Asia, but also to contend with the growing importance of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean region. We reject the option of withdrawal from the Western Pacific because of these new challenges. Such a withdrawal could lead to rapid deterioration of the security environment and render operations more difficult rather than easier.⁸⁰

The U.S. must be assertive in defending its interests and those of Japan and the international community against Chinese hegemony. The U.S. should seek to maintain open and candid communications with Beijing and strive to avoid confrontation. Washington also needs to restore economic solvency in its domestic policymaking, assert unflinching strategic clarity in its China and international security policymaking, maintain a strong military presence in East Asia to enhance regional peace and stability, and acknowledge China's increasing ascendancy and track record of behavior antagonistic to U.S. and allied strategic interests. Essential elements of U.S. and allied strategy for addressing Beijing's ECS aspirations should include developing assertive and agile traditional and social media campaigns stressing the desire to maintain cooperative and stable relations with China, effectively countering Chinese

public diplomatic claims about its ECS objectives, and warning global opinion of the dangers of allowing China to attain strategic preeminence in the ECS and other adjoining international waters.⁸¹

Prudent geopolitical calculation and hedging, along with the enduring prevalence of military conflict, national aggression, and irrationality in history, requires that the U.S. and its allies candidly prepare domestic and international public opinion for the potential of future military confrontation with China and equip and fund their military forces for the possibility of protracted and ultimately victorious conflict in the ECS. A Harvard Belfer Center's Thucydides Trap Case File project documents 16 historical cases of the interactions between rising powers such as China and status quo powers such as the U.S. covering from the 16th century to the present and encompassing countries from North America, Europe, and Asia. Project findings reveal that 12 of these 16 scenarios produced war.⁸²

The U.S. should also explicitly declare that the Senkaku Islands fall within the parameters of the U.S. security treaty with Japan and give the military liberal rules of engagement to forcefully defend against Chinese attempts to impede air or sea passage through the ECS. Such American assertiveness will require a more strategically and geopolitically minded presidential administration and the willingness and ability to repeatedly educate U.S. public opinion on the critical strategic importance of the Western Pacific and ECS to national interests and not allowing these regions to come under Chinese dominance which would likely threaten international freedom of access and navigation in the ECS.⁸³

Japan must explicitly admit its responsibility for World War II era atrocities and work tirelessly to improve relations with its neighbors such as South Korea. Tokyo must continue increasing its share of defense spending and its willingness to engage in offensive military operations in view of the deteriorating regional security environment caused by Chinese, North Korean, and Russian aggressiveness and provocations. This will require Japanese leaders to educate their public opinion in the hard knocks realities of contemporary regional geopolitics and for international opinion to recognize that Japan can no longer be strategically constricted by its historic World War II aggression and recent pacifism as it seeks to defend its vital national interests in a deteriorating regional security environment.⁸⁴

Japan and other East Asian countries concerned about China's rise and uncertainty about U.S. commitment to maintaining regional security will seek to maintain geopolitical and strategic flexibility by enhancing their security cooperation and military force enhancement. The proposed submarine project involving Australia and Japan is an example of this hedging in response to Chinese assertiveness and the potential lessening of the U.S. strategic presence and commitment to the ECS region.⁸⁵

The ECS is becoming an increasingly important economically and military region for the U.S. and its allies. This economic importance is documented by bilateral trade between the U.S. and China for the first quarter of 2016 being \$128.372.4 billion; \$47.053.8 billion between the U.S. and Japan, \$27.647.1 billion between the U.S. and South Korea, and \$15.202 billion between the U.S. and Taiwan with most of this trade being seaborne occurring in the ECS.⁸⁶

China is a great civilization and has the choice of being a rising and responsible stakeholder restraining from disruptive action and territorial aggrandizement. Conversely, it may also continue taking steps to upset the East Asian security order by engaging in realistic Western Pacific military combat exercises and wallowing in the victim mentality of historical defeats by lashing out at its geopolitical and maritime competitors, seeking to coerce its neighbors, and trying to reclaim land from adjoining oceanic waters such as the Paracel and Spratly Islands.⁸⁷

The U.S. and the international community must ensure that China does not dominate these waters and impose fraudulent claims about national sovereignty and territorial possession on ECS waters and natural resources on the international polity. The next U.S. presidential administration will face a critical test of its international credibility by how well or poorly it stands up to Chinese assertiveness in these waters. It will need to reaffirm and muster sustained international support for freedom of aerial and maritime navigation while trying to peacefully resolve disputes with China. At the same time, it must also equip U.S. and allied military forces with the means necessary to deter and defeat China if this dispute erupts into war. If war erupts, it will be necessary for the U.S. and its allies to act aggressively and decisively to impose their Clausewitzian will on China and defeat Beijing's aspirations for regional hegemony. The aftermath of a military confrontation with China should also include U.S. and allied preparation for post-conflict stabilization to restore international order and stability benefitting the international community as well as military combatant powers without humiliating China and stoking its desire for a revanchist postbellum environment. Doing these things will require a robust conservative internationalism and geopolitical realism currently absent in U.S. foreign and national security policy-making.⁸⁸

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