

How to Tackle Chinese Ambition toward the High Seas

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1 International Security Environment in Asia-Pacific region

International security environment in the world today is said to be "confused and disordered". There are many destabilizing factors such as international terrorism, cyberattacks, emerging failed states and refugees, ultra-secessionist and national independence movements, etc. These factors become more tangible and acute in Europe, Middle-East, Africa as well as Asia.

Some countries willingly pursuit their national interests without hiding their ambition and challenge to change existing international order. For example, it is said that Russia intends to change the status quo of Georgia and Ukraine in the Middle-Europe by force, and IS barbarous movement seems to change the present government of Iraq and Syria in the Middle-East.

In the Asia-Pacific region, a new concept of Indo-Pacific region/arc is emerging with the rising India, we have witnessed significant change of power balance during last several years, including assertive and belligerent provocations by China in disputed areas around its territory.

In the background of ongoing change of power balance, Chinese leaders believe their perception that American power is declining and the American Century, covering nearly 20th century, is over. That is the reason why China urgently proposes “New Type of Great Power Relationship” so called G2 (Group of Two) to the United States.

On the contrary, The United States has been prepossessed by wishful thinking with that “American aid to a fragile China whose leaders thought like us would help China become a democratic power without ambitions of regional or even global dominance.” (Michael Pillsbury: “The Hundred-Year Marathon”, 2015)

Many China experts, not only researchers but politicians, in US are awaked that their perceptions on China was completely misunderstanding.

China has continuously increased military budget at a high level and rapidly reinforced its military forces in wide range of areas. As part of such efforts, China has tried to prevent other counties from conducting military operations in certain area, i.e. China's so called Anti-Access/Area-Denial (A2/AD) capabilities.

In November of 2013, China unilaterally established “East China Sea ADIZ” that covers the Senkaku Islands. Chinese government announced that the Chinese Armed Forces would take “defensive emergency measures” in the case of foreign aircraft in the ADIZ does not respond the relevant rules set forth by the Chinese Ministry of National Defense. Chinese measures unduly infringe the freedom of overflight over the high seas according to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In the South China Sea, China made rapid and large-scale land reclamations at seven features in the Spratly Islands. China constructs infrastructures including runways with a 3000m long and big ports for commercial and military use, which raised international concern among Japan, US and ASEAN countries. China has deployed military assets at Woody Island in the Paracel Islands, and it is believed that China will soon deploy military troops, equipment and facilities in the Spratly Islands and will establish “South China Sea ADIZ” in near future.

China's creeping jurisdiction toward the high seas by paramilitary is often called “paramilitary operations short of war” (POSOW) or “Gray-Zone situation”.

China has creeped its sovereignty into neighboring countries by paramilitary together with so called three kinds of warfare, such as legal warfare, psychological warfare and media warfare. Consequently, China has strengthened its A2/AD strategic capabilities which may cause more serious problems without clear path to deal with.

It is clear that one of objectives of China’s maritime movements is to weaken the administrative power of other countries over their islands. Strengthening its territorial claim, China continues huge land reclamation on rocks and low tide elevations. China also carries on various surveillance activities at sea and airspace inside of the First Islands Chain.

In addition, a number of Chinese naval vessels cruising in the Pacific Ocean have

increased in recent years, and such operations are their routine today. It is also clear that China seems to seek opportunity to improve its deployment capabilities in the high seas.

From a military point of view, China apparently continues expanding its maritime dominance. Along with its long-term economic activities, and it is certain that the tensions on claiming territory between China and its neighboring countries has been increasing further in the Asia-Pacific region.

In short, how to tackle and deal China from expansion to the high seas is the biggest challenge for security issues in the Asia-Pacific region today.

2 Japan-US-Taiwan Trilateral Security Relations

Taiwan is an island located off coast of the Euro-Asian Continent, and to the north, it continues Okinawa island chain and further continues Japan archipelago, to the south, it extends to the Philippine archipelago. Thus, Taiwan lies in between these two archipelagic countries, and constitutes a part of islands running along the Asian continent coast at the Western rim of the South China Sea. From a strategic point of view, Taiwan is favorably situated to block China's expansion to the Pacific Ocean.

Again, Japan and Taiwan are neighboring countries along the First Islands Chain and are situated on the same boat so far as China's strategy concern.

In Japan, the Legislation for Peace and Security Support passed in the Diet in September 2015 with strong initiatives of Prime Minister Abe. In case of "situations that will have a significant influence on Japan's peace and security", the legislation enables the JSDF to provide support various activities to the US Armed Forces. The legislation also has a significant meaning both countries, Japan and Taiwan. Because, based on this law, it will facilitate security cooperation between two countries in the future.

The United States military power is indispensable for national security of Taiwan, and US will support Taiwan for buildup military capability and modernization of military equipment based on the Taiwan Relations Act. Needless to say, it also reflects the geopolitical importance of Taiwan for the US security strategy in this region.

We should make it clear again that peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region could not be maintained without the US presence in the region. Therefore, the trilateral security cooperation framework among Japan, the United States and Taiwan is critically

important, because this framework is a key to tackle China's ambition in the First Islands Chain and to play important roles to ensure peace and security in the region.

3 Security cooperation and coordination with other countries

The principle of relativity, one of attributions of military strategy, has been effective against Chinese coercive expand to the high seas as a counter-action (reaction).

The US security strategy has emphasized peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. The 2014QDR states that the centerpiece commitment of the Department of Defense (DoD) in the Asia-Pacific region is to update and enhance security initiatives with its allies in the region. Additionally, the QDR notes that the US Forces will be decreased 60% of assets of the Navy and Air Force in the Asia-Pacific region by 2020.

Japan has prioritized the deployment of ground troops to key remote islands in the Ryukyu Islands (Yonaguni Island, Miyako Island, Isigaki Island, Amami-Oshima Island, etc.) and the establishment of a rapid deploying brigade specializing in amphibious operations, as well as the development of capacities to ensure maritime supremacy and air superiority. These are prerequisite for effective deterrence and response in various situations, and they shift defense posture buildup in the southwestern region of Japan. Also, Japan revised the Guidelines for the Japan-US Defense Cooperation and enacted necessary legislation and has steadily built up its defense capabilities by increasing its defense budget since FY2013.

Under the guidance of building the “hard rock” defense, Taiwan adapts its military strategy of “resolute defense and credible deterrence” and improves its expertise on modern warfighting capabilities by transformation of its armed forces. In view of the fact that the PLA is enhancing its missiles, naval and air forces, Taiwan still needs to modernize its defense equipment.

Therefore, Taiwan, in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act, wants to purchase the F-16C/D fighters, conventional-powered submarines, and other arms from the United States. Taiwan also promotes the domestic development of military equipment especially in the areas of surface-to-air missiles and anti-ship missiles. It is believed that long-range cruise missiles and surface-to-air missiles will ensure defense capabilities of Taiwan to deter from China’s ballistic missiles under development.

However, it is estimated that the United States seems impossible to guarantee its own

security because US faces everlasting international conflicts.

Consequently, we understand that every country can maintain their peace and security in cooperation and coordination with other countries with which they share basic values such as democracy, maintenance of rule and law, respecting for human rights, and a capitalism economy, as well as common interest in maintaining peace and security of the world.

The strong bonds between Japan and the United States based on the Japan-US Security Arrangements which stipulate the foundation of US commitment to the maintenance of the peace and security in the Asia-pacific region. These arrangements are complemented by the bilateral security relationship between US and other countries in the region such as South Korea, Australia, Philippines and Thailand, and also by the friendly relations with other countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia, (Malaysia, Singapore), India, etc. They play an indispensable role in maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

4 How to deter China from expansion toward the high seas

For these allied and friendly countries including Japan, the most fundamental principle to achieve successful multilateral operations is sharing their strategic common goal and threat recognition and assimilating their strategy to the maximum.

Common goal of these countries must be, without saying, to deter and deal with Chinese expansion toward the high seas.

Now, I would like to explain briefly how to deter and respond Chinese expansion toward the high seas in an itemizing manner.

—Firstly, we should terminate Chinese land reclamation activities as soon as possible by all means and prevent Chinese POSOW in the East and South China Sea as a common threat just before us.

—The United States should enhance regional alliance or defense cooperation together with Japan, Taiwan, ASEAN, Australia and India.

—In order to ensure US extended nuclear deterrence to the region, US is required to reconstruct theater nuclear capabilities, and at same time, aforementioned countries should increase or introduce BMD capabilities as soon as possible.

—For the resolute defense of its territorial integrity including remote islands, allied and friendly countries will be accomplished with defensive operation and should construct

“Denying Fence along the First Islands Chain” by connecting each country’s defense line against Chinese Armed Forces’ expansion to the high seas. Then, US may provide complementary support and assistance for each country if needed.

—In order to check Chinese SLOC, blockade line along the outside periphery of the First Islands Chain by US-Japan in the West Pacific, US- Australia in the South Pacific and US-India in the Indian Ocean should be constructed.

—In response to the Chinese Armed Attack, main body of US Navy and Air-force will be retrograded to avoid its losses behind the Second Islands Chain, however, the US will conduct counter C4ISR operations and underwater warfare as a part of Air-Sea Battle. On taking offensive posture, US Armed Forces will transfer to the counter-offensive operation with conducting deep operation.

—Finally, Chinese Naval Force should be destroyed by materializing US Navy’s “War at Sea Strategy” together with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force into order to control maritime domain and maintain free access at sea and in airspace.

These strategic postures will deter Chinese expansion toward the high seas, and there is no doubt that the strategy will be able to deal with Chinese aggression.

It will bring us a definite path towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous international community in the Asia-Pacific region by making use of the existing international order based on common values and rules.

Finally, we should not be neither optimistic nor pessimistic when we consider Chinese ambition toward the high seas.