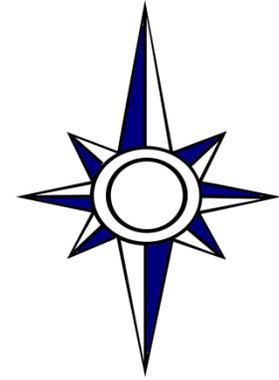


# Comparative Connections

A Triannual E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations



## Japan-China Relations: Going Nowhere Slowly

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Repeated efforts by the Abe government to engage China in high-level dialogue failed to produce a summit meeting. While Tokyo remained firm in its position on the Senkakus, namely that there is no territorial issue that needs to be resolved, Beijing remained equally firm in its position that Japan acknowledge the existence of a dispute as a precondition for talks. In the meantime, Chinese and Japanese patrol ships were in almost daily contact in the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands region, while issues related to history, Japan's evolving security policy, Okinawa, and the East China Sea continued to roil the relationship. By mid-summer over 90 percent of Japanese and Chinese respondents to a joint public opinion poll held negative views of each other.

### **Business and economics**

In early June, Japanese automakers Honda and Nissan released May sales figures. Both Honda and Nissan sales exceeded May 2012 numbers. Honda sold 54,564 vehicles, a 4.6 percent increase, while Nissan sold 103,000 vehicles, a 2 percent increase. Together with Toyota, Japan's big three experienced an increase in monthly sales over 2012 for the first time since the Noda government nationalized the Senkaku Islands in September 2012. After experiencing 40 percent declines in October and November 2012, the upturn in sales suggests that better times are ahead for Japanese automakers position in the China market.

Meanwhile, Japan experienced a sharp drop in Chinese tourists since September 2012. According to Japanese Foreign Ministry statistics on visas issued to Chinese, approximately 72,000 visas were issued to tourists in the July-September 2012 quarter, however, since October 2012, the number decreased to 26,000. The last quarter of a year is normally a low period for travel to Japan, but in 2010 and 2011, 49,000 visas were issued to Chinese tourists for the October-December quarter. From July 2012 to July 2013, the number Chinese visitors to Japan decreased 30 percent to 140,000.

In the first half of 2013, Japan's exports to China (dollar-denominated) were off 13.8 percent over the same period in 2012 to \$76.1 billion, according to data released by China's National Bureau of Statistics. In contrast, South Korea's exports to China grew 11.6 percent and Taiwan's 36.8 percent. A weak yen and declines in the export of machinery and construction equipment were cited as major contributing factors in the overall export decline.

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\* The views expressed in this article are the views of the author alone and do not necessarily represent the views or policy of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

Meanwhile, statistics released by China's Ministry of Commerce showed a 14.4 percent increase in Japan's direct investment in the first six months of 2013, making Japan the second largest investor in China after Hong Kong. The 14.4 percent figure, however, marked a drop from the 16.9 percent rate of investment for the same period in 2012. At the same time, the *Nikkei Shimbun* reported that Japanese investment was moving toward ASEAN countries, amounting to 1 trillion yen in the first half of 2013, double the Japanese investment in China. The story attributed the shift to increasing wages in China and to the downturn in Japan-China relations.

The *Nikkei* also reported that local Chinese governments have begun to show an interest in attracting Japanese investment. On July 29, Guangdong Province held an investment fair in Guangdong City. The *Nikkei* noted that the session was considered the first province-level initiative aimed at Japanese investment since the riots that followed the September 2010 fishing boat incident. An estimated 200 businessmen affiliated with Japanese companies attended.

### **Senkaku incursions**

During the May-August period, China repeatedly deployed ships of the Maritime Surveillance Agency, Coast Guard, and Fisheries Law Enforcement Command to the Senkakus to support its claim to sovereignty over the islands. There were also several instances where Chinese military vessels were suspected of entering into Japan's contiguous zones. When challenged, the Chinese vessels responded that the Diaoyu Islands and adjoining areas were Chinese territory and sovereign seas or that the Japanese ships pursuing them were violating Chinese sovereignty.

On three occasions in June and early July, the Bahamian Research ship, *Discover 2*, associated with Chinese oil companies entered Japan's contiguous zone in the Senkakus. When Japanese Coast Guard requested it to stop its research activities cease because the ship was operating in Japan's without permission, the *Discover 2* crew replied that it was operating in China's contiguous zone with China's permission.

### **Senkaku history lessons**

On May 26, Prime Minister Li Keqiang, speaking in Potsdam, Germany, declared that on the basis of the Potsdam and Cairo Declarations, all territories that Japan had seized from Imperial China, including the Senkaku Islands, were to be returned to China. In Tokyo, Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide pointed out that the Senkaku Islands were Japanese territory even before the 1895 peace treaty with China and that Li's statement "completely disregarded history." Suga's statement prompted Foreign Minister Wang Yi to question whether Japan had "seriously studied history." On May 29, Suga told reporters that Japan's post war territory had been settled by the San Francisco Treaty, not the Cairo Declaration, and that all allied countries, including the Republic of China, had accepted the San Francisco Treaty without objection.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei volleyed back, telling a May 29 press conference that "in 1895, as the Qing government's defeat ... was all but certain, Japan covertly included the Diaoyu Islands in its territory, which is an illegal act of theft. In the treaty of Shimonoseki, Japan "forced the Qing government to sign the unequal treaty" that ceded Taiwan and the

Diaoyu Islands to Japan. As for the San Francisco Treaty, Li cast the treaty as “illegal and invalid and could under no circumstances be recognized by the Chinese government since China had been excluded from its preparation, formulation and signing. The Diaoyu Islands have never been part of the Ryukyu Islands and they were not within the trusteeship defined by Article 3 of the *Treaty of Peace with Japan*.”

On June 3, after meeting with senior Chinese Communist Party officials, Nonaka Hiromu, former chief Cabinet secretary and confidant of former Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei, told a press conference that “just after the normalization of relations, I was told clearly by then Prime Minister Tanaka that a decision was made on the normalization by shelving the Senkaku issue.” Speaking as a “living witness” Nonaka said that he wanted to “make clear” what he had heard. He told reporters that he had made that statement during his meeting with the Communist Party officials. In Tokyo, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters that “there is no truth” that Japan “had agreed with China to shelve or maintain the status quo of the Senkaku Islands.” Suga noted that Nonaka was reporting hearsay after 40 years and that his statement lacked any basis in fact. Foreign Minister Kishida Fumio stated that “as far as Japanese diplomatic records are concerned, there is no such fact.” Kishida added “there is no territorial dispute that needs to be shelved.”

On his return to Japan, Nonaka told reporters at the Kansai airport that he would not withdraw his remarks. Meanwhile, Hong Lei, addressing the “shelving” controversy, told reporters that Japan should “face squarely the history, respect facts, give heed to the voice of those far-sighted people in Japan, such as former Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiromu Nonaka ... and come back to the track of managing and solving the Diaoyu Islands issue through dialogue and consultation.”

At the end of June, former Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio entered the Senkaku debate. After separate meetings in Beijing with Jia Qinglin, chairman of the Chinese People’s Consultative Conference, and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, Hatoyama told reporters that “The Japanese government says there is no territorial dispute. But, if you look at history, there is a dispute.” The former prime minister argued that “If you keep saying ‘there is no dispute,’ you will never get an answer.” He urged the Japanese government to acknowledge the existence of a dispute, to seek resolution through dialogue, and agree to shelve the dispute. Hatoyama added that both Jia and Yang shared his views.

The next day, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga found it “very regrettable that the comment came from someone who has served as prime minister.” Suga said he “was dumbfounded and at a loss for words after hearing those remarks.” Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary Hosono Goshi characterized Hatoyama’s remarks as “exceedingly irresponsible and damaging to Japan’s national interest.”

## **Okinawa**

On May 8, researchers from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences published an article in the *People’s Daily* that called into question Japan’s claim to sovereignty over Okinawa. The two scholars suggested that “it may be time to revisit the unresolved historical issue of the Ryukyu Islands.” In response to Tokyo’s protest, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson told the press that Japan’s protest was “unacceptable.” She added that the reason sovereignty over

Okinawa is now being discussed is that Japan “has infringed Chinese sovereignty with its constant provocations regarding the Diaoyu Islands.” Nevertheless, on the issue of the government’s position on Japan’s sovereignty over Okinawa, Hua said “there is no change.”

Joining the Ryukyu debate, People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Gen. Luo Yuan declared that Japan had no rightful claim of sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands. He argued that the islands leader began paying tribute to China in 1372, 500 years before paying tribute to Japan in 1872, when Japan forced a weakened Okinawa into submission. Luo was not arguing that all former tributary states belonged to China, but that it can be said “with certainty that the Ryukyus do not belong to Japan.” In contrast, PLA Lt. Gen. Qi Jianguo told the Shangri-La Dialogue that China had not changed its position on Japan’s sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands.

Commenting on the *People’s Daily* article, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga made clear that “in terms of history and internationally, it is our nation’s sovereign territory.” There is “absolutely no basis” for the Chinese claim; their assertion went “beyond the absurd.”

## **East China Sea**

In early July, reports surfaced that China had been developing new gas fields in the East China Sea near Japan’s claimed mid-line boundary. During a *TBS* program, Prime Minister Abe addressed the reports, saying that such actions would be against the 2008 agreement on joint development and “extremely regrettable” and asked China to continue to abide by the joint agreement. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters that Japan could not accept any unilateral development on the part of China and that Japan’s concerns had been conveyed to China through its ambassador in Tokyo and through the Japanese Embassy in Beijing. China’s Foreign Ministry pointed out that development was taking place in areas under China’s jurisdiction and above reproach.

On July 17, *Reuters* reported that China’s CNOOC would ask government approval of plans to develop seven new oil and gas fields in the Huangyan project in the East China Sea. Responding to the *Reuters* story, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga reiterated that Japan could not recognize any unilateral steps taken by China.

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported that one of its company aircraft had observed Chinese construction of platforms near the mid-line boundary in early August. Meanwhile, a Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) project team on natural resources and energy recommended the government ask China to withdraw from construction efforts and development in disputed areas.

## **History**

History returned to the present as issues related to the Kono Statement (comfort women), the Murayama Statement (war apology), the definition of aggression, and Yasukuni Shrine visits again resurfaced. On April 23, Prime Minister Abe, commenting on the Murayama Statement’s reference to “aggression,” told an Upper House Budget Committee that “the definition of aggression has not been established.” He went on to say that “the perception is different on the standpoint you take in relations between nations.” The day before, Abe told the Committee that

his government “does not adhere to the Murayama Statement without question.” On May 8, again at a meeting of the Upper House Budget Committee, Abe was asked about the “definition of aggression.” In reply, Abe side-stepped the issue by observing that “there are various discussions in academic fields. I will not enter there.” Commenting on Abe’s remarks, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson told reporters that “There is ironclad and irrefutable evidence for Japanese militarism’s aggression, on which the international community has long reached a conclusion. It is not an academic issue at all.”

On May 13, Takaichi Sanae, head of the LDP Policy Affairs Council, said that she believed that Prime Minister Abe held “different opinions” about the judgment handed down by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East that Japan had waged a war of aggression. Takaichi questioned the Murayama Statement, which had acknowledged that Japan had followed “a mistaken national policy.” “Would it have been better for Japan not to fight at all and to take the path of becoming a colony amid embargoes,” she asked. As for paying homage at Yasukuni Shrine, she asserted that “It is an internal affair how to commemorate the people who sacrificed their lives for national policy.”

On May 14, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters that Takichi’s remarks represented her personal opinions not the policies of the Abe government. Suga made clear that the prime minister “clearly accepted” the judgment of the tribunal and that the government upholds the Murayama Statement. A week earlier Suga had addressed the Kono Statement, telling a news conference, “I don’t think I have ever said that we are conducting a study that could include revision of the Kono Statement.” The government’s basic policy remained that “this issue should not be made either a diplomatic or political issue.” Questioned on comfort women during an Upper House Budget committee meeting, Abe replied “I sympathize with the comfort women who suffered unspeakable pain.”

The following day, questions on the definition of aggression and the Murayama Statement were again raised during an Upper House Budget Committee meeting. In reply, Abe told the committee he had “not once said that Japan had not committed aggression” that as head of the administration with political authority, he must be humble before history and constrained with regard to its understandings, which should be left to historians. He then reaffirmed the Murayama Statement, acknowledging that that Japan had caused “tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to other Asian nations.” His government shared “the same recognition as previous Cabinets” and “upholds the statement as a whole.”

## **Yasukuni**

Yasukuni Shrine also came up during the Upper House Budget Committee meeting. Asked whether visits to the shrine would violate the constitutional separation of religion and politics, Abe replied that government officials are “free to pay visits in a private capacity.” Yasukuni, he said is “a quiet commemorative place,” not “a symbol of militarism.” Asked whether the government would support a state-managed war memorial in place of Yasukuni, Abe replied that “how bereaved families would feel about such a new war memorial is a very big issue.”

On Aug. 15, Abe sent an offering of a sacred tree branch to the shrine as head of the LDP. Meanwhile, three members of his Cabinet, Minister of Internal Affairs Shindo Yoshitaka, Chairman of the National Safety Commission Furuya Kenji, and Minister of Administrative Reform Inada Tomomi paid homage at the shrine, along with 102 members of the Diet and former Tokyo Gov. Ishihara Shintaro. In his remarks at ceremonies commemorating the end of the war, attended by the emperor and empress, Abe said “we will carve out the future of this country as one full of hope, as we face history with humility and engrave deeply into our hearts the lessons that we should learn.” He omitted the words “profound remorse” and “sincere mourning” for Japan’s war time conduct, words used by successive prime ministers, including Abe himself in 2007.

In Beijing, Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin called in Ambassador Kitera Masao to protest the visit of the Cabinet ministers. The *Mainichi Shimbun* reported that sources close to China relations had noted that “China had never summoned the ambassador just for the shrine visits of Cabinet ministers.” The Foreign Ministry issued a statement that read “Shrine visits by leaders in whatever capacity amount to the denial and glorification of the history of militarist aggression and a challenge to the outcome of World War II and the postwar international order.”

## **Security**

In an interview with *Foreign Policy*, former Minister of Defense Morimoto Satoshi responded to the question “How should Japan communicate to the United States that China is a threat,” saying that “Japan, and most ASEAN countries face a very serious Chinese military threat. Under President Obama, the United States has basically an engagement policy approach towards China. But we believe that a more hedging approach is necessary ... to manage China’s military in the blue ocean. Turning to the Senkakus, Morimoto did not think that China would “declare war and attack the Senkakus with a Chinese military landing force. However, to demonstrate their sovereignty, he was concerned that a “Chinese official ship may capture our fishing boat within the territorial waters of the Senkakus ... or some small unit would land on the Senkakus and stake the Chinese flag.”

In a speech in Omura, Nagasaki Prefecture on June 15, Minister of Defense Onodera Itsunori called attention to Japan’s need for an amphibious force with marine functions to support the defense of the Senkakus and Japan’s other remote islands. In a speech delivered later that day in Tokyo, Onodera, addressing the review of Japan’s National Defense Program Guidelines, said that the “capability to attack enemy bases will be discussed.” Earlier, on June 11, the LDP called for the creation of an amphibious force, equipped with amphibious vehicles and Osprey aircraft in order to attack enemy bases.

On July 9, Japan’s Ministry of Defense released its 2013 Defense White Paper. The report called attention to China’s increasingly assertive air and maritime activities, violations of Japan’s sovereign maritime and air space – “dangerous actions that could that could cause a contingency situation” and found such actions as “extremely regrettable.” The report cites the January incidents in which Chinese ships locked fire control radar on a Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) frigate and helicopter. With regard to the Senkakus, the White Paper states that “China has attempted to change the status quo by force based on its own assertion, which is

incompatible with the existing order of international law,” and portrays China’s actions as being aimed at weakening “the effective control of another country over the islands ... through various surveillance activities and use of force.” The report calls on China to “accept and abide by international norms” and to improve transparency of its defense budgeting and policy.

The White Paper also previews the mid-term review of the National Program Defense Guidelines with respect to Japan’s “will and capacity to defend itself against foreign invasions,” and the possibility of enhancing deterrence by acquiring the capability to strike enemy missile bases.

On July 10, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying expressed China’s “strong dissatisfaction” with the White Paper and its “malicious hype about the so-called ‘China threat’...” Hua went on to drive home several points:

- “China takes the path of peaceful development, and pursues a defense policy that is defensive in nature ... China’s development of normal and legitimate defense capabilities poses no threat to any country. Japan has no right to point fingers at China’s domestic affairs.”
- “China is justified in carrying out legitimate maritime activities according to international law and relevant domestic laws ... By stirring up the Diaoyu Islands issue, Japan has grossly violated China’s territorial sovereignty and undermined regional peace and stability...”
- “By playing up an external threat, Japan is trying to justify its own military buildup and its attempt to get out of the bounds of the post-war order...”
- “China values its relations with Japan and stands ready to grow bilateral ties ... But Japan must correct its attitude, meet China half-way, and make concrete efforts to remove barriers to the healthy development of bilateral relations....”

On July 26, The Ministry of Defense released a mid-term report on the review of the National Defense Program Guidelines. The report found that Japan’s security environment is becoming increasingly severe as a result of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the development of ballistic missile capabilities. It also noted China’s continuing military modernization program, in particular the build up its air and naval components, as well as the lack of transparency in China’s military programs. The mid-term review also referred to China’s continuing incursions into Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus and to the possibility of unintended contingencies arising as a result of such actions.

In addressing the growing missile ballistic missile threat posed by North Korea, the report advanced a comprehensive approach to strengthening Japan’s deterrence posture. Commentary by defense officials indicated that under the concept of a comprehensive approach consideration would be given to a study of strike capabilities. Minister of Defense Onodera told reporters “There is no change in our basic stance of defense-only policy.”

At the end of July, Japanese media carried reports of increased Chinese military activities in the vicinity of Japan: over-flight of the Nansei Islands by a Chinese military aircraft, joint exercises with the Russian Navy in the Sea of Japan, followed by circumnavigation of Japan by PLA Navy ships, and a Y-8 surveillance aircraft flying between Okinawa and Miyako Island to join fleet exercises in the western Pacific.

Commenting on Chinese activities, JMSDF Chief of Staff Kawano Katsuyoshi observed that “the Chinese Navy is expanding its sphere of activities and is now embarking on extended operations.” Minister of Defense Onodera said on an *NHK* broadcast that the activities indicate “China’s move toward further maritime expansion.” Prime Minister Abe characterized the Y-8 flight as unusual and worthy of continuing attention. China’s Ministry of Defense rejected Abe’s claim, noting that China had regularly conducted exercises in international waters and found the Mid-Term Defense Report guilty of hyping a “China threat.”

On August 6, Japan launched its largest helicopter carrier, the *Izumo*. The next day, the *Sankei Shimbun* reported that the government is considering the deployment of a 100-man Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) contingent to Yonagumi Island, some 500 km from Naha, to monitor movement of Chinese ships and aircraft.

### **Collective self-defense**

On August 4, Yanai Shunji, head of the prime minister’s advisory commission on issues relating to the Constitution and the exercise of the right of collective self-defense, told an *NHK* television audience that “current government views are excessively narrow and (Japan) has refrained from doing even what is not prohibited by the Constitution. He went on to assert that “in other words, use of collective self-defense has been accepted under international law and is not prohibited by the Constitution.” On the same program Minister of Defense Onodera said that the review of the National Defense Program Guidelines should include the commission’s recommendation regarding the exercise of collective self-defense.

Sources close to the prime minister were reported as recommending that the commission consider four specific scenarios in which the right of collective self-defense could be exercised rather than a blanket authorization. However, Tokyo University professor and member of the Yanai commission Kitaoka Shinichi took the position that, in light of growing concerns over China’s increasing military strength and its continuing incursions in the Senkakus, the panel should go beyond the four scenarios under consideration.

On Aug. 12, the prime minister, while visiting his home district of Yamaguchi prefecture, told supporters that he “will work hard for constitutional revision. This is my historical mission.” Earlier, while visiting the Philippines at the end of July, Abe told Philippine President Benigno Aquino that reconsideration of collective self-defense was aimed at “ensuring safety for Japan and contributing to the Japan-US alliance, and regional peace and stability.” He went on to say that Japan is simply attempting to act as “almost all other countries can do naturally.”

On August 14, Isozaki Yosuke, special advisor to Abe, posted a message on Facebook that the government would consider the exercise of collective self-defense from a comprehensive

perspective. Referring to the first Yanai commission's recommendation that Japan be allowed to exercise the right of collective self-defense in four specific cases, Izozaki wrote that the four cases were aimed "at generating debate, but are not intended to allow Japan to exercise the right ...only for special cases. Since the right to collective self-defense is a right, the question is whether Japan has that right or not."

### **Abe on the Senkakus**

During a July 9 *TBS* program, Prime Minister Abe observed that it is important to understand that China is attempting to use history to strengthen its claims to the Senkakus. He argued that the understanding of history and diplomatic relations are separate problems. Abe personally believed that history should be left to historians, but he observed that in reality China is attempting to use history to force concessions on the Senkakus, but that Japan has "no intention to compromise on the Senkakus."

Asked to comment on Abe's remarks, Hua Chunying told reporters that "China's position on the Diaoyu Islands issues is clear and consistent. The Diaoyu Island and its affiliated islands belong to China. China is resolute and firm in safeguarding its territorial sovereignty ... We urge Japan to stay true to history, show sincerity, and take real actions to properly manage and solve the Diaoyu islands issue."

Shortly before the Upper House election, Abe visited Ishigaki and Miyako Islands. At the Ishigaki Coast Guard Office and then at the Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) Miyako facility, Abe made clear his firm determination "to protect our country's territorial waters and air space." In remarks in Ishigaki, he emphasized that "we will not budge even an inch" on the Senkakus.

### **Can we talk?**

On June 30, Prime Minister Abe told reporters at the LDP headquarters that "the proper diplomatic approach (with respect to China) is to meet and talk when there are issues. Both sides should not set conditions for meeting." At the same time, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga, in a speech delivered in Tokyo, remarked that "various negotiations are taking place" between Tokyo and Beijing and that "the gap is narrowing between the two sides." On July 2 in Brunei, Foreign Minister Kishida acknowledged that he had failed to meet his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi during the ASEAN meeting but went on to say that working-level contacts were taking place, though they had not yet been able to produce high-level results.

Speaking in Singapore on July 26, Abe said that "I am looking forward to the day when I can have amicable discussions with the leaders of China ... in exactly this spirit of being at ease with each other." Responding to Abe's remarks, Hua Chunying told reporters that "China has been committed to properly controlling and settling the Diaoyu islands issue through dialogue" Japan "should not solely resort to empty talk about 'dialogues' but needs to face up to history and reality."

On July 28, Iijima Isao, speaking in Tatsunomachi in Nagano prefecture, told his audience that he had made a private visit to Beijing in mid-July in an effort to advance a high-level meeting.

Iijima said that he had met with important people and was given the opportunity to say what he wanted to say with regard to the prospects for a summit. It was his “private and personal opinion that a summit is possible in a not too distant date.” The following day, spokesperson Hong Lei told reporters that Iijima had applied for a visa but that as far as he knew, Iijima “has not engaged in any official activity in China, nor have officials of the Chinese government made contact with him.”

On July 29, Vice Foreign Minister Saiki Akitaka visited Beijing. Commenting on Saiki’s trip, Prime Minister Abe told reporters “the door to dialogue with Japan is always open. The foreign ministers or top leaders of both countries should engage in candid dialogue without any conditions.” Saiki met Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui and other senior Chinese officials. According to sources close to the China-Japan relationship, the Chinese officials pressed Saiki to admit the existence of a dispute over the Senkakus, but he refused to do so, reiterating the government’s position “that a territorial problem does not at all exist.” Discussions also covered policies to avoid unintended incidents in the Senkakus. Before departing Beijing, Saiki told reporters that the two sides agreed to continue dialogue through various channels. As for prospects for a summit, Saiki declined comment.

Aug. 12 marked the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Although no official events were held to commemorate the day, a nine-member delegation of Japanese parliamentarians, led by Toyama Kyohiko, visited Beijing and met Yang Yi, assistant minister of the CCP’s International Department and formerly director general of the Foreign Ministry’s Asian Affairs Department. The Diet members reiterated the government’s position that there is no territorial issue with respect to the Senkakus and emphasized the importance of dialogue to improve relations. Yang responded that while the Japanese talked about the importance of improving relations, their actions told a different story, that Japan’s policy toward China had given Chinese a sense of threat rather than an intention to improve relations. Toyama replied that it was China’s growing military strength that has caused Japan to feel threatened.

On August 27, Vice Foreign Minister Li Baodong told a press conference that there is little likelihood of a meeting between President Xi and Prime Minister Abe during the September G-20 meeting in Russia. Li observed that setting up such a meeting would be difficult, “given there is no foundation for dialogue.”

### **Public opinion**

In early August, Genron NPO, a Japanese nonprofit organization based in Tokyo and the *China Daily* released the results of a public opinion poll conducted earlier in June and July. The poll found that 92.8 percent of Japanese respondents had bad or relatively poor feelings toward China, while 90.1 percent of Chinese respondents had similar feelings toward Japan. On Aug. 12, *Xinhua* commented that the state of China-Japan relations was the worst since normalization of relations in 1972, and the Abe government was “pouring oil on fire.”

### **Outlook**

With both Tokyo and Beijing holding firmly to their positions on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, the relationship, over the next four months, promises to remain in a state of suspended animation.

## **Chronology of Japan – China Relations**

### **May – August 2013**

**April 23, 2013:** Prime Minister (PM) Abe Shinzo in commenting on Murayama Statement says “aggression” has yet to be defined.

**May 4, 2013:** Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey on a visit to China states that the US will honor treaty obligations to Japan.

**May 5, 2013:** Director General Sugiyama Shinsuku protests Chinese entry into Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus.

**May 7, 2013:** Two Chinese frigates pass through Japan’s contiguous zone between Yonaguni and Nishiomote Islands en route to western Pacific.

**May 7-8, 2013:** President Barack Obama in Sunnylands meeting with President Xi Jinping emphasizes that Japan is a treaty ally of the US.

**May 8, 2013:** Researchers from Chinese Academy of Social Science publish an article that questions Japan’s sovereignty over Okinawa. China’s Foreign Ministry maintains that there is no change in government’s position regarding Japan’s sovereignty over Okinawa.

**May 13, 2013:** Minister of Defense Onodera Itsunori announces May 2 and May 12 transit of submerged submarine through Japan’s contiguous zone around Amami-Oshima Island.

**May 15, 2013:** PM Abe reaffirms Murayama Statement.

**May 26, 2013:** PM Li Keqiang speaking in Potsdam Germany announces that on basis of Potsdam and Cairo Declarations Senkakus are to be returned to China.

**May 27, 2013:** Three Chinese frigates pass in international waters between Okinawa and Miyakojima en route to exercises in the western Pacific.

**May 26, 2013:** PM Abe visits Chidorigafuchi National Cemetery.

**May 28, 2013:** *Xinhua* reports *2012 Strategic Assessment* study released by Ministry of National Defense think tank; report notes increasing danger of air and maritime contingencies with Japan.

**May 29, 2013:** Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga replies that Japan’s postwar territory had been defined by the San Francisco Treaty, not the Cairo Declaration and that the Republic of China had accepted the San Francisco settlement.

**June 1-9, 2013:** Chinese ships enter Japan’s territorial waters in Senkakus.

**June 11, 2013:** LDP calls for an amphibious force to defend Japan’s remote islands.

**June 15, 2013:** Minister of Defense Onodera points to need to develop an amphibious force with marine capabilities; previews discussion of “strike capabilities” in mid-term review of Japan’s National Defense Program Guidelines.

**June 17-18, 2013:** Taniuchi Shotaro visits Beijing to explore possibilities for high-level meeting.

**June 22-23, 2013:** Chinese ships enter Japanese territorial waters in Senkakus.

**June 25-26, 2013:** Former PM Hatoyama tapes interview with Hong Kong’s *Phoenix TV* and urges Japanese government to acknowledge existence of a dispute over the Senkakus.

**June 26, 2013:** Former PM Hatoyama meets Foreign Minister Wang in Beijing. After the meeting, he says that Japan should acknowledge the existence of a dispute over the Senkakus.

**June 27, 2013:** Chinese ships enter Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus.

**June 28, 2013:** Former PM Hatoyama meets with PM Li in the Great Hall of the People; the meeting is Li’s first with a representative of Japan’s political world.

**June 30, 2013:** PM Abe tells reporters that there should be no conditions for a meeting of Japanese and Chinese leaders.

**July 1, 2013:** Chinese ships enter Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus.

**July 2, 2013:** Yu Zhengsheng, fourth ranking member of the Standing Committee, meets visiting Japanese business delegation; China’s *Central Television* carries Yu’s remarks that it is in the fundamental interest of both countries to stabilize relations.

**July 2, 2013:** Foreign Minister Kishida acknowledges failure to meet Chinese Foreign Minister Wang during ASEAN meeting in Brunei and lack of progress in arranging a high-level meeting with China’s leaders; says working-level contacts continue.

**July 4-10, 2013:** Chinese ships operate in Japan’s territorial waters.

**July 5, 2013:** PM Abe says it is “extremely regrettable” if China is developing new gas fields in the East China Sea and asks China to abide by 2008 agreement on joint development.

**July 5, 2013:** *Xinhua* reports sentencing of rioters involved in anti-Japanese demonstrations of September 2012 following nationalization of Senkakus.

**July 8, 2013:** PM Abe tells Upper House Budget Committee that Yanai commission is considering going beyond the four cases previously developed with respect to the exercise of the right of collective self- defense.

**July 9, 2013:** Japanese Ministry of Defense releases 2013 Defense White Paper, which expresses concern that Chinese assertive air and maritime actions could result in unexpected contingencies and asserts that these actions in the Senkakus represent efforts to change the status quo by force.

**July 10, 2013:** Ministry of Defense reports Japanese ASDF aircraft scrambled 115 times in the period April-June 2013, the highest number since the fourth quarter of 2005; scrambles against Chinese aircraft totaled 69 compared to 15 in the same period in 2012.

**July 10, 2013:** China expresses “strong dissatisfaction” with Japan’s 2013 Defense White Paper and its “malicious hype about the so-called China threat.”

**July 12, 2013:** PM Abe issues proclamation to mark July 15 National Sea Day, emphasizing determination to defend freedom of the seas and not recognize change based on use of force.

**July 13-16, 2013:** Iijima Isao, political confidant of Prime Minister Abe, visits Beijing.

**July 15-Aug. 15, 2013:** Chinese ships repeatedly enter Japanese territorial water in Senkakus.

**July 17, 2013:** *Reuters* reports CNOOC will ask permission to develop seven new oil and gas fields; Chief Cabinet Secretary says Japan could not accept any unilateral steps taken by China.

**July 17, 2013:** In pre-election visit to Ishigaki, PM Abe underscores Japan’s determination on the Senkakus, saying “we will not budge even one inch.”

**July 22, 2013:** China launches new Coast Guard.

**July 22-24, 2013:** Chinese research ship operates in Japan’s contiguous zone without prior permission of Japan.

**July 24, 2013:** Japan scrambles fighters in response to flight of Y-8 surveillance aircraft between Okinawa and Miyakojima.

**July 26, 2013:** Japanese Ministry of Defense releases Mid-Term Review of National Defense Program Guidelines.

**July 29, 2013:** Vice Foreign Minister Saiki visits Beijing and meets Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui. PM Abe says that “the door to dialogue with Japan is always open.”

**Aug. 1, 2013:** LDP project team proposes that government ask China to cease development operations in East China Sea.

**Aug. 2, 2013:** Director General for Asian and Oceanian Affairs Ihara protests Chinese incursion to Chinese Embassy in Tokyo.

**Aug. 3, 2013:** Vice Premier Li meets former PM Hatoyama; *Xinhua* reports Li cautions Japan not to forget the past, urging both countries to face the future, squarely looking at the past.

**Aug. 4, 2013:** Yanai Shunji, head of the prime minister's advisory commission on issues related to the constitution and the exercise of collective self-defense says that the current government's views are "excessively narrow."

**Aug. 5, 2013:** Japanese Coast Guard reports Chinese Coast Guardsmen board Chinese fishing boats operating in Japan's contiguous zone near the Senkakus.

**Aug. 5, 2013:** *Yomiuri Shimbun* aircraft observes Chinese construction efforts in East China Sea near Japan's claimed mid-line boundary.

**Aug. 6, 2013:** Japan launches helicopter carrier *Izumo*.

**Aug. 8, 2013:** Japan protests incursions into Japanese waters by Chinese vessels on Aug. 7-8 to Chinese Embassy, which refuses to accept the protest.

**Aug. 12, 2013:** PM Abe says that constitutional revision is his "sacred duty."

**Aug. 12, 2013:** Thirty-fifth anniversary of the China-Japan Treaty of Peace and Friendship occurs with no official ceremonies to mark the day.

**Aug. 12, 2013:** Nine-member delegation of Japanese parliamentarians visits Beijing and meets Yang Yi, assistant minister of the CCP's International Department.

**Aug. 14, 2013:** Chinese Ambassador Cheng meets Vice Foreign Minister Saiki; Japanese Foreign Ministry sources reports discussions included Yasukuni, Okinawa, and the Senkakus.

**Aug. 14, 2013:** Isozaki Yosuke, special advisor to the prime minister, in Facebook post says that exercise of the right of collective-self-defense should be considered from a comprehensive perspective, not limited to the four cases previously under review.

**Aug. 15, 2013:** PM Abe does not visit Yasukuni Shrine but sends offering as LDP president; three Cabinet ministers and 102 members of the Diet pay homage at the shrine.

**Aug. 18, 2013:** Five Japanese ships carrying fishermen and members of *Ganbare Nippon* sail to Senkakus but do not land. It is the fifth visit to the Senkakus this year by *Ganbare Nippon*.

**Aug. 25-26, 2013:** Four Chinese Coast Guard Ships operate in Japan's contiguous zone near the Senkakus.

**Aug. 27, 2013:** Two Chinese frigates transit in international water between Okinawa and Miyakojima.

**Aug. 27, 2013:** China's Vice Foreign Minister Li downplay chances for Abe-Li meeting during September G20 meeting in Russia.