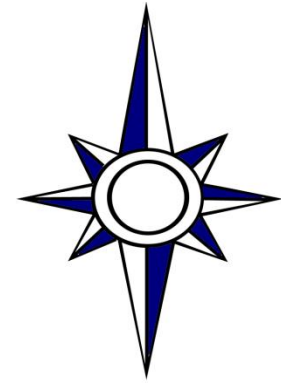


Comparative Connections

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Japan-China Relations: Searching for a Summit

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Japan spent the summer months pressing for a summit with China. In remarks to the Diet, press conferences, and public speeches Prime Minister Abe made clear his quest for a summit, without preconditions, with President Xi during the upcoming November APEC meeting in Beijing. A parade of Japanese political figures, including former Prime Minister Fukuda, explored the possibility of a summit during visits to China. Beijing's answer continued to point to obstacles in the way – Abe's visit to Yasukuni Shrine and Japan's failure to recognize the existence of a dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Meanwhile, incursions by China's Coast Guard into Japan's territorial waters continued and two mid-air incidents heightened security concerns. Japanese investment in China plunged over 40 percent in the first half of the year, and history – the 77th anniversary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident – remained ever present.

The search for a summit

When Prime Minister Abe Shinzo addressed a meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels in early May, he called specific attention to China's diplomacy and its lack of transparency regarding its expanding military budget – over 10 percent increases in a 26-year span – and observed that these are “issues of concern to the international community.” He called on China to respond to Japan's initiative for an air-sea communications mechanism. He also called on Europe to maintain “strict control on the export of weapons and sensitive general-purpose equipment” to China to avoid destabilizing the Asia-Pacific region.

At a May 7 press conference, Abe reiterated his position on relations with China. He said that relations should be developed from a “comprehensive perspective, returning to the starting point ... of a mutually beneficial strategic relationship.” Accordingly, “both countries should openly discuss issues without preconditions.” He also reiterated that “I have always kept the door open for dialogue with China. I hope the Chinese side will take the same stance.”

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying delivered Beijing's reply, stating that “internally the Japanese leader is busy taking perverse action on historical issues and pressing ahead with constitutional amendment and military expansion under the cloak of proactive pacifism. Internationally, the Japanese leader is busy spreading maliciously the China threat theory, launching verbal attacks against China and defaming China wherever he goes.” Hua cast

* 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.

Abe and his visit to the Yasukuni Shrine as being “among a group of people in Japan who attempt to deny or even glorify the history of aggression and colonial rule by Japan’s militarism and negate the just trial of Japanese fascism by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East.” Hua also accused Japan of “stirring up troubles on issues concerning territorial disputes with neighbors and ratcheting up tensions.”

At the end of May, in his address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore titled “Peace and Prosperity in Asia Forevermore,” the prime minister emphasized freedom of the seas and freedom of overflight, the rule of law, avoidance of coercion to advance claims, peaceful resolution of disputes, and human rights. Abe referred to the 2007 agreement between himself and then Premier Wen Jiabao to set up “a maritime and air communication mechanism to prevent unexpected situations between Japan and China” and expressed regret that it had yet to become operational. Finally, Abe explained the purpose behind his government’s reconsideration of the existing constitutional interpretation of the exercise of the right of collective self-defense as necessary to allow Japan to make a “Proactive Contribution to Peace.”

In a Q&A after his address, a Chinese military officer asked how Abe could explain his visit to the Yasukuni Shrine – did he express the same sentiments toward to “millions and millions of people in China, Korea and many countries in this region that have been killed by the Japanese Army?” Abe replied that he had frequently made clear his deep remorse for those who had lost their lives during the war and for the victims of the war. Postwar Japan had “created a peaceful, free and democratic nation ... We protect human rights and respect that law.” The Japanese press and the *Washington Post* noted that Abe’s reply earned applause from the audience.

In a July 5 interview with the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Abe reiterated his call for a meeting, without preconditions, with President Xi during the November APEC meeting in Beijing. Abe again raised the idea of a meeting with Xi in remarks before the Lower House Budget Committee on July 14 and in an address delivered in Shimonoseki City on July 19, noting that because there are problems in the relationship that leaders should meet to resolve differences.

During a July 9 appearance on a BS-Fuji program, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide expressed his hopes for an Abe-Xi summit during the APEC meeting, finding such a meeting only natural. Replying to Suga’s comment, China’s Foreign Ministry spokesperson Qin referenced Abe’s visit to Yasukuni and the Diaoyu Islands dispute, saying that “the relevant remarks from the Japanese side attempt to force China to swallow the bitter pills of hurt feelings and impaired sovereignty.” As for the prospects for a summit, Qin cited a Chinese saying to the effect of “don’t even bother to approach me if you are not absolutely sincere,” unless Japan takes steps “to correct its attitude and take concrete actions, there is no way for China to improve their relations.”

The July 14 *Sankei Shimbun* reported that during his May visit to Beijing, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Vice President Komura Masahiko had expressed his opinion that Abe would not pay homage at the Yasukuni Shrine if not going to the shrine would result in a meeting with President Xi. That same day in a *Mainichi Shimbun* interview, when asked about Komura’s statement, Abe replied “that is Mr. Komura’s opinion. I don’t know anything about it.”

In a *Sankei* public opinion poll released July 22, respondents were asked if Japan should “hurry for a summit meeting with China;” 47 percent responded “yes;” 43.4 percent responded “no.” Asked which country was more responsible for the failure to hold a leadership meeting, 3.8 percent responded “Japan,” 38.4 percent responded “China,” and 53.8 percent responded “both.” In an Aug. 11 *Sankei* poll asking the same question, 54 percent responded that Japan should hurry to arrange a summit meeting with China; 38.9 percent relied that Japan should not hurry.

During his visit to Brazil, Abe told an Aug. 2 press conference in Sao Paulo that “it is important for each of us to make quiet efforts” toward the realization of a meeting. The following day, Japanese media reported that former Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo had visited Beijing at the end of July (27-29) and secretly met President Xi to whom he conveyed a message from Abe expressing his desire for a meeting. An aide to the prime minister told the *Nikkei Shimbun* that the Prime Minister’s Office was responsible for the Fukuda initiative and, in the process, had cut out the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The *Sankei Shimbun* reported that during the Fukuda visit, Xi told him that China is uncertain how Abe “wants to interact with China.” Fukuda reportedly told associates that Xi is agonizing on ways to improve the Japan-China relationship. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told an Aug. 4 press conference that “There should be no preconditions for engaging in dialogue. Dialogue should be held precisely because there are issues.” Abe reiterated his summit plea at an Aug. 6 press conference, observing “because issues of concern exist, we need to have a frank dialogue.”

Looking for a political opening: high-level meetings

In early May, LDP Vice President Komura Masahiko led a supra-party delegation of the Japan-China Friendship Commission to Beijing where it met former State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan, head of the China-Japan Friendship Commission. Tang stressed the importance attached to the Komura visit by China’s leadership, but also expressed concern with possible changes in Japan’s security policy. Komura said Japan does not regard China as a threat and expressed Japan’s interest in improving relations and returning to a “Mutually Beneficial Strategic Relationship.” He also raised the possibility of an Abe-Xi meeting during the APEC meeting.

The Komura delegation also met Zhang Dejiang, the third ranking member of the CCP. While they agreed on the necessity of improving relations, their different perspectives on history and the Senkakus/Diaoyus revealed deep differences. Zhang told the delegation that the responsibility for improving relations rested with Japan. He wanted Japan “to take concrete actions to show that you are committed to eliminating problems.” Afterward, Komura characterized the exchanges as “extremely frank and rigorous.” Back in Tokyo, Komura told reporters that he had raised the possibility of an Abe-Xi meeting at APEC and that Zhang had committed to informing China’s leadership of the request. After briefing Abe on his meetings, Komura told reporters there was “no reason not to be hopeful” regarding an Abe-Xi meeting.

A delegation of the Asia-Africa Study Group, led by former Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko, followed Komura to Beijing and met Yu Zhengsheng, the CCP’s fourth ranking member. Yu welcomed the visitors, saying that he was one person who has continuously attached importance to friendly relations between the two countries. However, according to former Minister of Finance Koga, who attended the meeting, Yu said that the path to improving relations depended

on Abe ceasing visits to Yasukuni and to recognizing that a dispute existed over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. As Abe himself had caused the present difficulties, were he to change his perspective, China would have no choice but to respond favorably. At the same time, Yu expressed the importance of continuing cultural exchanges and the Chinese leaderships' high regard for the contribution Japanese industry has made to China's economic development. On May 13, the Noda group briefed Abe on their visit.

The New Japan China 21st Century Commission met in Nagasaki on June 5-6, the first meeting of the group in nearly two years. Former State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan led the Chinese delegation and is reported to have said that as a result of Abe's visit to Yasukuni and the Diaoyu dispute, China-Japan relations are "in an unprecedentedly dangerous state." Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga complained that Tang's comments "as always are one-sided explanations."

The parade of Japanese politicians continued at the end of June, when a delegation, led by Socialist Democratic Party Chairman Yoshida Tadamoto visited Beijing and met Yu Zhengsheng and later with Wang Jiarui, head of the CCP's International Department. Yu told the delegation that to realize a summit in November Abe would have to change his positions on Yasukuni and the Diaoyu Islands. Wang noted the importance of creating an "environment for mutual concessions" to realize an Abe-Xi meeting. However, Wang was reported as saying that it is incumbent on Abe to make clear his agenda and that "there is no point in holding a meeting between the two leaders if the prime minister maintains his wrong position toward China."

Japan's Minister of Transportation Ota Akihiro arrived in Beijing on June 26, the first Japanese minister to visit Beijing since the advent of the Abe government in December 2012. Ota met Vice Premier Liu Yandong, head of the National Tourism Administration Shao Qiwei, and Tang Jiaxuan. Liu noted the significance of Ota's visit in the present difficult state of affairs and said that people-to-people exchanges could build a feeling of friendship. The *Sankei Shimbun* regarded the Ota visit as a sign of China softening its stance toward Japan.

Director General for Asian and Oceanic Affairs Ihara Junichi met his Chinese counterpart in Beijing in early July. Discussions focused on bilateral relations and explored the possibility of an Abe-Xi summit. Several political figures followed Ihara to Beijing. On July 16, the DPJ's Kaieda Banri met Liu Yunshan, the fifth ranking member of China's leadership. Liu commented favorably on the DPJ's understanding of history. However the two leaders failed to agree on Liu's call to shelve the Daioyu/Senkaku dispute. In response to Liu's concerns about Japan's exercise of the right of collective self-defense, Kaieda defended the Abe government's decision as a domestic political issue. On July 23, former LDP Vice President Yamasaki Taku met Tang Jiaxuan. Yamasaki is reported to have told Tang that he thought Abe would not visit the Yasukuni Shrine because doing so would not be in Japan's national interest. As for the Senkakus, there was no mistaking that the islands belong to Japan; any concession on the issue could lead to Abe's resignation. Tang replied that under the present conditions realizing a summit would be "difficult."

Arriving in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar for the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting, Wang Yi told reporters that he hoped Japan would take practical steps to improve relations but, thus far, Japan had not sent clear signals of its intentions to improve relations and so again China must study the

signals it is receiving. On Aug. 9 Foreign Minister Kishida Fumio met for approximately one hour with Wang. Afterward, Kishida told reporters that the two wanted to use the opportunity to advance relations and were able to exchange views in a straight-forward manner. The meeting of Japanese and Chinese foreign ministers was the first in nearly two years.

On Aug. 18, Vice President Li Yuanchao met a delegation of the Japan-China Committee for Next Generation Exchange. Li emphasized the importance of both countries putting aside “minor disagreements for the sake of common interests.” He called attention to the downturn in economic relations and found rising popular mistrust “most serious,” a result of “insufficient strategic mutual trust.” As for the prospects of a summit, he observed that “it is necessary to create an environment and atmosphere for removing political obstacles.”

Business and economics

In mid-May, Japan’s Foreign Ministry released visa issuance statistics for 2013. Overall the number of visas issued to Chinese nationals fell by 12.7 percent to an estimated 972,000 over 2012, with tourist visas experiencing a near 20 percent decline to 540,000. Meanwhile statistics compiled by the Japanese embassy and consulates in China indicated that as of Oct. 1, 2013, the number of Japanese nationals residing in China fell to an estimated 135,000 with Shanghai experiencing a 17 percent decline and Beijing a 14 percent drop.

Between January and April, direct Japanese investment in China plunged 46.8 percent over the same period in 2013. The *Asahi Shimbun* reported that Beijing, while maintaining a strong line toward the Abe government, has shifted toward a line of “separating politics and economics.” On June 17, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce released statistics for the January-May period, during which Japanese investment fell 42.2 percent over 2013. On July 15, China’s Ministry of Commerce announced that Japan’s indirect investment in China for the period January-June was off 48.8 percent, or \$2.4 billion, over 2013.

On May 17, Japan’s Minister of Trade, Industry and Technology Motegi Toshimitsu met China’s Minister of Commerce Gao Huncheng on the sidelines of the APEC Trade Ministers Meeting in Qingdao, the first meeting of between Cabinet ministers in China since the autumn of 2012. Ten days later Keidanren Chairman Yonekura Hiromasa met Tang Jiaxuan in Beijing. During the meeting Tang observed that it is possible to advance mutually beneficial economic cooperation. On May 28, Yonekura met Vice President Li Yuanchao.

Jin Liqun, the official in charge of setting up China’s proposed Asia Infrastructure Development Bank visited Tokyo in late June and met Vice Finance Minister for International Affairs Furusawa Mitsuhiro to discuss Japan’s interest in supporting the initiative. According to Japanese sources, Furusawa told Jin that, because the Asian Development Bank has worked well so far, “Japan is “not convinced” of the necessity of setting up a new international institution.

On Aug. 20, China’s National Development and Reform Commission hit eight Japanese auto parts and four Japanese bearing makers with fines in the range of \$200 million for price fixing violations. The *New York Times* reported that “The fines, a record for China, are also notable for being levied exclusively against Japanese companies.”

History

In early June, the Chinese government applied to UNESCO to include in the Memory of the World Register documents relating to the Nanjing Massacre and the recruitment of comfort women. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga found Beijing's actions – using one period in the two countries' long history for political purposes – to be “extremely regrettable.” In reply, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua said that China would “not accept Japan's unjustifiable representations and ... will not withdraw its application.” Hua continued “Japan's irresponsible remarks which reflect its erroneous concept of history are used to cover up its guilty conscience. The Nanjing Massacre and Japan's forced recruitment of the “comfort women” are grave crimes committed by Japanese militarism in the war of aggression against China....”

From June 30 leading up to July 7, the 77th anniversary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, the city of Beijing initiated patriotic activities to commemorate the event. Through the end of October an estimated 40 related events are being planned. Looking ahead, President XI has designated 2015 as commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Victory over Fascism. On July 7, Premier Li Keqiang, at a joint press conference during the visit of Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel, emphasized the importance of learning the lessons of history as a guide to the future. Speaking on the 77th anniversary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, Li noted the day as marking the beginning of Japan's all-out invasion of China and the Chinese people's eight years of struggle and resistance.

During his July summit with ROK President Park Geun-hye, Xi used his remarks at Seoul National University to remind his Korean audience of early 20th century Japanese militarism and Japan's invasion of Korea and China and of waging “aggressive war.” Xi referred to the two occasions when China had helped Korea repel earlier Japanese invasions. He made no mention of China's numerous invasions of Korea, most recently during the Korean War.

In early July, the *Chongqing Youth News* published an edition with a full-page ad under the headline “Japan Wants a New War” in both Chinese and English. The headline ran across a map of Japan with mushroom clouds appearing over both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On July 8, Foreign Minister Kishida, speaking as a politician from Hiroshima, responded that he found the display “completely unacceptable” and “imprudent.” The following day, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters that the government, through the embassy in Beijing, had issued a strong protest to China's Foreign Ministry and that similar protest had been lodged with the Chongqing government through the Japanese consulate.

A supra-party delegation of 84 Diet members paid homage at the Yasukuni Shrine on Aug. 15. Prime Minister Abe did not participate, sending instead a sakaki offering. China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua blasted the shrine as a place that “whitewashes Japan's war of aggression, and the visit as demonstrating “the Japanese government's wrongful attitude toward historical issues.” The *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported that in contrast to last year, when the Chinese Foreign Ministry called in the Japanese ambassador to protest Abe's offering, this year the protest was lodged by a phone call to the Japanese embassy.

On Aug. 27, Japanese media reported that Prime Minister Abe had sent a letter to an April 29 Buddhist memorial service commemorating Japan's Class A, B, and C war criminals, including the 14 Class A war criminals enshrined at Yasukuni. In his letter, Abe hailed the former imperial military officers as having "staked their souls to become the foundation of their nation." Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga endeavored to calm the storm by noting that Abe had signed the letter in his private capacity as president of the LDP. Not convinced of the distinction, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Qin urged Japan to "make a clean break with militarism."

Senkakus/Diaoyus

Over the summer, Chinese Coast Guard vessels regularly entered Japan's contiguous zone and territorial waters in the Senkaku/Diaoyu region. A summary of the incidents is provided in the chronology. When challenged by Japanese Coast Guard patrols, the nearly scripted response was that the Chinese ships were patrolling under Chinese law and could not accept Japan's assertions that they were operating in Japanese controlled waters.

In mid-August, the *Nikkei Shimbun*, citing government sources, reported that the frequency of Chinese incursions into Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus had fallen off significantly in the first six months of 2014. In contrast to 2013, when 94 incursions were recorded, the number had fallen to 40 in 2014. Also, the time spent in Japan's territorial waters had lessened from an average of four hours in 2013 to two-three hours in 2014.

Security: air engagements – Act 1

The summer also saw activity between Japanese and Chinese air patrols over the East China Sea. On May 24, in the airspace where the Chinese and Japanese ADIZs overlap, two Chinese *SU-27* aircraft flew within close proximity (between 30-50 meters) to two Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) aircraft, a *YS11EB* and an *OP3C*, that were observing a joint Chinese-Russian naval exercise. Vice Foreign Minister Saiki Akitaki called China's Ambassador Cheng Yonghua on May 26 to protest the Chinese actions and request that steps be taken to prevent a reoccurrence. After the meeting, Cheng told reporters that he had protested Japan's dangerous intelligence activities, expressing his great dissatisfaction with the ASDF actions. In turn, Saiki told reporters that Japan could not at all accept China's protestations of dangerous ASDF actions as obstructing the joint exercise. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told a press conference that such dangerous actions on the part of China could result in accidents and was truly regrettable. To avoid unanticipated accidents, he asked China to exercise self-restraint and act responsibly. Minister of Defense Onodera Itsunori told the Upper House Budget Committee that the ASDF had not obstructed the Chinese-Russian exercise. To avoid such incidents in the future, Onodera stressed the importance of establishing a military hotline.

Asked to comment on a pending resolution in the Foreign Affairs Committee, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei said that he found the resolution to be "extremely irresponsible," while accusing Japan of carrying out "interruptive activities over the drill" and of using the issue to "to deliberately hype up the 'China threat.'"

Security: air engagements – Act 2

On June 11, two Chinese military aircraft flew within meters of two JASDF aircraft over the East China Sea. In Beijing, Japanese Deputy Chief of Mission Horiuchi called at the Foreign Ministry to protest. On June 12, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga cast the Chinese actions as “extremely regrettable and unacceptable,” pointing out that such dangerous actions could lead to unanticipated incidents. Vice Foreign Minister Saiki called Chinese Ambassador Cheng to the Foreign Ministry to protest. Cheng said that he could not accept the protest and asserted that the Japanese planes had approached the Chinese aircraft. Cheng, however, did advocate the setting up of a communications mechanism. After the meeting, Saiki told reporters the fact a second incident had taken place was deeply felt by the Japanese government. Cheng took the position that rather than Japan protesting to China, China should protest to Japan.

China’s Ministry of Defense accused Japan of acting to create an “up roar,” while “hyping a China threat” and “slinging mud on the image of the PLA.” According to the ministry’s description of the event, China’s aircraft were operating within China’s ADIZ, when the Japanese aircraft approached; in contrast to the Chinese aircraft, which acted with exemplary restraint, the actions of the Japanese planes were dangerous and provocative.

At the Foreign Ministry’s press briefing, spokesperson Hua accused the Japanese aircraft of taking “a dangerous action” and making ‘unfounded countercharges against China in disregard of facts and slung mud at China’ Hua also charged Japan with attempting to shift the blame to others, noting that “The Japanese side has long been supervising and disturbing China’s aircraft at close range, posing a threat to the security of China’s aircraft. This is the root cause” Beijing released photos and a video of the incident.

Meeting with reporters on June 13, JASDF Chief Saito Hirokazu addressed the Chinese description of the two Japanese *F-15* aircraft closely approaching the Chinese planes. He pointed out the Chinese video was shot with a zoom lens. Setting aside the approaches of the Chinese aircraft, Saito said that Japanese video footage showed the *F-15*s following the Chinese aircraft at a distance of 30 meters and following accepted procedures for a scramble. Later Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told a press conference that the ASDF had acted in accordance with ASDF law and appropriately in accordance with international law. The Chinese statements that the ASDF aircraft had approached the Chinese aircraft were “without foundation in fact.” Defense Minister Onodera called for the creation of an air-sea communications mechanism to prevent future incidents from developing.

Security: collective self-defense

On July 1, the Abe Cabinet announced its decision to reinterpret the constitution to allow for the exercise of collective self-defense. Asked to comment, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hong Lei noted that “Japan’s political moves in the military and security field have long been watched by its Asian neighbors and the international community. Recently, Japan’s ruling authority has been stirring up troubles on historical issues on the one hand, and taking unprecedented measures in the military and security field ... bringing great changes to Japan’s military and security policies. People cannot but question whether Japan is deviating from the path of peaceful

development” China urges Japan “to earnestly respect the legitimate security concerns of Asian neighbors and prudently deal with sensitive issues. It must not undermine China’s sovereignty and security interests, nor shall it harm regional peace and stability.”

On Aug. 5, the Abe Cabinet approved Japan’s *2014 Defense White Paper*. Echoing the *2013 National Security Strategy*, the white paper found Japan’s security environment becoming “increasingly severe.” The document found an increasing number of “gray-zone situations, neighboring states actively engaged in modernizing military capabilities and intensifying military activities. Like the security strategy, the white paper expressed the hope that China would “comply with international norms and play an active role in a more cooperative manner on regional and global issues.”

At the same time, it noted that China is “enhancing its asymmetric military capabilities to deter military forces of other countries from approaching and advancing into China’s surrounding region;” that it is continuing to modernize its forces across the board, noting that China’s defense budget “has grown approximately 40-fold over the past 26 years and almost quadrupled in size over the past ten years;” “expanding and intensifying its activities in the seas and airspace including the East China Sea and South China Sea;” adopting “so-called assertive measure, including attempts to alter the status by coercive measures, especially for issues involving conflicting maritime interests.” Added to a lack of transparency in its military budget, these issues are matters of concern to Japan, the region and the international community.

China’s *Xinhua* blasted the document as “hyping the China threat debate” and using China as an excuse to abandon its peace constitution and return to seeking a role as a regional military power. The Ministry of National Defense followed by accusing Japan of holding wrong positions and propagandizing a China threat.

Outlook

A *pas de deux* toward a November Abe-Xi meeting in Beijing is being scripted. China has conditioned a high-level meeting on Japan’s recognition of a dispute over the Diaoyu Islands and Abe’s not going to the Yasukuni Shrine, while Japan has called for a meeting without preconditions. Yet both sides recognize the importance of a high-level meeting to bettering ties. Neither Beijing nor Tokyo will realize their maximalist positions. While sending an offering to the Yasukuni Shrine on Aug. 15, Abe did not personally pay homage as he did in December 2013. Interestingly, China’s protest – a phone call to the Japanese embassy – was at a lower level than in August 2013, when the Japanese ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Ministry. At the same time, China’s incursions into Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus have fallen off significantly in the first six months of 2014. And so the score is being written.

Chronology of Japan – China Relations May – August 2014

May 1-6, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2102, 2166* and *2401* are found operating in Japan’s contiguous zone. On May 2, the ships enter Japanese territorial waters. Warned by the

Japanese Coast Guard against entering Japan's territorial waters, the Chinese ships reply that they were patrolling under Chinese law.

May 4, 2014: Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Vice President Komura Masahiko meets former State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan in Beijing. He raises the possibility of an Abe-Xi meeting at APEC Leaders Meeting in November.

May 5, 2014: LDP Vice President Komura meets third ranking member of Chinese leadership, Zhang Dejiang, who tells him responsibility for improving bilateral relations rests with Japan.

May 6, 2014: Prime Minister Abe Shinzo addresses the North Atlantic Council and states that China's continuing military build-up and lack of transparency are issues of concern within the international community.

May 7, 2014: PM Abe calls for dialogue with China without preconditions.

May 7-9, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2101 and 2113* are found operating in Japan's contiguous zone in the Senkakus. When challenged by Japanese Coast Guard, they again asserted they were operating in Chinese waters under Chinese law.

May 9, 2014: Delegation of Japan's Asia-Africa Study Group meets in Beijing with fourth ranking member of China's leadership Yu Zhengsheng.

May 17, 2014: Japan's Minister of Trade, Technology and Industry, Motegi Toshimitsu meets China's Minister of Communications Gao Huncheng on the sidelines of APEC Trade Ministers Meeting, marking the first meeting of Cabinet ministers since nationalization of the Senkakus.

May 24, 2014: PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and Japan Air Self-Defense Force (JASDF) aircraft approach each other over the East China Sea.

May 26, 2014: Vice Foreign Minister Saiki Akitaka calls in Chinese Ambassador Cheng Yonghua to protest PLAAF actions.

May 26-31: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2146 and 2151* enter Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus. Chinese ships do not reply when asked to leave by the Japanese Coast Guard.

May 27, 2014: Keidanren Chairman Yonekura Hiromasa meets former State Councilor Tang in Beijing. Tang emphasizes economic cooperation.

May 28, 2014: Chairman Yonekura meets Vice President Li Yuanchao in Beijing.

May 30, 2014: PM Abe delivers keynote address at Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. His remarks emphasize rule of law, freedom of seas and overflight, and peaceful resolution of disputes. He calls for China to respond to 2007 agreement to establish maritime and air communications mechanism.

May 31, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships enter Japanese territorial waters in the Senkakus.

June 5-6, 2014: New Japan-China 21st Century Commission meets in Nagasaki, marking the first meeting of the group in two years.

June 11, 2014: PLAAF and JASDF aircraft have a close encounter over the East China Sea.

June 12, 2014: Vice Foreign Minister Saiki calls in Ambassador Cheng to protest PLAAF action. Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga finds actions extremely regrettable and unacceptable.

June 13, 2014: Six members of the Chinese Coast Guard ship *Haijian 2101* board a Chinese fishing boat, operating within Japan's EEZ.

June 16-22, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2102* and *2146* are found operating in Japan's contiguous zone in the Senkakus area. On June 20, the Chinese ships enter Japanese territorial waters.

June 24, 2014: Social Democratic Party delegation led Chairman Yoshida Tadamoto meets Yu Zhengsheng in Beijing.

June 26, 2014: Chairman Tadamoto meets Wang Jiarui, head of the CCP's International Department. Wang echoes Yu's talking points and adds that there is no point in holding a summit if Abe continues to hold his wrong positions toward China.

June 26, 2014: Japan's Minister of Transportation Ota Akihiro arrives in Beijing, marking the first visit of a Cabinet Minister to Beijing since nationalization of the Senkakus. He meets Vice Premier Liu Yandong.

June 29-July 1, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2102*, and *2146* are found operating in Japan's contiguous zone; they enter Japan's territorial waters on June 30.

June 30, 2014: Beijing city begins week-long patriotic activities leading to the July 7 anniversary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

July 1, 2014: Director General for Asian and Oceanic Affairs Ihara meets his Chinese counterpart in Beijing to explore the possibility of an Abe-Xi meeting.

July 1, 2014: Abe Cabinet announces decision to reinterpret Japan's constitution to allow for the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. China's Foreign Ministry questions whether Japan is moving from the path of peaceful development.

July 4, 2014: President Xi Jinping in remarks at Seoul National University reminds the audience of Japan's 20th century militarism.

July 5, 2014: PM Abe in a *Yomiuri Shimbun* interview calls for a meeting with President Xi without preconditions during APEC meeting in November.

July 5, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2101* and *2151* enter Japan's territorial waters near the Senkakus. Challenged by the Japanese Coast Guard to withdraw, the Chinese ships reply that Diaoyu Island and related islands are historically part of China.

July 7, 2014: China marks 77th anniversary of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

July 7, 2014: Premier Li Keqiang in joint press conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel calls attention to the importance of future generations learning the lessons of history.

July 9, 2014: Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga on television news program expresses hope for an Abe-Xi meeting at APEC in November.

July 10-21, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijian 2012*, *2113*, and *2146* are found operating in Japan's contiguous zone near the Senkakus.

July 12, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships *Haijin 2101* and *2151* enter Japanese territorial waters near the Senkakus.

July 14, 2014: PM Abe in remarks before Upper House Budget Committee calls for meeting with President Xi.

July 19, 2014: PM Abe in speech at Shimonoseki calls for meeting with President Xi during APEC meeting in Beijing.

July 23, 2014: Former LDP Vice President Yamasaki Taku meets former Councilor Tang in Beijing. Yamasaki explores possibility of Abe-Xi meeting and Tang replies that under current conditions such a meeting would be difficult to realize.

July 27-29, 2014: Former Prime Minister Fukuda makes a secret visit to Beijing; he meets President Xi and relays Abe's interest in an Abe-Xi meeting.

Aug. 1, 2014: China marks 120th anniversary of the 1894-95 Sino-Japanese War.

Aug. 1, 2014: Japan announces names for 158 uninhabited islands including five in the Senkakus; China protests action as undermining Chinese sovereignty.

Aug. 2, 2014: PM Abe tells press conference in Sao Paulo that it is important for both Japan and China to make quiet efforts toward the realization of a summit.

Aug. 9, 2014: Foreign Ministers Kishida Fumio and Wang Yi meet during ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Myanmar, marking the first meeting between Chinese and Japanese foreign ministers in close to two years.

Aug. 9, 2014: PM Abe in *Sankei Shimbun* interview speaks to the importance of Japan-China relations and of the need for both countries to make efforts to improve ties.

Aug. 9-13, 2014: Chinese Coast Guard ships enter Japan's contiguous zone near the Senkakus. On Aug. 12, three ships enter Japan's territorial waters and patrol for four hours.

Aug. 12, 2014: *Yomiuri Shimbun* reports the LDP will likely submit legislation to autumn Diet session to designate remote but inhabited islands, close to national borders as "special border remote islands," authorizing infrastructure construction/SDF facilities on the designated islands.

Aug. 15, 2014: PM Abe does not pay homage at the Yasukuni Shrine, making a *sakaki* offering instead. However, 84 members of the Diet, a supra-party delegation and three Cabinet-level officials visit the shrine.

Aug. 20, 2014: China hits Japanese auto parts makers with approximately \$200 million fines for alleged price fixing.

Aug. 24, 2014: *Haijian 2101, 2113, 2146, and 2305* enter Japan's territorial waters.

Aug. 26, 2014: *Mainichi Shimbun* reports Li Xiaolin, head of Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and confidant of President Xi, is considering a visit to Japan late September or early October.

Aug. 29, 2014: Japan's Ministry of Defense announces ¥3.5 trillion budget request for FY 2015, a 3.5 percent increase.