

Maritime Security Involving Japan and Taiwan

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1 PLC's A2/AD Strategy

Current strategy of Peoples Republic of China (herein after China) is important when considering Japan and Taiwan maritime security. PLC's A2/AD strategy is a vision to turn the South China Sea, the only sea which is deep enough along the Chinese coast, into a sanctuary to deploy strategic missile submarines, the nuclear retaliation capabilities, also, to secure free use of waters within the First Island Chain. It is envisaged to prevent of invasion of enemy forces to enter inside the first island Chain and to destroy enemy troops between the First and Second Island Chains.

At present, all the exits from the Chinese coastal areas to the outer seas are managed by what they call the First Island Chain, and there is no Chinese territory on this island chain. This is a huge strategic disadvantage for China. In other words, China's A2/AD strategy will not work if the Chinese armed forces cannot effectively pass through the First Island Chain and allow enemy forces to invade in it. It is an absolute necessary for China to set up its rule on the First Island Chain to overcome this situation and set up regional hegemony.

In line with this strategy, China announced its intention to build a strong maritime-based country in 2012, And adding the South China Sea in 2010 and the Senkaku Islands in 2013 as its core interests to its conventional list of Taiwan, Tibet, and East Turkistan. It is also well-known that China has been steadily promoting conversion of the Spratly Islands to military base islands after the start of its full-scale reclamation in 2014.

In this way, China has been forcefully promoting the "change of the current situation by force with rapid growth in its military power in the background. This shows that as its military power develops China's pursuit of its territorial desires has no limitation.

Japan and Taiwan exist the eye of storm called china's core interests. And both are friends and allies of the United States. China recognizes the United States as its biggest enemy and aims to remove US influence from Northeast Asia.

The highlight the fact that as long as China's economic growth continues accompanied by a continuous growth in its military power , China will be the most serious threat to Japan, US and Taiwan for a long time in the future.

As you know, China enacted the Hong Kong National Security Law in this year and is implementing a policy to collapse the One Country, Two Economic Systems' policy in Hong

Kong. China has also taken a self-centered stance, such as imposing sanctions on nations that oppose the enactment of the law. This reality is equal to China itself eliminating the possibility of a peaceful unification with Taiwan, and it seems that this is already creating a crisis in which Taiwanese unification can only be done by force.

2 The Strategy of United States of America

The United States is obviously the most important player for security of Taiwan and its surrounding waters. To respond appropriately to the aforementioned threats posed by China, the United States has recently clarified its strategic stance.

Until the end of the Obama administration, the United States continued its engagement policies and showed a reconciliatory stance called “strategic reassurance” with China, and remaining indifferent to the defense of Taiwan. However, the United States’ national security strategy launched under the Trump administration stipulated that engagement policies were an illusion and recognized China as a long-term competitor, and launching the US-China trade war to restrain China’s economic development that has been the basis for its military growth. The United States’ stance toward the defense of Taiwan also changed. The United States passed the Taiwan Travel Act in 2018 and provided record highs of military aid to Taiwan exceeding \$10 billion in order to strengthen U.S.-Taiwan ties, and clarifying its stance on the defense of Taiwan.

Although it is one of China's core interests, Taiwan is the most important core interest for China. So long as they stand in the way of China’s national interests, the United States has recognized China as a competitor (hypothetical enemy) and has shown a firm confrontational stance. Simultaneously, China also has recognized the United States as its biggest enemy. This intensifying confrontation between the United States and China will increase the strategic value of Taiwan and its surrounding seas.

The strategic significance of the United States’ alliance in Taiwan and its surrounding waters can summarize in the following three points.

(1) The First Island Chain forms with the Japanese archipelago and the Philippine islands, acting as a barrier that prevents China’s free access into the Pacific Ocean (open sea).

(2) Existence of the Bashi Strait and the Taiwan Strait, which are in a place to control marine resources and Sea lane of communication, SLOC, from the South China Sea to the East China Sea and to the Pacific Ocean. These SLOC and marine resources are vital not only to Japan and Taiwan but also China as well.

(3) A large proportion of Chinese troops dedicates to the most important core interest ,

which prevents them from being diverted to other fronts.

3 Maritime Security

The following two factors are important for the free use of the oceans. The first is the military power of one's own country, and the second is the alliance/cooperation system with other countries. Free use of the oceans brings great wealth to the nation but it also requires a great effort to secure it. The United States is a typical example of this, Japan enjoys the free use of the ocean based on its alliance with the United States. The same applies to Taiwan. China is making aggressive maritime advances under its slogan of becoming a strong maritime power, but it faces a lack of multilateral alliances and cooperative networks due to its aggressive stance. This is the weakness of China's maritime expansion. It is entirely reasonable that China's maritime expansion would eventually face cost overloads and stall if the United States' alliance side can recognize this weakness, solidify its bonds, and make joint moves against China. It has already been reported that China's fourth aircraft carrier was scheduled to be deferred due to the impact of the U.S-China tariff war.

The path that Japan and Taiwan must take would naturally be decided with this in mind.

4 Maritime Security Involving Japan and Taiwan

It seems that the policy for establishing Japan-Taiwan maritime security can be organized into the following three points.

- (1) The Strengthening self-defense capabilities
- (2) The Strengthening of alliance and relation between U.S., Japan and Taiwan
- (3) The Strengthening cooperation with other countries on the First Island Chain.

As long as we oppose the major power that is China, strengthening of our own self-defense capabilities are indispensable. Strengthening the defense capability of Japan and Taiwan naturally forces China to build a strength in response to this, and making it possible to force new defense spending in China. In particular, building up the ability to prevent landing on and passage through the first Island chain by Chinese forces and limit the activities of the Chinese navy and air force exerts a major deterrent effect on China and will set up an early support operation to back up the United States military deployment in war-time. Japan has neglected strengthening own defense capability, and there is a need for early prioritized investment of national resources in this field.

Point (2) is also a natural course of action. As mentioned above, the security and defense

of Japan and Taiwan will not be established without the United States. Cooperative relations among nations, focusing on the United States, will also be crucial in confronting China.

The United States has also built strong alliances and cooperative relations with several countries in Asia as well. A particular point of focus should to strengthen relations with Australia and India, which are both democracies and which have powerful military forces.

The following are essential matters for the maritime security of the region with regard to cooperation with Taiwan, which has no diplomatic relations with Japan. Mutual economic and military support should strengthen through mediation of the United States, specifically providing defense equipment and defensive technology support by passing the United States. And each Country should take part individually in military exercises hosted by the United States, through which various defense exchanges and the mutual coordination of working concept between Japan and Taiwan can be achieved to build the foundation of a joint operation between their military forces that is important to give maritime security in this region.

As for point (3), although it is ideal to cooperate with all nations in the First Island Chain, it is also true that are limits to ability of intermediate states. Therefore, both Japan and Taiwan should concentrate their effort on areas that are closely related to their own defense, and support for other countries should be limited to the extent to which defense equipment transfers (exported) and friendship strengthened. The area most closely related to Japan's defense is clearly Taiwan, and Taiwan's perspective, it is also Japan.

It is clear from the “Far East article” of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty and the associated defense legislation in Japan that China recognizes Japan as an enemy. Even if Japan were to refrain from strengthening relation with Taiwan. China will never abandon its ambitions toward the South China Sea, East China Sea, and the Western Pacific Ocean. In light of this situation, what Japan should be cautious about most is the person defeat of Taiwan and Japan one after another. To avoid such a situation, it is thought that Japan must change its stance toward China, rebuild its maritime security system as Japan’s lifeline, and reach a stage where it could set up a robust deterrence against China.