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In a Fortnight

CHINA'S NEW SUBMARINES AND DEPLOYMENT PATTERNS: AIMED AT SOUTH CHINA SEA?

By L.C. Russell Hsiao

Images and media reports about new types of submarines appearing in recent months have generated a lot of interest in China's evolving submarine force. While the magnitude of such developments remains to be seen, since much depends on the submarines' tested capabilities, these rare glimpses provide important clues about the development of China's subsurface force structure and its orientation. The reports include the recent deployment of a new Type 093 submarine to Hainan Island in the South China Sea (*The Mainichi Daily News* [Japan], October 20). Whereas the development and deployment of the Chinese navy's surface fleet have been prominently displayed in unprecedented scale in recent naval exercises both in the South and East China Sea, the expansion of China's subsurface fleet appears to have been slowed in recent years. In fact, overall People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) submarine totals remained almost flat from 2007-2010 (rising from 62 to 63 boats) (The Diplomat, September 29). In this context, these reports raise interesting questions about what is known regarding the pace of investments that China has undertaken to increase stealth, missile capacity, survivability and the capability to project its submarine force both regionally and globally.

In early October, a Hong Kong-media ran a story covering a photo image of a new type of Chinese submarine that has been circulating on the web for several weeks. The submarine was developed by the state-owned China Shipbuilding Industry Corporation (CSIC), which is the country's largest shipbuilder. The company reportedly had double-digit growth in output, revenue and profit in 2009 despite the global recession (People's Daily Online, February 23). The image of the SSK submarine surfaced several weeks before a CSIC statement, which indicated that the company had successfully launched a 'new' conventionally powered attack submarine in early September from its shipyard in Wuhan, central China. While the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has not officially acknowledged that the 'new' ship was a stealth submarine, many military analysts believe

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that the submarine is such a vessel (*South China Morning Post*, October 3).

The South China Morning Post noted a September 1 *PLA Daily* article covering an award ceremony hosted by the PLAN Deputy Political Commissar Xu Jianzhong for Da Lianglong, a professor at the PLA Navy's Submarine Academy. Professor Da received an award from the Central Military Commission for his successful research on submarine stealth technology (*PLA Daily*, September 1; *South China Morning Post*, October 3).

The stealth submarine in question appears to be a modified version of the Type 041 Yuan-class submarine. According to military experts, the Yuan-class's technology borrows heavily from Russian designs. The Yuan-class is reported to use a new air-independent propulsion (AIP) system based on the concept of the Swedish Stirling engine. Chinese naval research institutes are known to have been investigating fuel cell and exhaust recycling AIP designs similar to the French MESMA (Module d'Energie Sous-Marine Autonome) (*Jane's Defense Weekly*, October 7; *Wen Wei Po* [Hong Kong], October 12).

Chinese academic engineering literature cited by a prominent Western defense magazine supports the fact "that the PLA has also been researching fuel-cell AIP engine technology—with the PLA having benefited via Chinese academics from several conferences with German fuel-cell technology experts" (*Jane's Defense Weekly*, October 7). The addition of an AIP system could allow a Chinese submarine to operate underwater for up to 30 days on battery power, and would make the Song and Yuan submarines inaudible to existing U.S. surveillance networks-and U.S. subs.

The PLAN is also reportedly stepping up its deployment of submarines. According to Kanwa's *Asia Defense Review* cited by *Wen Wei Po*, China will finish testing and deploy two additional Yuan-class submarines by the end of 2011 (*Wen Wei Po*, October 12). If this report is indeed true, it would add fuel to the argument that the apparent slowdown in naval expansion was a transitory phase while the PLAN's submarine fleet appears set to resume its upward trajectory (The Diplomat, September 29).

These revelations dovetail a recent sighting of a new Type 093 Shang-class nuclear-powered attack submarine docked at a Chinese naval base in Sanya, Hainan Island. The photograph obtained by Japan-based *Kyodo News*, taken on September 2, shows two nuclear-powered submarines docked at a quay on the base. According to a military expert cited by *The Mainichi Daily News*, "the photograph marks the first time the whereabouts of the submarine were visually confirmed." The PLAN is known to have also deployed a Type 094 "Jin-class" ballistic missile submarine capable of loading nuclear missiles at the same base (*The Mainichi Daily News*, October 20).

The images and reports showcasing China's new submarines and deployments at forward positioned naval bases reflect, to a degree, Beijing's willingness to allow foreign powers to view their activity, which signals a new level of confidence and transparency for Beijing. As PLAN naval exercises increase in sophistication and frequency, so have Chinese submarine patrols in recent years—the PLAN conducted 12 patrols in 2008, twice as many as in 2007 (FAS Strategic Security Blog, February 3, 2009). This trend is consistent with the frequent sightings of Chinese submarines that have been showing up close to Taiwan, Japan and South Korea. Taken together, these recent developments appear to suggest that the PLAN may be deploying some of its newest underwater assets near the South China Sea. Furthermore, the recent actions undertaken by Beijing appear to be further reaffirmations that China perceives the South China Sea within its sphere of influence.

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PLA Gains Clout: Xi Jinping Elevated to CMC Vice-Chairman

By Willy Lam

The appointment of Vice-President Xi Jinping as vice-chairman of the Chinese Communist Party's Central Military Commission (CMC) has confirmed the Fifth-Generation cadre's status as heir-apparent to President and General Secretary Hu Jintao. Xi's induction into the policy-setting CMC, which was decided by the just-ended plenum of the party's Central Committee that took place from October 15-18, could also augment the military establishment's already formidable clout in foreign policy and other arenas.

At the end of the conclave, the Central Committee also endorsed the country's 12th Five-Year Program for Economic and Social Development that covers the years 2011 to 2015. Details of the 12th Five Year Plan (12FYP) will not be released until the full session of the National People's Congress (NPC) scheduled for next March. Yet, a terse communiqué released by the official Xinhua News Agency confirmed earlier statements by officials and media commentators that the blueprint's thrust is "enriching the people" and "promoting social equality and justice" (Xinhua News Agency, October 18; *People's Daily*, October 19).

The 57-year-old Xi's promotion as vice-chairman to the CMC renders beyond doubt that the sixth-ranked member of the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) will take over from Hu as general secretary at the 18th Party Congress slated for October 2012—and state president soon afterward. Xi's competitor, First Vice-Premier Li Keqiang, who is ranked seventh in the PBSC, will likely have to settle for the position of premier (*Financial Times*, October 19; *Washington Post*, October 18).

What is not certain, however, is whether Hu, 68, will remain CMC chairman for at least a few more years beyond the 18th Party Congress. If the supremo chooses to do so, he will be following in the footsteps of his predecessor, former president Jiang Zemin. After retiring from the Politburo at the 16th Party Congress in 2002, Jiang stayed on as CMC chairman until September 2004, when he was reportedly forced out by Hu and People's Liberation Army (PLA) generals who had shifted their loyalty to the younger leader (*Apple Daily* [Hong Kong], October 8; New York Times, September 19, 2004).

Irrespective of Hu's intentions, Xi's acquisition of the much-coveted military portfolio will likely result in the PLA playing a more active role in national policy. Unlike Jiang or Hu, who had had no military experience prior to their helicopter ride to the CMC, Xi worked in the army's high echelons for three years. Immediately upon his graduation from Tsinghua University in 1979, he served as a secretary in the CMC General Office, deemed the PLA's nerve center. The princeling—a reference to the offspring of party elders—got this job through his father Xi Zhongxun, a former vice-premier and a crony of then defense minister General Geng Biao. Xi's wife, Peng Liyuan, a popular singer with the PLA Song and Dance Troupe, has the rank of major-general. Xi is known to be on good terms with the disproportionately large number of princelings who have since the early 2000s risen to the post of major-general or above (*Ming Pao* [Hong Kong], October 18; AFP, October 18; Asiasentinel.com, October 19). So-called "military princelings" who were recently made full generals with high military ranks included Political Commissar of the Academy of Military Sciences Liu Yuan, Political Commissar of the Second Artillery Corps, Zhang Haiyang, and the Vice-Chief of the General Staff Ma Xiaotian (See *Jamestown* Occasional Paper, "Changing of the Guard: Beijing Grooms Sixth-Generation Cadres for 2020s").

Not much is known about Xi's military thinking, except that he is an ardent advocate of Chairman Mao's theory of "the synthesis between [the requirements of] peacetime and war." This means that civilian sectors should also play a major role in military construction. For example, infrastructure projects such as airports and railways should be designed to also serve war-time needs. While being Party Secretary of Zhejiang from 2002 to 2007, Xi doubled as the party secretary of the Zhejiang provincial military district. In a memorable speech to Zhejiang-based officers in 2007, Xi pointed out that "we must implement [Mao's] strategic concept of the 'unity between soldiers and civilians' and both the army and regional [civilian authorities] should assiduously pool our resources in the preparation for military struggle [against China's enemies]" (Zhejiang Daily, January 8, 2007). Seen in this perspective, there is a possibility that the PLA's share of the nation's economy and other resources will be augmented under Xi's watch.

Given that Xi's current portfolio mainly centers around party affairs, he has not had many opportunities to express views on military developments and diplomacy. Yet, the former party secretary of Shanghai and Zhejiang Province is deemed a nationalist who might advocate tougher tactics to facilitate China's rise as a superpower. While visiting Mexico in 2009, the vice-president raised eyebrows when he made a veiled attack on the United States. "Some foreigners with full bellies have nothing better to do than pointing their fingers at us," he said (Reuters, October 18; *Wall Street Journal*, October 19). Xi also ruffled feathers during a tour of Japan last year, when he insisted on seeing the Japanese Emperor. According to Japanese protocol, an audience with the Emperor—especially by somebody who is neither head of state nor head of government—required at least a couple months' prior notice. Xi got his way, but comments in the Japanese press were largely negative (Japan Times, December 17, 2009; *People's Daily*, December 16, 2009).

There are great expectations both inside and outside of China that the plenum might have something positive to say about the direction of political reform, which has been stalled since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. After all, Premier Wen Jiabao raised the sensitive issue on at least three occasions since August, when he warned in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone that without reform—including political liberalization—the party "faces the road to perdition" (See *China Brief*, "Premier Wen's Southern Tour: Ideological Rifts in the CCP?").

Party veterans who know Xi, however, have indicated the high unlikelihood that the princeling will follow through with the premier's groundbreaking, albeit late initiatives (AFP, October 19; *Apple Daily*, October 19). In the past few years, the Vice-President has made a series of remarkably conservative, even quasi-Maoist, statements, mainly in his capacity as president of the Central Party School (CPS). Xi has repeatedly urged CPS students to "insist upon the synthesis between the basic principles of Marxism on the one hand, and China's concrete realities and contemporary characteristics on the other." Xi emphasized in a talk on grooming young cadres that utmost emphasis must be put on "strengthening education on political loyalty…education about party discipline and education about resisting corruption and *fangbian* ("preventing changes")."*Fangbian* is a CCP jargon for the possibility of the Marxist party degenerating into a "vassal of capitalism." Xi particularly urged leading cadres to "firm up their political cultivation, and to boost the resoluteness of their political beliefs, the principled nature of their political stance, the sensitivity of their [ability in] political discrimination, and the reliability of their political loyalty" (*People's Daily*, September 8, 2009; Xinhua News Agency, March 30, 2009).

The 4,700-character plenum communiqué has given no indication that the 365 full and alternate Central Committee members discussed major events such as dissident Liu Xiaobo winning the Nobel Peace Prize, or that 23 respected elders had signed an open petition demanding an end to official censorship (*Financial Times*, October 12; *Wall Street Journal*, October 14). The communiqué only has one clause on liberalization, that the party would "implement reform of the political structure in an enthusiastic, stable and adequate manner." There was not even a reference to the *pro forma* statement made by President Hu when he toured Shenzhen, to the effect that the authorities would "implement, according to law, democratic elections, democratic decision-making, democratic management and democratic supervision" (*People's Daily*, September 7; China News Service, September 7).

Beijing's apparent failure to push forward genuine political liberalization has been evidenced by relatively circumscribed ideas on the subject that were recently floated by Peking University political scientist Yu Keping, who is deemed an adviser to Hu on reform issues. On the eve of the plenum, Yu, who is also Deputy Director of the Central Committee's Compilation and Translation Bureau, noted that the authorities were gunning for the ideal of *shanzhi*, or a benevolent order. "The Chinese government can only attain benevolent administration—and make progress toward a benevolent order—through ceaseless institutional renovation," Yu said. Yet, Yu's schema does not seem to include any democratic elements. By benevolent administration and benevolent order, he meant, "a government based on rule by law, a responsible government, a service-oriented government, a transparent government and a clean government" (*Global Times*, October 12; Xinhua News Agency, October 12). There was no reference at all to political participation by the masses.

A number of scholars have expressed disapproval of the party's total neglect of political reform. According to social scientist Hu Xingdou, who teaches at the Beijing University of Science and Engineering, "the plenum communiqué has almost nothing on political or administrative reform." Hu pointed out that crony and bureaucratic capitalism had reached a dangerously high level, and "only political reform can solve these problems." Popular author and social critic Yuan Jian also voiced disappointment with the Central Committee session. He noted that political changes could no longer be postponed. "Many of the most serious economic problems facing the party and the country are actually political problems," he said (*Ming Pao*, October 19; Radio Free Asia, October 19).

With regards to the economic policies to be rolled out during the 12FYP, official media commentaries have focused on an epochal "strategic restructuring and realignment" of development priorities. The first major change is that instead of just aiming for *qiangguo*, "national strength," more weight will be given to *fumin*, or "building up the people's wealth" (Xinhua News Agency, October 16; China News Service, October 16). The Communiqué indicated that the party would "lay more stress on the 'putting people first' principle," and "put more emphasis on securing and improving people's livelihood [so as] to promote social equality and justice." Other foci of the 12FYP include encouraging consumer spending as a locomotive of growth instead of relying solely on exports and government investment. Thus, the Central Committee pledged to "quicken the pace of establishing a new growth pattern that is jointly driven by consumption, investment and exports." More attention will be paid to raising the technological level of industry and agriculture, especially those in central and western regions. The plenum also underscored the imperative of developing low-carbon sectors for the purpose of attaining a "resource-saving and environment-friendly society" (China News Service, October 18; Sina.com, October 19).

While the 12FYP seems to dangle goodies particularly for the underprivileged, neither the Communiqué nor senior cadres have spelled out concrete steps or institutions whereby such populist pledges can be carried out. Little wonder that even the China News Service (CNS) pointed out on the plenum's eve that "China's leaders need more courage, determination, foresight and wisdom in pushing through systemic and institutional innovation." The official news agency called upon Beijing to in particular "break through systemic barriers that have hamstrung economic and social development" (China News Service, October 15; *Wen Wei Po* [Hong Kong], October 15).

What are some of the new socio-economic and political framework that needs to be established? Veteran reform theorist Chi Fulin noted that systems must be introduced to ensure that "economic growth will satisfy the interests of the great majority." "We must adjust the distribution mechanism of national income, and speed up [relevant] institutional reforms," said Chi, who heads the Haikou-based Chinese Reform Research Institute (*New Beijing Post*, October 15). One popular proposal is that Beijing ensures that workers' and farmers' incomes grow at the same clip as the GDP. This is in view with the much-noted fact that for the past two decades, the GDP share of laborers' wages has gone down by at least one percent a year. Vice-President of the official China Labor Studies Association Su Hainan recommended that "China should learn from the Japanese experience and allow citizens' income to grow at the same rate as the GDP." He added that measures must be put in place to shrink the income gap between haves and have-nots (China News Service, October 12; Shandong Business Post, October 12).

The plenum also failed to deliberate on urgently needed reforms concerning state-owned enterprises, especially the long-delayed restructuring of the 129 *yangqi*, or central-level conglomerates that enjoy monopolies in sectors including oil and gas, banking and insurance, transport and telecommunications. Since the *yangqi* has been accused of taking advantage of their special prerogatives to make fat profits, putting an end to their monopolistic powers is deemed a key to the achievement of distributive justice. According to the Vice-Director of the School of Public Administration, Renmin University, Xu Guangjian, Beijing should "allow more companies, including private firms, to enter monopolistic sectors—and such [liberalizing] policies must be seriously enforced" (People's Daily, October 16). In 2009, *yangqi* made profits of 815 billion yuan ($122.56 billion)—up 17.1 percent from the previous year—despite the global financial crisis. This year, the four centrally-held banks made on average 1.4 billion yuan ($210.53 million) a day. In a recent commentary, the *People's Daily* pointed out that "the people are paying more attention to how are the profits [of *yangqi*] are being distributed and used." "When can the entire people enjoy the profits reaped by the state-held enterprises?" asked the Party mouthpiece (People's Daily, August 30; Xinhua News Agency, September 5).

In addition to his remarkable statements on political reform, Premier Wen has in the past year, made substantial promises to ensure that, in his words, "the economic pie can be more fairly divided." "We must make social equality and justice shine brighter than the sun," he said at the NPC in the spring (Xinhua News Agency, March 14; *Ming Pao*, March 15). The onus is on the Party leadership—including Fifth-Generation cadres led by Xi, who will soon be taking over the helm—to prove to Chinese and the world that the hundreds of millions of disadvantaged Chinese will finally win their place in the sun.

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Letter from Taiwan: Taipei and the New, Assertive China

By Arthur Waldron

While attending a conference on security in Taipei as October arrived, I found it easy to point to indications of an erosion in American support for Taiwan unprecedented since the 1970s. This was in part owed to a sense in Washington that President Ma Ying-jeou's "sunshine policy" toward China had reduced tension and the risk of war, while leading Taiwan toward "peaceful unification" or at least amicable coexistence and trade with China.

This perception led to a questioning of the necessity of continued American support, including arms sales, for Taiwan in this new situation. The prevalence of such views in Washington circles were evidenced by Senator Dianne Feinstein expressible skeptical view about such support after leading a lighting Senatorial trip to the island in June (Reuters, June 16). Similar reservations were expressed by Senator Arlen Specter who professed concern about the need to rebalance trade with China, which had cost 2.3 million American jobs. He argued that this situation was not helped by such policies as arms sales to Taiwan and China's treatment of the Dalai Lama, while also voicing not a little general resignation.

China had simply grown too big and too powerful, putting the handwriting on the wall for Taiwan, regardless of what America might or might not do. As Specter put it: "We have recently sold Taiwan some US $4.6 billion worth [of arms], which is very substantial, but if the People's Republic of China decided to invade Taiwan, the defenses they have and their request for additional fighter planes which has not been granted—all of that would not be sufficient to stem the tide." A private visit with President Ma Ying-jeou on August 13 had failed to convince the senator that sales of F-16 C/Ds to Taiwan were justified (*Taipei Times*, September 23).

After my return from the weeklong visit came word that the Obama administration had ordered lifting the embargo on selling U.S. C-130 military cargo aircraft to China, possibly a preemptive *quid pro quo* for F-16 sales, but also possibly a signal of acquiescence to a new Chinese military predominance in the region (PRI's The World, February 4).

Until mid-summer the sense had been growing in Washington circles that China's military rise was already massive and would continue, but that it posed little threat to any states in the region other than Taiwan, with its special circumstances deriving from the flight there of the Kuomintang in 1949 at the end of the Chinese civil war. Furthermore, under Ma Ying-jeou, Taiwan was in any case preparing to accept its inevitable absorption by China, concerned only that the terms be the best possible.

Yet, starting in late spring an unexpected tide of events suggested something very different: the sinking of the South Korean corvette *Cheonan* in March 2010 and the tense ASEAN regional forum in July, culminating in Chinese insistence that the entire 1.4 million square miles of the South China Sea were her sovereign territorial waters. These events were soon followed by a statement from American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who declared that the peaceful resolution of competing sovereignty claims to the South China Sea is a U.S. "national interest." The American statement was a direct and public negation of the announced Chinese position, first surfaced in March when Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs Cui Tiankai reportedly told two senior U.S. officials that China viewed its claims to the South China Sea on a par with those to Tibet and Taiwan (Forbes.com July 28). These events were followed by a confrontation with Japan over the disputed Diaoyutai/Senkaku islands, which cooled a bit just as I was leaving, as China withdrew her military patrol boats from the region (AFP, October 5).

My visit to Taiwan coincided, then, with what retrospect may well identify as a turning point in East Asian geopolitics, the moment when the long-dominant dream of China as a pacific "stakeholder" in the Asian region evaporated. Beijing had shocked her neighbors and Washington by her assertive behavior. This in turn set in motion the beginning of a new polarization between China and many of the other, hitherto disorganized states of the region whom now began to seek allies and coordinate actions. The United States took the side of the countries threatened, not of China. The strategic map of Asia was being redrawn in a way unprecedented in 40 years.

This redrawing posed in turn an unanticipated question for President Ma's government in Taiwan: which side would the island take? If it came to a confrontation between the mostly democratic nations she was menacing, and the China that Ma was courting, where would Taipei stand? Given the island's great strategic importance, it would not be an easy question to dodge.

I was in Taiwan for a major conference on the Japanese-American security alliance, on October 5, sponsored by the Taiwan National Security Institute and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. This event featured Japanese Diet member Gen Nakatani, a former minister of defense, and from the United States current American Enterprise Institute Fellow and former Department of Defense Senior Country Director for China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mongolia, Daniel Blumenthal, as well as myself and a number of senior figures from Taiwan [1]. The meeting was attended mostly by green and pro-independence types (though Kuomintang speaker of the Legislative Yuan, Wang Jyn-ping [1941-] made the opening remarks).

The overarching analysis that I put forth was that the alliance between the United States and Japan—lynch-pin of Asian security—could no longer to be counted on, owing to the breakdown of extended deterrence, the weakness of Japanese forces and the continuing deterioration of the American position—my sincere opinion but also intended to provoke—was overshadowed by intense concern about Taiwan's new situation faced with Beijing's rather unsettling feistiness (*Taipei Times*, October 6).

Clearly, the Taipei government had been caught by surprise by Beijing's assertiveness in the recent East China Sea dispute with Japan. John Chiang son of Chiang Chingkuo and vice chairman of the Kuomintang had declared in China that the islands belonged "to all Chinese people"—a position that the island's government conspicuously failed to endorse, after some hesitation in effect withdrawing from the dispute (Wall Street Journal China Real Time Report, October 14). My sense that Taiwan's government was distancing itself from China was reinforced, after my return, by its rebuff to overtures from China for military negotiations and confidence building measures (RTT News, October 14). Beneath the surface, however, clearly there was a degree of disarray.

I made a plunge into the world of Taipei gossip and rumor, within which I have some relatively reliable sources. I heard, from the blue camp, a distinctly dispiriting account of the Ma administration. The government, so the analysis went, had staked, if not everything, then "ninety percent" on improving relations with China. Clearly, they had made some gains. On the trip home, I ran into a responsible American official who described the recent Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (aka ECFA, signed June 29) as "amazingly" favorable to Taiwan. Yet, little consideration, my Taiwan sources told me, had been given to the need for an alternative approach, should China prove uncooperative.

Some among the blues said that even the ostensibly urgent appeals to the United States for advanced fighter aircraft and other weaponry had been undercut, via back channels that told the Washington administration that Taiwan did not really want approval of the weapons (this would have been before the sobering events of the summer). Other sources reported that the United States was aware of traffic between China and Taiwan that undercut the latter's public position. None of this seemed on the face of it implausible, given that when out of power the Kuomintang had stifled funding in the Legislative Yuan (Taiwan's parliament) for the Bush administration's unprecedented comprehensive arms sales offers to the island. Had they not done so new F-16s may already be flying in the skies over Taiwan.

The degree to which even matters of national security are eclipsed by the political divisions in the island is striking (and a consistent feature of Taiwan's rancorous politics). The blue, or roughly speaking Kuomintang coalition is more willing to engage in negotiations with China than it is to talk seriously to the opposition greens—while the latter are likewise difficult to move. Opposition leaders boycotted the celebrations this year of Taiwan's (aka ROC) national day—claiming insults by President Ma as the reason (though more deeply-rooted locals have difficulty identifying with what to them are the foreign events commemorated: the anniversary, October 10, of the Wuchang uprising in Qing China that led to the birth of the Republic of China, for which Taiwan is now a home in refuge) (*Taipei Times*, October 6).

Is President Ma's administration equal to such challenges within and without? From both sides I heard characterizations of it as lacking in leadership, averse to the making of difficult decisions, and (from a well-informed American friend) bureaucratic and lacking in imagination.

One area that concerns me particularly, given the unreliability and politicization of American arms supply and support, is the island's ability to defend itself.

Since the days of Chiang Kai-shek who initiated nuclear research on the island in the early 1950s, Taiwan has had a largely clandestine program of developing military self-sufficiency—aided at times by the United States, as in the development of the Indigenous Defense Fighter, halted by Washington at other times (most notably with the forced ending of Taiwan's rather advanced nuclear weapons program). Today many people in Taiwan, both blues and greens, are concerned that these programs—which have produced some capable systems, including a supersonic anti-ship missile that could prove deadly in any attempt actually to land on Taiwan, as well as limited counter-attack capabilities—should continue.

The basic go-it-alone strategy is to develop capable defensive systems, able to disrupt staging areas on the other side of the strait and interdict attempts to land, while at the same time strengthening deterrence by creating some sort of (non-nuclear) weapon of mass destruction sufficient to cause second and third thoughts on the part of any would-be adversary. Improbable as they seem to many foreigners, when first broached, both objectives are well within the reach of Taiwan today and one may expect that, unless the programs (which have substantial momentum) are actively closed down—which seems unlikely—those capabilities will be reached.

Ironically, though, the heyday of such preparation was in the time of such figures as the two Chiangs and General Hau Po-tsun. Subsequent administrations, those of Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shuibian did less substantively, according to my sources. The word was that the Ma administration was reducing both priority and support for such endeavors, though it is the nature of such assertions that they are difficult to confirm.

The new cold breeze blowing from China, however, looks to have had some effect on Taiwan, and is likely to continue to do so. A foreigner who had recently met with a number of regional governments told me that in his opinion not one expected anything other than trouble from China in the years ahead. As already mentioned, Taiwan's government would seem to have slowed down the rate at which it has been embracing cooperation with China. As a coalition of other Asian states takes shape to counter-balance China, I argued in my presentation at the conference, it was unlikely that democratic Taiwan would take the side of a dictatorship against other democracies (among other things the military would never stand for this—I was told), and even more unlikely that the United States would seek to force a democratic country like Taiwan to make terms with a would-be regional hegemon.

The wisest of my Taiwan interlocutors, however, expected nothing of the sort to happen either way. When I remarked that in the 40 years since I began the study of Chinese, little really substantial has happened either to the Taiwan-China relationship or to that of Taipei with Washington (beyond, of course, massive shifts in protocol and symbolism), he responded that were we to meet again in 40 years time, probably little more would have taken place. In his reasoning, China clearly does not want to attack Taiwan, and will not do so absent some sort of serious provocation from the island—which the island's governments have steadily proved too savvy to provide. This situation will continue, and although Ma may be disappointed in his hopes for genuine understanding across the strait, and for periods at least Taiwan's military will struggle to maintain its ability to fend off attack, in the end future decades will resemble very much those that have passed since the high drama of the 1970s. Heated talk will continue, but the more things may seem to change, the more they will remain basically the same. No rabbit, it seems, is waiting in the cross-Straits hat.

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NOTES

1. See "International Symposium on 50 Years of U.S.-Japan Security Alliance and the Security of Taiwan" (Taipei: Taiwan National Security Institute, 2010).

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New Strains Emerge in the Sino-Russian Military Relationship

By Stephen Blank

The military dimension of Sino-Russian ties, particularly arms sales, has been deteriorating since 2006-07. While that decline partly reflects the growing prowess of China's defense industrial base, a major part stems from Russia's growing apprehension about China's growing capabilities and anger over its wholesale piracy of Russian weapons' designs and ensuing competition with Russia for third party markets in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The unlicensed copying of military arms has made China a formidable military player and a redoubtable competitor with Russia in emerging defense markets. For instance, Russian experts profess surprise at how fast China has been able to copy the SU-27UBK (*The Times of London*, September 9, 2009). The combined effects of this mounting, albeit suppressed Russian anxiety (that is by the political leadership) about China's improved military capabilities and anger about its unceasing piracy has apparently spilled-over to the public sphere.

When General Guo Boxiong, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) met in Moscow in late 2009 with his Russian counterparts, no substantial military technology cooperation agreement reportedly ensued form those discussions. Russian sources claimed that they were surprised by China's positions, charging Russia with failure to abide by several bilateral military technology agreements with China. They replied that Russia could not sell China the engines for the Ilyushin-76 transport because the production facility in Uzbekistan lost its production capability. Chinese statements that Beijing would work directly with Uzbekistan meant that Russia would have to inject new investment into the Tashkent Aircraft Company of Uzbekistan, which was impossible.

China also said it would only import four SU-33 Fighters in the first phase where as Russia intends to export 40 of them. Thus, no agreement was reached on the fighters. Russian media also firmly opposed the export of Russian new generation military technology to China. Russia and China also differed on the provision to China of the technology for the KA-28 anti-submarine helicopter. Moscow held back on the automatic communication and navigation systems here that make it easy for the helicopter to keep in contact with its anchor ship. Yet China will now reportedly develop those systems alone (Kanwa Asian Defense, April 1-30). Although both sides agreed in principle to upgrade the two Varshavyanka and two earlier Kilo 636 class submarines that Moscow sold to China so they can fire 3m-54E anti-ship missiles, there was discord over whether they should be rebuilt in Russia as Moscow wanted or in China, as Beijing wanted. In the latter case, Russia would have had to invest in the Chinese factories to upgrade the systems, but refused to do so (Kanwa Asian Defense, April 1-30).

Although there was an agreement on selling China more Mi-17 helicopters and Al31F/FN and RD-93 aircraft engines, it is clear that the talks were frosty at best (Kanwa Asian Defense, April 1-30). Since then things have apparently gotten worse. China's "land-based aircraft carrier" in Wuhan apparently shocked Russian and Western experts. At least some experts believe this vessel can actually be used as a platform for shipborne fighters to take off, i.e. as a real carrier (Kanwa Asian Defense, April 1-30).

In March 2010, Mikhail Pogosyan, General Manager of Sukhoi, made it clear that while Russia would develop the T-50 fifth generation fighter with India and export it to states like Libya and Vietnam, it would not sell it to China (Kanwa Asian Defense, June 1-30). The flourishing state of Russian arms sales to Vietnam and India—both countries with existing militaty tensions with China—suggests a desire on the part of Moscow to prevent China from obtaining the technologies and systems needed for this plane due to China's cloning habit and out of concern over what it might do with the military capabilities of this fighter in the Indian Ocean (if not the Northwest Pacific) (Kanwa Asian Defense, June 1-30).

Moscow is also apparently blocking the export of Chinese fighters abroad. For example, it won the contract to sell Myanmar (aka Burma) MiG-29 fighters by agreeing to provide the RD-93 engines for the FC1-fighters that China would export to Burma (Kanwa Asian Defense, May 10-June 19). By intervening in this way in Burma (and also in Pakistan) over its purchase of Chinese JF-17 Fighter—which is a prime example of Chinese piracy of Russian designs—Moscow is making it clear that it is willing to block China wherever it can from selling fighters to potential Russian customers (Kanwa Asian Defense, May 10-June 19).

At the same time Russian experts like Ruslan Pukhov, Director of the Center for Analysis, Strategies, and Technologies, have launched a press campaign saying that China cannot copy Russian fighters because the results are hopelessly inferior (Interfax-AVN Online, June 4). Pukhov warned that China is not only trying to copy all of the Russian fourth-generation fighters it has received, but also their engines like those described above, which are still being sold by Russia to China (Interfax-AVN Online, June 4). In a similar vein, Russian defense officials are publicly belittling the capabilities of China's J-15 Fighter as being inferior to the SU-33 Fighter (RIA Novosti, June 4). Therefore, even though Russia will sell China over 40 RD-93 engines this year for Chinese Fighters, it is clear that the competition and mutual suspicion of both sides in this aspect of their relationship is now out in the open (Interfax-AVN Online, January 11).

IMPLICATIONS

Russia's desire to restrain the growth of Chinese acquisitions of military hardware and capabilities, and China's penetration of third country markets emerges clearly from these episodes. Moscow's actions speak to its growing anxieties about Chinese military power as does its recent military exercise (Vostok [East]-2010). Arms sales are the only area in which a visible competition if not rivalry between Moscow and Beijing has broken out. One can see it as well in Central Asia where discord flared in 2008 over the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and again in 2009 when China broke Russia's monopoly on gas pipelines out of Central Asia. There is also very good reason to believe that during the recent ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan that China colluded with Uzbekistan to block a possible Russian military intervention in Kyrgyzstan and for the first time was able to prevail against Moscow in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), not just the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (Central Asia Caucasus Analyst, September 1).

These strains on the Sino-Russian military relationship are becoming worse, not better despite all the rhetorical flourishes over a converging set of strategic interests. The leaders of these countries know it. This sense that not all is well in the bilateral relationship may lie behind Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo's telling remarks to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in June 2010. Dai Bingguo observed that the international scene is undergoing complex and in-depth changes therefore the importance and urgency of comprehensively strengthening the bilateral ties with Russia have become "more conspicuous" (Xinhua News Agency, June 4). President Hu Jintao's remarks to Lavrov paralleled this call for comprehensively strengthening the bilateral relationship and greater coordination and exchanges of views on major and sensitive issues in bilateral, regional and multilateral affairs to achieve greater coordination (Xinhua News Agency, June 4).

At the same time, Russia is losing out economically to China. Moscow had to accept Chinese loans of $25 billion to build the East Siberia Pacific Ocean pipeline (ESPO) that is soon to open. Similarly Moscow in 2009 tied the development of the Russian Far East to Chinese development plans for Heilongjiang province in Northeastern China, opening the way to Chinese economic colonization of the region. During his recent visit to China Russian President Medvedev actually pursued this policy further and invited Chinese investment in the new high-tech center in Skolkovo. In fact, it appears that either Russia or China will jointly co-produce military aircraft with Chinese investment or collaborate on investments in civilian aircraft that could easily become dual-use technologies even as China invests in high technology projects in Russia. Thus, Moscow appears to be blithely welcoming its economic integration into China´s economic network and ensuing further subordination of the Russian Far East to China as it become ever more dependent upon Chinese investments. According to Medvedev, "Never before have our ties been characterized by such a high level of mutual trust," Medvedev said, adding that his government welcomed Chinese investments in high-tech industries including aircraft construction" (*Channel News Asia*, September 27).

Given the accelerating rate of change in world politics and the growing disparity between Russia and China, it may well become more difficult for both capitals to preserve the synchronized nature of their relationship. This applies not only to the issues discussed here, but also to such other key issues as Iran, North Korea, international financial reform, the future of Afghanistan, and even future arms control negotiations. Given the increasing Chinese investment in the Russian Far East and in getting the prices it wants on Russian gas, the need for coordination might strike Beijing as being very important. Certainly, Moscow desperately needs to be working together with China rather than at cross-purposes with her. Yet, can it sustain that kind of partnership relationship with Beijing as its economy stagnates and as China leaps forward and brings in its wake the accompanying growth of Chinese military power and interests? Can the nature of the relationship continue despite Russia's concern even as its neighbor subordinates Russia's Asian economy-the future of the country-into its own economy?

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Growing Nationalism and Maritime Jurisdiction in the East China Sea

By James Manicom

In early September, a Chinese fishing boat that collided with a pair of Japan Coast Guard (JCG) vessels near the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands reignited a longstanding dispute between Beijing and Tokyo over the East China Sea. The captain of the Chinese trawler was detained by the JCG on suspicion of obstructing public duties. The remainder of the crew were released and returned home to a hero's welcome in Fuzhou. At the official level, Beijing protested the seizure and repeatedly summoned the Japanese ambassador to the foreign ministry (*Kyodo News*, September 13). In the weeks that followed, Beijing severed high-level meetings with Japanese leaders, cancelled the second round of talks on resource exploitation in the East China Sea and cancelled a state sponsored visit to the Shanghai Expo by Japanese students. Rumors circulated that an export ban on rare earth metals to Japan and the detention of four Japanese citizens working in Northern China for filming military installations were also expressions of Beijing's displeasure. The captain of the vessel, Zhan Qixiong, was released by Naha authorities on September 25, sparking criticism of the Naoto Kan administration from opposition political parties that have galvanized over anti-China sentiments. China responded with demands for an apology and compensation.

While crises over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands are not new, this latest event is particularly troubling due to the confluence of three trends. First, it comes on the heels of China's most assertive year on record vis-à-vis its disputed maritime claims. Beijing has adopted a hard-line posture toward rival claimants in the South China Sea and protested the deployment of the USS George Washington to the Yellow Sea. In April PLA Navy vessels conducted drills in waters near Japan and in May the JCG survey vessel *Shoyo* was confronted and pursued by a Chinese vessel while operating near Amami Oshima, 40 km east of Japan's claimed median line in the East China Sea. Secondly, the strident nature of China's response seems to be motivated in part by a desire to preempt the outpouring of popular nationalist sentiment that accompanies diplomatic crises with Japan. Finally, it comes at a time when Japan is pursuing a more activist posture toward its maritime environment, particularly as it relates to the exercise of jurisdiction. Only days after the collision, it was reported that a Japanese survey vessel was confronted by a Chinese maritime enforcement vessel in the disputed area of the East China Sea (*Kyodo News*, September 12). While all three factors have a long track record, their coalescence does not bode well for the stability of the East China Sea.

Domestic Pressure and the Erosion of Cooperation

The collision between the JCG vessel and the Chinese fishing vessel is a reminder of the resentment toward Japan that simmers throughout Chinese society. Although public protests were restrained by Chinese public security officials, policymakers in Beijing are clearly aware of the domestic costs of conciliation with Japan on territorial issues. On September 8, the day after the collision, a small group of protestors demonstrated outside the Japanese embassy in Beijing, while protestors from Taiwan and Xiamen prepared to go to sea. Yet, the Chinese protest vessel never left Xiamen and nationalist protests to mark the September 18 anniversary of the Mukden incident were short, sparsely attended and heavily monitored by police. The explosive Chinese reaction to Zhan's arrest was likely designed to assuage domestic pressure for an assertive posture against Japan.

The domestic salience of sovereignty disputes with Japan has traditionally presented the most significant barrier to cooperation between the two states. It is widely speculated that the reason for the delay in the implementation of the 2008 consensus on resource development was because of the domestic reaction in China. While street protests were kept to a minimum, it appears that nationalists within government were heavily critical of the terms of the agreement, particularly the first clause under which China agreed to a joint development zone that straddled Japan's median line. While this offer was clearly the concession that made consensus possible, it may also have rendered the agreement unworkable for Beijing.

Consequently, China and Japan have taken a step backward in the management of their boundary dispute in the East China Sea. Neither party has been forthcoming about the prospects of joint development at the Chunxiao gas field, which is located 5km from Japan's claimed median line, in Chinese waters. In mid-January, Japanese Foreign Minister Okada Katsuya stated that Japan would take "appropriate measures" if China continued to exploit gas at Chunxiao following reports in December that a new drilling installation had been discovered (*Mainichi Shimbun*, April 23). The two have since entered into a war of words over the interpretation of the June 2008 agreement. Beijing maintains that the agreement calls for cooperative development of Chunxiao, while Tokyo maintains the agreement calls for joint development. In fact, the agreement calls for the joint development of an area south of the Longjing field and grants Japanese entities the right to participate in the Chunxiao project, although no details of such an arrangement have emerged. China seems to view the latter as "cooperative development," the former as "joint development." Regardless of whether this wrangling was mere semantics or a genuine misunderstanding, the naval confrontation in April appears to have been the catalyst for the first director-general level meeting on implementing the agreement since it was signed. However, China abruptly cancelled these talks in protest over the detention of the captain of the fisheries vessel (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 12). The latest crisis threatens to further exacerbate tensions in the East China Sea. China is reportedly preparing to re-start production at the Chunxiao field, which has led Tokyo to ponder "countermeasures" (*Kyodo News*, September 19).

These dynamics are evident following the most recent incident. It is clear that leaders in both states are now prepared to move on. An impromptu meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Europe Meeting in Brussels between Naoto Kan and Wen Jiabao cleared the air and set the stage for a more productive meeting between defense ministers at the ASEAN+8 meeting in Hanoi. There, Toshimi Kitazawa and Liang Guanglie agreed to restart talks toward a maritime communication agreement which, in the context of more active naval postures from both states, could go a long way in preventing future crises. Yet, it appears that segments of both of populations are not ready to move on. In Japan rightwing groups staged two large scale protests in Tokyo on October 2 and October 16. Both protests witnessed calls for a more assertive Japanese policy toward the islands and were heavily critical of the Kan administration. More tellingly, poll data indicates that the Kan administration's handling of the incident is directly responsible for the plunge in the government's approval rating (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 5). While the extreme right in Japan exists at the margin of Japanese politics, it appears that anti-China sentiment is more diffuse across the political spectrum than it has been in the past.

Likewise, it appears that China's reaction did not assuage domestic anger toward Japan. Large scale demonstrations occurred in Chengdu, Xian, Zhengzhou and Mianyang on October 16-17, apparently in response to reports of the nationalist protest in Tokyo. Consistent with the April 2005 protests, the last large scale outpouring of anti-Japanese sentiment, the protestors smashed Japanese storefronts and shouted anti-Japanese slogans. However, these latest protests are marked by several differences. First, these protests were aimed directly at the territorial issue, whereas protests in 2005 were aimed primarily at Japanese history textbooks and its bid for a permanent UN Security Council seat. Second, these protests were reportedly more violent as protestors scuffled with police in Wuhan and Chengdu (The Associated Press, October 18). Finally, the protests were confined to cities that did not have a Japanese consulate or other diplomatic presence. While it could be argued that this indicates a degree of central control over the expression of nationalist sentiment, reports indicated that many protestors received news of the demonstrations through Twitter and other social media. The heavy police presence surrounding the Japanese embassy in Beijing suggests that central authorities were prepared for protests in large cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing but that the scale of the protests in secondary cities caught them off guard. On balance, this latest expression of nationalist sentiment reveals that issues of disputed sovereignty and maritime jurisdiction have assumed pride of place in mindset of nationalists in both China and Japan.

The Exercise of Jurisdiction in Contested Areas

Viewed in this context, the aftermath of the collision exposes some disturbing trends that do not bode well for future stability between China and Japan at sea. Japan is more willing than ever to exercise its jurisdictional rights under the Law of the Sea. For example, Japan has typically resisted conducting surveys of disputed waters in the East China Sea for fear of offending China. In 2004, it commissioned the *Ramform Victory* to survey the median line area and the ship was repeatedly harassed and shadowed by the PLA Navy. As part of a more assertive posture, the Diet passed the Basic Ocean Law almost unanimously in 2007, which created the legal pretext for further exploration efforts in Japan's claimed EEZ. The law included protocols that would allow the deployment of Japanese forces to protect resource production installations at sea. This added weight to Japan's threats to drill on the east side of the East China Sea median line in waters Beijing describes as "disputed" (*The Japan Times*, August 27, 2005). The survey operation by the *Shoyo* was the first Japanese research operation since the height of the tensions in the East China Sea in 2005. Amidst reports that Japan is prepared to search for rare earth metals on the ocean floor, the survey indicates that asserting and exercising Japan's maritime jurisdiction remains a priority for the DPJ government, despite its 2009 election commitment to improve relations with Beijing (*Kyodo News*, April 28). This could have potentially devastating consequences because from the Chinese perspective, Japan is not entitled to exercise this jurisdiction in waters claimed by China.

The causes of tension over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands are thus no longer limited to unilateral acts by extreme nationalist groups—such as attempting to land on the islands—nor limited to the status of production facilities at Chunxiao. Political tensions now arise when one state exercises its maritime jurisdiction against citizens or agents of the other. A 2004 landing attempt by Chinese activists escalated when they were arrested by the JCG. China protested their arrest because the activists were protesting on Chinese soil and demanded their release. Local authorities released the protestors rather than prosecuting them under Japanese law at the behest Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. While the circumstances surrounding Zhan's release remain unclear, the incident reveals that Japan is prepared to assert its maritime jurisdiction against China. Reports that a JCG survey vessel did not back down when confronted by a Chinese maritime enforcement vessel in disputed waters on September 11 were overshadowed by the fallout from the collision (Agence France-Presse, September 11).

The collision between the Chinese fisheries vessel and the JCG ship reflects these trends. The JCG is charged with enforcing Japan's territorial waters jurisdiction, including those around the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. However, ambiguity exists as to the frequency and tenor with which this jurisdiction is enforced. During the negotiation of the 1997 China-Japan fisheries agreement, the parties agreed that neither would enforce fisheries laws against boats from the other state operating south of 27 degrees North latitude (i.e. near the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands) (*Asian Wall Street Journal*, September 12). In recent years, JCG vessels have been expelling Taiwanese and Chinese fishing vessels from the area with greater frequency. This leaves the understanding reached under the 1997 fisheries agreement in a state of flux. The agreement not to enforce fisheries jurisdiction against the other party near the islands has been part of the China-Japan fisheries relationship since 1955 [1], but the enforcement of territorial sea rights by Japan puts this understanding in jeopardy. Zhan was detained for violating a domestic Japanese law, by allegedly ramming the JCG vessel; this is not a violation of the fisheries agreement. Japan derives the authority to enforce its domestic laws from the fact that the collision occurred in its territorial sea. Problematically, China does not recognize that Japan has this authority, as it also claims a territorial sea around the islands. The dispatch of Chinese fisheries enforcement vessels to the islands is a disturbing development because China may attempt to assert its claimed jurisdiction around the islands as it has done in the South China Sea (*Asahi Shimbun*, September 11; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 28). Japan of course would see this as a violation of its territorial waters and once again be required to respond, as it did against Zhan.

This latest crisis thus occurs at a time when both Japan and China face powerful incentives for confrontation over their disputed maritime space because both states view the dominance of the East China Sea by the other as a strategic catastrophe. The continued impasse over resource development, Japan's survey efforts and China's training exercises need to be understood as extensions of the strategic value both parties place on the East China Sea. Control of the East China Sea is the first step of China's blue water naval strategy. From the Japanese perspective, Chinese maritime operations, whether military drills, marine surveys, or EEZ enforcement, occur in parts of the ocean where its jurisdiction is contested. These issues are increasingly being perceived as vital to Japan's national security. In addition to these strategic incentives for confrontation, both states confront powerful disincentives for conciliation in light of the growing domestic salience of these issues. On balance therefore, the atmosphere in maritime East Asia is becoming one in which China, and Japan are increasingly active yet dispute the basic ground rules for maritime operations. This collision and the aftermath are indicative of the kind of crises that can be expected as China and Japan enforce their maritime jurisdiction against one another in contested waters.

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1. Zou Keyuan, *Law of the Sea in East Asia: Issues and Prospects* (London: Routledge, 2005): 91.

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