

EAST ASIAN OBSERVER

Confidence-Building Measures in East Asia: A Twin Approach

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1. Introduction

Today, a couple of serious territorial disputes are going on in East Asia regarding Takeshima/Dokdo Islets¹ between South Korea and Japan, Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands² among China, Taiwan and Japan, and Socotra/Suyan Rock (Ieodo) between China and South Korea. There are also disputes related to the Exclusive Economic Zones (“EEZs”) and the continental shelf in the East China Sea among China, Japan and Korea.³

As the political tension began escalating in East Asia, a few military collisions occurred between China and Japan⁴ when a ship-based helicopter from the Chinese training fleet in the East China Sea came very closely (approximately 90m horizontally and approximately 30m vertically) to a Japan Maritime Self-Defense

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¹ South Korea has taken the legal position that no territorial dispute exists regarding Dokdo Islets. Japan, on the other hand, has twice proposed to South Korea the submission of Takeshima Islets dispute to the ICJ, in 1954 and 1962, respectively. See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 10 Issues of Takeshima, available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/pamphlet_e.pdf (last visited on Apr. 11, 2014).

² Japan has taken the position that no territorial dispute exists regarding Senkaku Islands. See Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, The Basic View on the Sovereignty over Senkaku Islands, available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/basic_view.html (last visited on Apr. 11, 2014).

³ On January 30, 1974, Japan and South Korea concluded the Agreement on Boundary in the Northern Part of the Continental Shelf Adjacent to the Two Countries to partially delimit their boundaries, available at <http://www.un.org/depts/los/.../jap-kor1974north.pdf> (last visited on Apr. 11, 2014).

⁴ National Institute for Defense Studies, NIDS China Security Report (Mar. 2011), at 16, available at http://www.nids.go.jp/english/publication/chinareport/pdf/china_report_EN_4C_A01.pdf (last visited on Apr. 11, 2014).