



DANIEL K. INOUE ASIA-PACIFIC CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES

# **Northeast Asia Security Dynamics, Challenges and the Japan-U.S. Alliance**

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# Overview

Thesis: The next 50 years will present acute challenges to the Japan-U.S. alliance because of unique geopolitical circumstances.

- Challenges
  - North Korea
  - Russia
  - China
- Japan and South Korea
- Complex Security Environment
- Free and Open Indo Pacific
- The Quad
- Economics & Demographics
- A Challenging Time





# Japan-U.S. Alliance

- “The United States-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and freedom in the Asia Pacific.”  
- Vice President Mike Pence

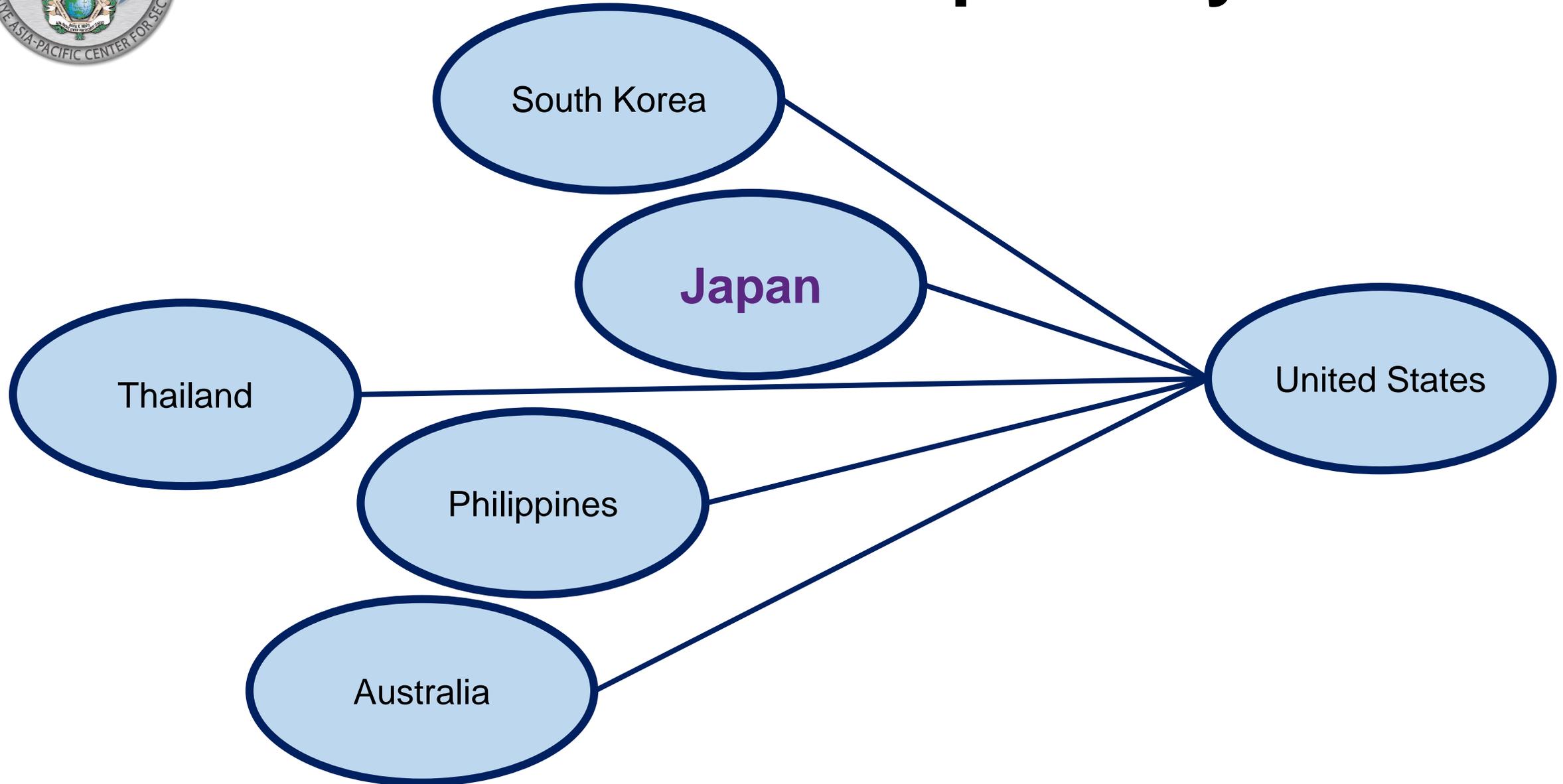


- “Japan is our most capable ally in the most important region of the world.”

- Richard Armitage



# Part of a Hub and Spoke System





# Challenge: North Korea

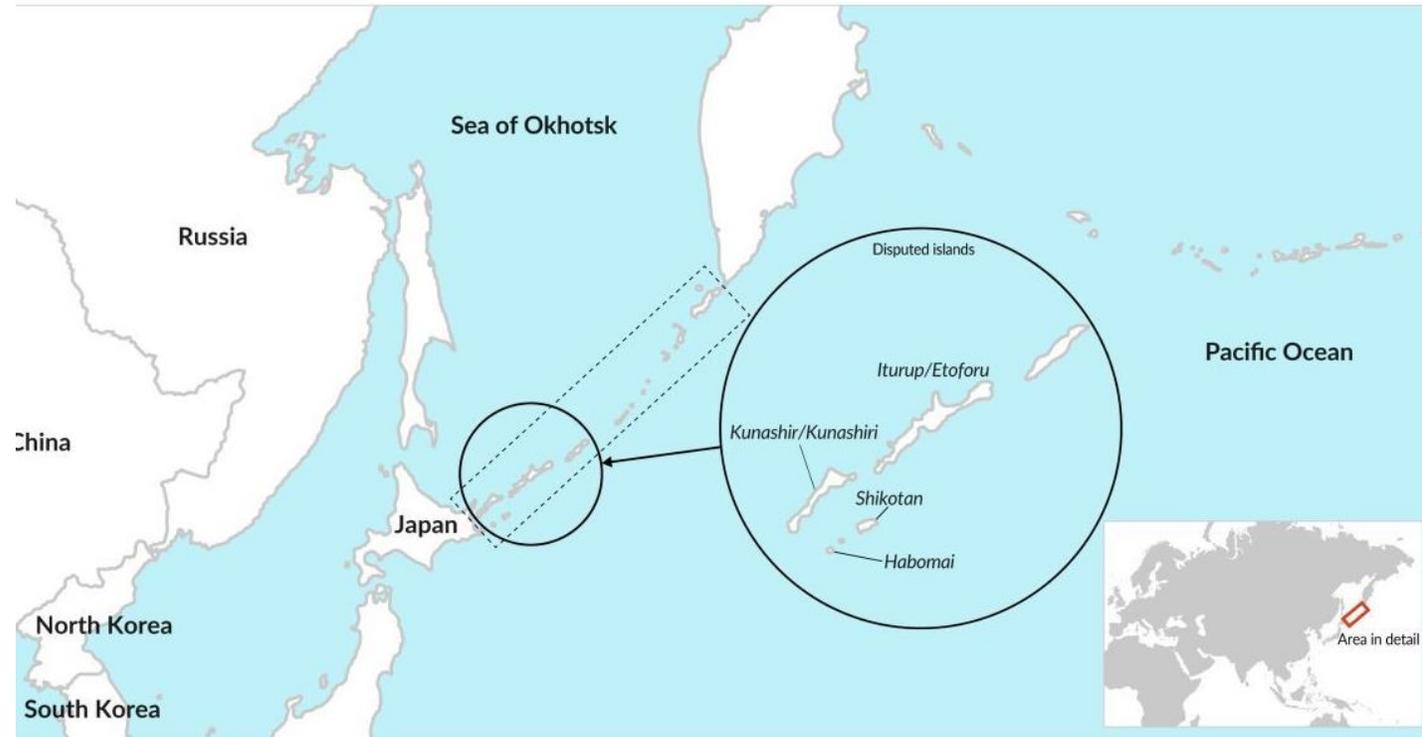
- Nuclear threat
- Ballistic missile threat





# Challenge: Russia

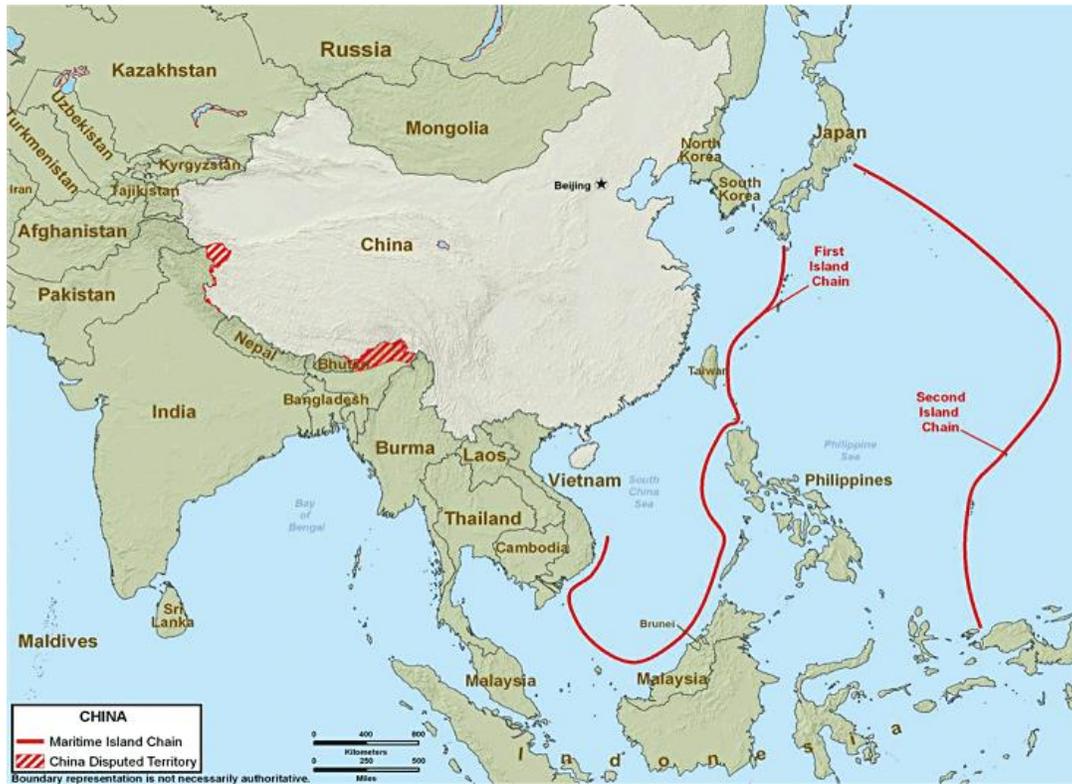
- Kuril Islands, Northern Territory
  - Japan and Russia have not signed a post-World War II peace treaty
- Prime Minister Abe's legacy will live beyond the unsuccessful attempt to resolve the dispute





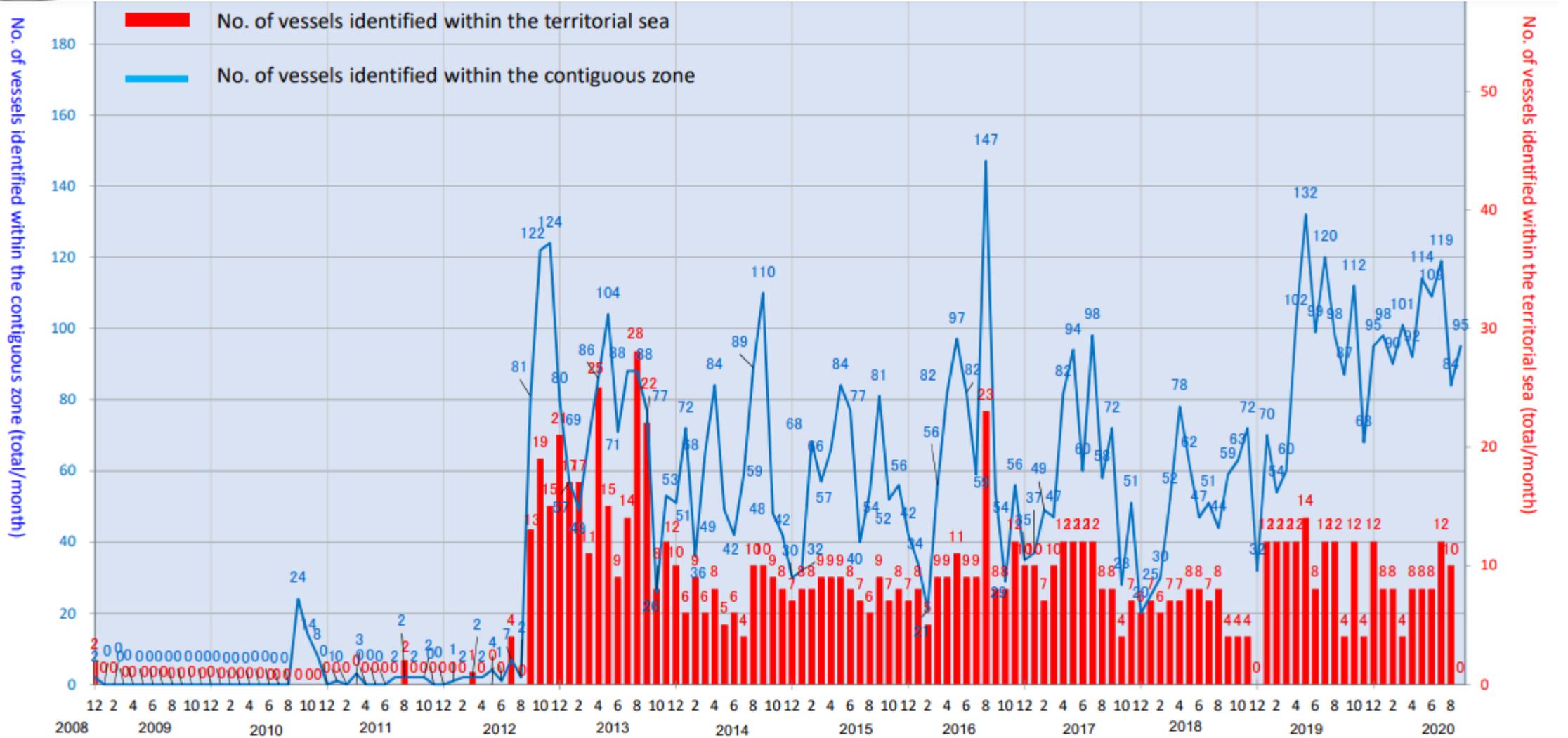
# Challenge: China

- Senkaku Islands
- Hong Kong
- Taiwan





# PRC Incursions into Japan's Territory



Source: Japan Coast Guard

As of 31 September



# Japan-U.S. Security Treaty

- Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between Japan and the United States of America 1960
- Superseded 1951 treaty
- Article 5:  
“Each Party recognizes that an armed attack against either Party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional provisions and processes.”
- CSIS video October 27, 2020 (6:05):  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVMoVKfCKwE&ab\\_channel=CenterforStrategic%26InternationalStudies](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVMoVKfCKwE&ab_channel=CenterforStrategic%26InternationalStudies)

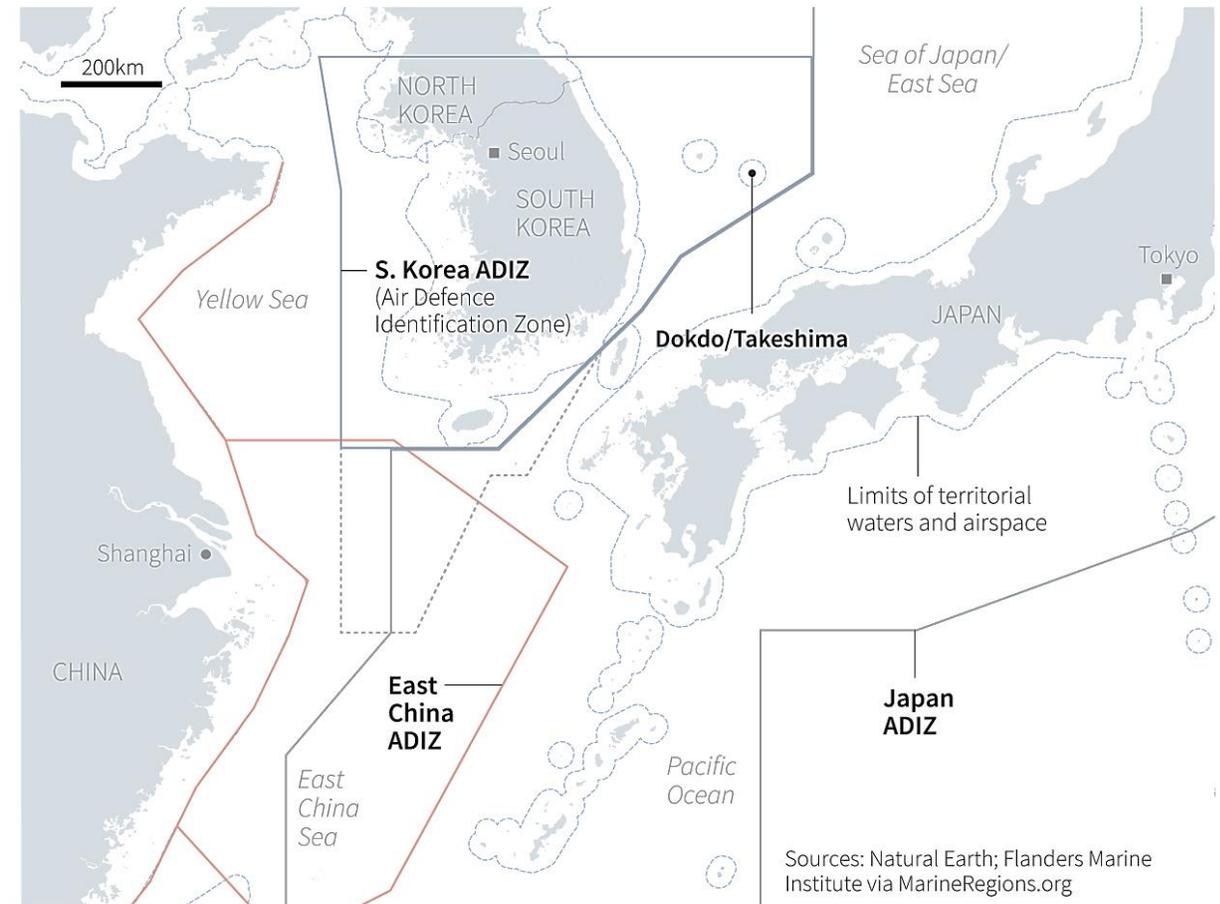


# Japan and South Korea

- Dokdo – Takeshima Islands
- General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) renewed November 23, 2019
- Technology sharing and trade agreements
- Russian-Chinese bomber flight July 23, 2019

## Disputed island Dokdo/Takeshima

The island called Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan, is claimed by both countries as part of their territory.



Sources: Natural Earth; Flanders Marine Institute via MarineRegions.org



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# Complex Regional Security Environment

**DefenseNews**

Air

Land

Naval

Space

Cyber

C4ISR

Pentagon

Congress

Global

TV/Video

Thought Leadership

Asia Pacific

## Russian-Chinese air patrol was an attempt to divide allies, says top US Air Force official in Pacific

By: [Mike Yeo](#)  August 23, 2019



Source: DefenseNews



# Free and Open Indo-Pacific

## Three Pillars of “FOIP”

- ① Promotion and establishment of the rule of law, freedom of navigation, and free trade
- ② Pursuit of economic prosperity (e.g. improving connectivity)
- ③ Commitment to peace and stability



Prime Minister ABE making a speech at TICAD VI held in Nairobi, Kenya (Aug 2016) (Source: MOFA HP)

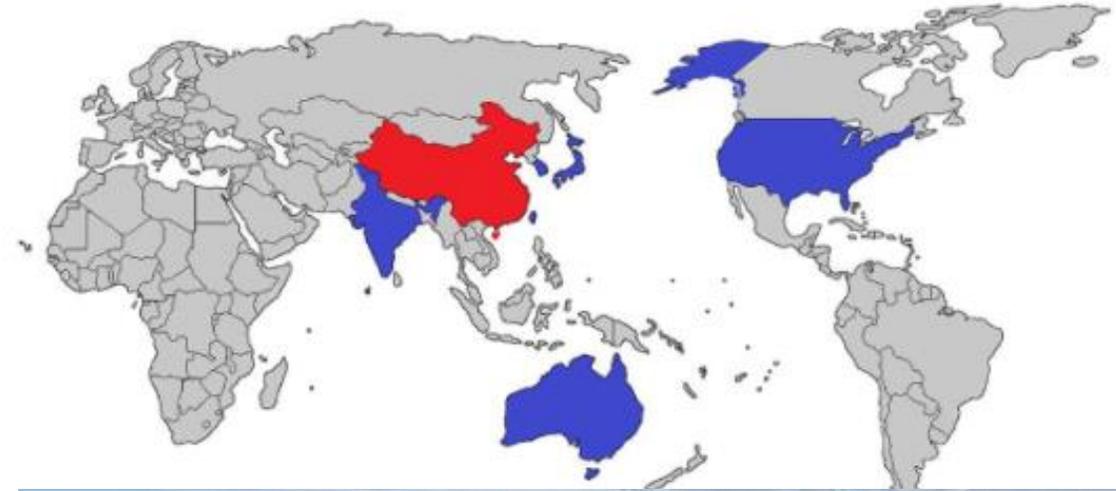
## Basic Concepts of “FOIP”

- The Indo-Pacific region is at the center of world vitality and home to more than half the world population; realizing the stable and autonomous development of this region is crucial for the stability and prosperity of the world
- The goal of the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” Vision is to facilitate free and robust economic activity throughout the Indo-Pacific, and to realize the prosperity of the entire region



# The Quad

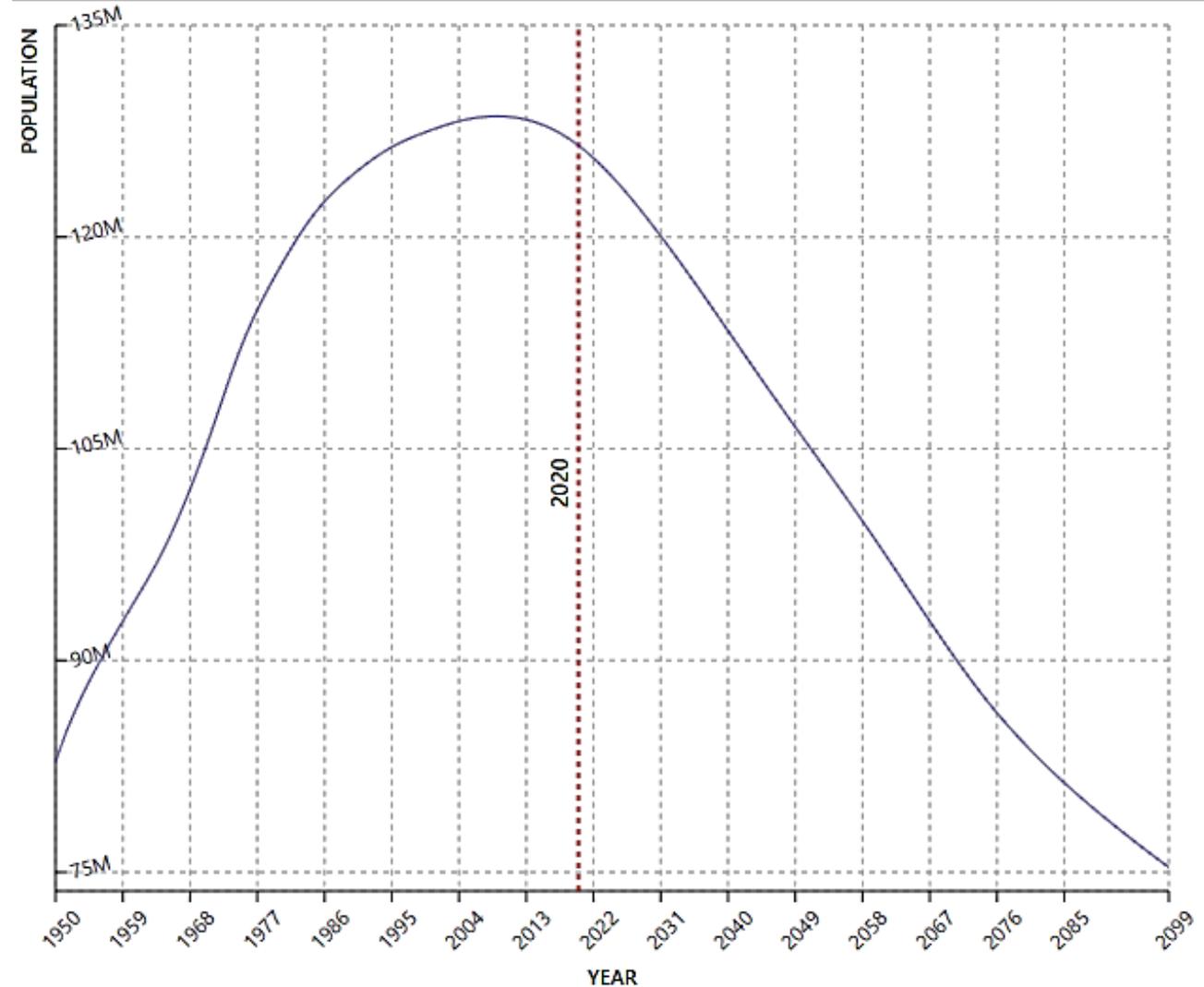
- Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (the Diamond)
  - Australia
  - India
  - Japan
  - United States
- Lack of cooperative security mechanism in Northeast Asia
- Strategic and geographic vision of PM Abe
- Strategic convergence
- *Malabar* exercise series





# Demographics

- Population 125.5M
  - Ethnically homogenous
- World's second oldest population
  - Social service expenses rising
- Net migration = zero
- Labor shortage
  - Low unemployment and late retirement
- Robotics
- Security implications



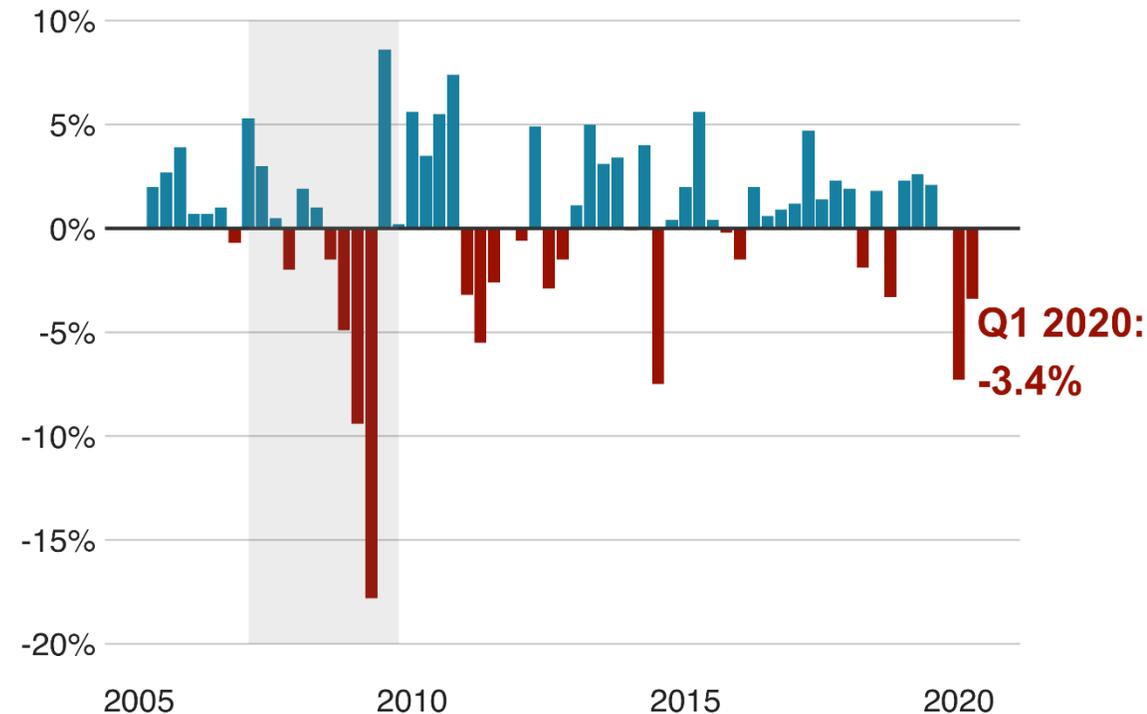


# Economy

- Mature liberal democracy
- Technology, manufacturing, services
- Debt 236% GDP
- Dependent on hydrocarbon imports
  - Two week supply of LNG
  - Malacca dilemma
  - Nuclear power
- CPTPP
- Free trade with United States?

## Japanese economy enters recession

GDP quarter-on-quarter, annualised



Source: Economic and Social Research Institute of Japan





# A Challenging Time

- Prime Minister Suga follows longest serving PM
- COVID-19 pandemic
- Aggressive Chinese Gray Zone activities
  - Maritime grand strategy
  - Intellectual property theft
- North Korean missile threat
- Pledge to make Japan carbon neutral by 2050
- Shrinking population
- Alliance tensions
- Next 50 years (2020-2070) will be challenging



Source: Government of Japan



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# And Now Dr. Hemmings...

