



INTERNATIONAL LAW
JOURNAL

**WHITE BLACK
LEGAL LAW
JOURNAL
ISSN: 2581-
8503**

Peer - Reviewed & Refereed Journal

The Law Journal strives to provide a platform for discussion of International as well as National Developments in the Field of Law.

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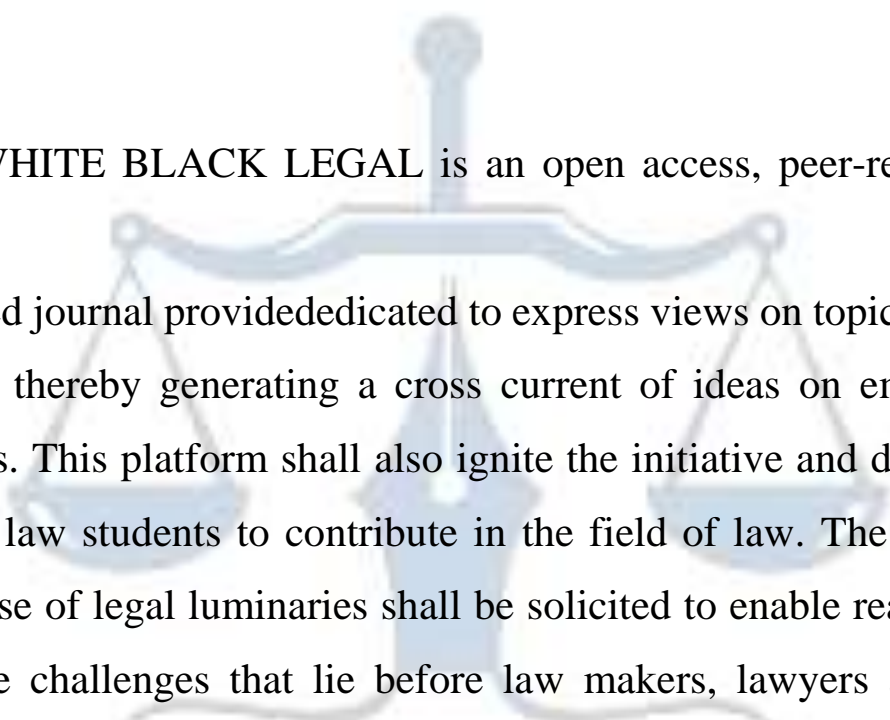


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WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal providededicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

ROLE OF USA IN EAST CHINA SEA DISPUTE

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Abstract

Many realists see China as a potential rival or even threat to USA in the coming years. In spite of this, the USA tends to be neutral in territorial disputes between Japan and China in East China Sea, rather than supporting its ally to contain China in the region. In this research paper its being elaborately discussed why USA plays a neutral role in dispute between China and Japan over East China Sea Islands. To analyse the above issue this research paper have been divided in to three parts as follows. The first part is '*Relationship between China and Japan from past to present*' which briefly discusses about Sino-Japan relationship from beginning and its continuation till today. This part also highlights how the war crimes committed during Japanese imperialism and current territorial dispute on East China Sea affect the current Sino-Japanese relationship. The second part is '*Territorial dispute in East China Sea between Japan and China*' which briefly discusses the commencement of East China Sea dispute between Japan and China and its present status. The third part is '*Position of USA in East China Sea dispute*' which briefly discusses the role of USA and the expectation of Japan and China form USA in dealing with East China Sea Territorial Dispute. Secondly this part discusses why USA maintains Silence over the East China Sea Territorial Dispute and what would be the reaction of USA's allies for USA's non-responsiveness in East China Sea Territorial Dispute. Finally in the conclusion of this research paper it's been analysed that USA is having advantage, in staying neutral rather than supporting Japan which would strain USA's relationship with China. On the other hand USA also uses this East China Sea Territorial Dispute to maintain political tension in the East Asian region by placing rising China in a difficult position to achieve the regional hegemon status.

Key Words: China, Japan, USA, Territorial dispute in East China Sea

Introduction

China, Japan and USA are three super powers doing well economically, politically and in security matters. In this research paper we could find how USA plays its role in building relationship with China and Japan for USA's benefit to retain the hegemonic status in the world. Though the trade relationship between China and USA is flourishing, behind the screen USA doubts China's military and economic rise to be the China's first step to rise as regional hegemon. At the same time China also doubts the presence of USA in East Asian region and helping China's neighbours is to contain China. Rising China is also seen by many realists as a potential rival or even threat to USA in coming years. In case of China and Japan though they have understood the value of business power creating borderless world in the present age of globalisation, they have some misunderstanding in marking their territory. Hence in this research paper we have tried to analyse why East China Sea Territorial Dispute between Japan and China has not been used by USA to support its ally to contain China in the region when China is being seen by many realists as a potential rival or even threat to USA in upcoming years.

For convenience and better understanding of the topic, this research paper has been divided in to three parts as follows. The first part is ***'Relationship between China and Japan from past to present'***, which briefly discusses about Sino-Japan relationship from beginning and its continuation till today. This part also highlights how the war crimes committed during Japanese imperialism and current territorial dispute on East China Sea affect the current Sino-Japanese relationship. The second part is ***'Territorial dispute in East China Sea between Japan and China'***, which briefly discusses the commencement of East China Sea dispute between Japan and China and its present status. The third part is ***'Position of USA in East China Sea dispute'*** which briefly discusses the role of USA and the expectation of Japan and China from USA in dealing with East China Sea Territorial Dispute. Secondly this part discusses why USA maintains Silence over the East China Sea Territorial Dispute and what would be the reaction of USA's allies for USA's non-responsiveness in East China Sea Territorial Dispute. Finally in conclusion of this research paper it's been analysed that USA is having advantage in staying neutral rather than supporting Japan which would strain USA's relationship with China. On the other hand USA also uses this East China Sea Territorial Dispute to maintain political tension in the East Asian region, by placing rising China in a difficult position to achieve the regional hegemon status.

Part –I

Relationship between China and Japan from past to present

In this part we shall discuss the relationship between China and Japan which will contribute in analysing the role of USA in East China Sea dispute. This section will analyse the economic, political and military supremacy of each country individually and will also throw light upon their effect on relationship in past and present.

The relationship of China and Japan is an age old one of friendship and feud. Chinese civilisation has extremely inspired Japan by its writing system, architecture, culture, religion, philosophy and law. Japanese state and its people ever since the period of the Chinese world order have felt a cultural affinity and friendship with their massive neighbor expressed in the '*dobun doshu*' which means '*same Chinese characters and same race*' (Glenn D.Hook, 2005, p. 190)¹. During ancient times the trade relationship between China and Japan through both land and sea was healthy. Whereas in 1633 during the period of Tokugawa Shogunate a feudal regime they decided to close all direct links with the foreign world by practicing '*isolationism*', which brought a temporary end to Japan's trade with China and it was only during 20th century the trade between China and Japan resumed (Glenn D.Hook, 2005, pp. 186-187)².

In the year 1852 Commodore Perry of USA's navy forced Japan to open its market for western trading. Japan realized the mortification faced by China during Opium wars and hence took steps to modernize Japan's military (Hunt, 2009, pp. 712-13)³. Meanwhile Tokugawa Shogunate was overthrown through Meiji restoration which meant to restore the Japanese emperor as the head of the state. Japan's modernisation of military induced Japan in using its military power to show their imperialism by conquering its neighbours like China and Korea. As the outcome of their imperialism Japan took control of China's Diaoyu Islands in 1870 and subsequently of Taiwan in 1894. Japan showed its aggressive phase to the world during 1868 to 1945 that is up to World War II by its long chain of invasions by committing following war crimes by its defence personnel's like mass killings, human experimentation and biological war

¹ Glenn D.Hook, J. G. (2005). *Japan's International Relations (Politics, economics and security)* (second ed.). (G. D.Hook, Ed.) New York: Routledge p(190)

² Glenn D.Hook, J. G. (2005). *Japan's International Relations (Politics, economics and security)* (second ed.). (G. D.Hook, Ed.) New York: Routledge pp(186-187).

³ Hunt, L. T. (2009). *The Making of the West, Peoples and Cultures* (Third ed., Vol. Vol. C.). Boston: Bedford/ St. Martin's pp:712-713.

fare, use of chemical weapons, torture to prisoners of war, cannibalism, forced labour, comfort women and looting. In China between 1894 and 1945 Japan committed some of the above mentioned war crimes especially in Nanking massacre committed during 1937-38 which was one of the unscrupulous events that affect the current Sino-Japanese relations (**A.Fogel, 2000, pp. 1-70**)⁴.

Japan stopped its atrocities and brought an end to its imperialistic behaviour by the end of World War II after the experiencing drastic effects of atomic bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. But still China fears that Japan may repeat its behaviour that was followed during Japan's imperialistic attacks. Whereas Japan on the other hand fears that China the massive neighbor will punish it for its past imperialist behaviour and war crimes. The above suspicion between Japan and China has been added fuel by signing Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance between USSR and China in the year 1950 and Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan in the year 1960. The acknowledgement of Taipei's state legitimacy by Japan, subsequently allowing USA to set military base in Japan adds suspicion and fear to China in USA-Japan relationship.

China and Japan by advent of globalisation have become world's second and third fastest growing economy. They have cherished great economic heights by their mutual peaceful aspects of trade. Though they maintain a sound relationship some of the events of the past crops in and disturb their regional stability challenging their modesty towards nationalism. Incidents like visit of Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to the Yasukuni Shrine in the year 2001 as a dedication to the country's fallen soldiers is seen by many Chinese as symbolizing a denial of Japan's World War II war crimes, specifically the Rape of Nanjing and understating Rape of Nanjing atrocities in Japanese history text books in the year 2005 have ignited many anti-Japanese protests throughout China. Hence People's Republic of China has to satisfy its citizens by assuring, that China will take any kind of action to upkeep its nationalism thereby protecting the dignity of the nation (**Glenn D.Hook, 2005, pp. 191-195**)⁵. Recently the 2012 purchase of disputed Senkaku Island by Japan from Koga family the Japanese settler, in order to nationalize the Islands led to the present eruption of anti-Japanese movement throughout

⁴ A.Fogel, J. (2000). *The Nanjing Massacre in history and historiography*. London: University of California Press pp:1-70.

⁵ Glenn D.Hook, J. G. (2005). *Japan's International Relations (Politics, economics and security)* (second ed.). (G. D.Hook, Ed.) New York: Routledge pp:191-195.

China.

In midst of sweet and sour relationship between China and Japan, USA tries to strike a balance in its relationship with China and Japan as both are equally important for USA to continue as a world hegemon. Before we start to discuss the role of USA in East China Sea territorial dispute, we shall see in our second part the historical events that led to the Senkaku Island dispute between China and Japan.

Part –II

Territorial dispute in East China Sea between Japan and China

Globalisation has given birth to a borderless world without giving any panacea to territorial disputes existing between states. One among the disputed territories in the world is of China and Japan over five uninhabited islands and three barren rocks. A new scholar to the territorial dispute in East China Sea will think why China or Japan is ready to take a conflict over the above issues when they have good trade ties, through which both of their economies are flourishing. In this part of the research paper we shall analyse how important is this East China Sea territorial dispute to both China and Japan.

As a first step of our analysis we shall probe in to certain historical events which are to be considered very important to study about the East China Sea territorial dispute. The groups of Islands that are present in East China Sea are called by different names like Senkaku in Japan, Diaoyu in China or Diaoyutai Islands in Taiwan. For convenience, in this research paper we shall take the name of Senkaku islands to describe the disputed Islands. The dispute over these Senkaku islands started in the year 1969 when United Nations reported that a large oil and gas reserves may exist under the seabed near the Senkaku islands. There is no official records as to whom Senkaku islands belong, but China and Japan mark some instances supporting their sovereignty claims over the Senkaku Islands.

People's Republic of China on one hand argues that Senkaku Island has been known and controlled by the Ming and Qing dynasties since 1368 to 1911 until the Japan's imperialistic conquest. PRC tries to represent their claim for sovereignty over Senkaku islands by saying the following instances, firstly in 18th century Japanese map the Sangoku Tsuran Zusetsu compiled by Japanese cartographer Hayashi Shihei shows the Senkaku Islands in same color as that of

China. Secondly China claims that only by treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895 Japan ceded the territory of Northern China which included Taiwan, Island of Formosa and these Senkaku islands and Japan did not have any claim before 1894. Thirdly in the year 1885 an official letter was written by the then Japanese minister of foreign affairs warning the then Japanese interior minister Yamagata Aritomo that Islands of dispute had Chinese names which were near to Qing's border and annexation would raise suspicion in the eyes of China, against their warning to Japanese activity in the off shore's coast of China. Fourthly China argues that by treaty of Taipei in 1951 Japan gave back the territories taken from China (**Suganama, 2000, pp. 89-97**)⁶. Hence China assures that Japan has surrendered Senkaku islands.

Japan on the other hand refuses that all the claims made by China for sovereignty over Senkaku is not true. Firstly Japan says that Senkaku Islands were not part of Taiwan nor they were part of Pescadores that would have been returned by Treaty of Taipei which was signed on the same date as of San Francisco peace treaty in 1951. The treaty of Taipei was signed separately as both People's Republic of China and Republic of China was not welcome to sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty, because other states were not clear whether PRC or ROC is a legitimate state. Secondly Japan claims that until 1895 Senkaku Islands were terra nullius and there was no sign of Ming or Qing dynasties administration on the Islands and only in the year 1895 Japanese families settled at Senkaku Islands. Thirdly Japan reminds China's silence; during USA's declaration that Japan will have the residual power over the Ryuku Islands by signing the San Francisco Peace treaty in 1951 and simultaneously when USA in the year 1953 set geographical boundaries of Ryuku Island which included the Senkaku Islands. Fourthly Japan says that China did not change the world map until 1970 where Senkaku Island was not included in its territory and only in the year 1971 China brought new edition text books which had Senkaku Island included in its territory (**Sato, 2010**)⁷. Hence the reason Japan mentions for China's extension of its territory to Senkaku Island was due to United Nations report of 1969, which mentioned that there may exist large oil and gas reserve beneath the seabed close to the Senkaku Islands (**Takeuchi, 2010, p. 3**)⁸.

⁶ Suganama, U. (2000). *Sovereign Rights and territorial Space in Sino-Japanese Relations*. USA: University of Hawai'i press pp:89-97.

http://books.google.co.in/books?id=vDpEiKR2osoC&pg=PA127&hl=en&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
accessed on : 20.11.2012

⁷ Sato, S. (2010, September 21). Clarifying the Senkaku Islands Dispute. *The Wall Street Journal*.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704129204575505141368553952.html> accessed on 25.11.2012

⁸ Takeuchi, H. (2010, October). Embassy of Japan in Israel- Ambassador, new letter Oct 2010. p:3.

http://articles.cnn.com/2010-10-14/world/japan.google.disputed.islands_1_diaoyu-islands-chinese-fishing-captain-senkaku-islands?_s=PM:WORLD accessed on 28.11.2012

Since 1971 the East China Sea territorial dispute on one hand has strained the Sino-Japanese relationship and on the other hand has challenged their regional stability due to many protests and demonstration conducted by activists supporting claims of China or Japan over East China Sea. The important one among the demonstrations was the one held in April 2004 by Japan's right wing group which hit a bus into the Chinese consulate in Osaka to protest Chinese claims for Senkaku Islands. Subsequently in July 2004, a Chinese mob conducted protest against Japan's illegal oil exploration activities in disputed territories of East China Sea, just outside Japanese Embassy in Beijing (**Military-Senkaku/ Diayutai Islands**)⁹.

In October 2010 Japan's Foreign Minister [Seiji Maehara](#), along with other members of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan filed a complaint against [Google Maps](#) demanding the removal of the Chinese name "Diaoyutai" from the interactive map services. Google refused the demand, stating that they wish to remain neutral (**Ogura, 2010**)¹⁰. Subsequently in November 2011 East Asia Summit, Japan along with USA openly supported to resolve South China Sea territorial dispute through multinational cooperation and dialogue as most of China's claim is under jurisdiction of international maritime law. Japan was considered to involve in this issue, because interference of nations to resolve the South China Dispute with China, would help Japan in solving East China Sea Territorial Dispute (**Masangkay, 2011**)¹¹. Whereas China opposed and declared that jurisdictional dispute over South China Sea would be resolved bilaterally, because it knows that if it accepts for multilateral cooperation in resolving SCS dispute, it has to do it for ECS territorial dispute too.

The above series of incidents show that since 1971 there had been dispute for Senkaku Islands between China and Japan. Whereas USA recently in 2012 has said that it does not want to declare as to who owns the island but on the other hand says that it will come to assist Japan in protecting the Senkaku Islands if anyone including China, attacks or attempts to occupy or control them as per the 1960, Treaty of mutual cooperation and security between the USA and Japan.

⁹ *Military-Senkaku/ Diayutai Islands*. (n.d.). Retrieved November 22, 2012, from Globalsecurity.org: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/senkaku.htm> accessed on 22.11.2012

¹⁰Ogura, J. (2010, October 14). *Japanese Party Urges Google to drop Chinese name for Disputed Islands*. Retrieved November 25, 2012, from http://articles.cnn.com/2010-10-14/world/japan.google.disputed.islands_1_diaoyu-islands-chinese-fishing-captain-senkaku-islands?_s=PM:WORLD accessed on 24.11.2012

¹¹ Masangkay, M. (2011, November 21). Japan takes stand in South China Sea Row. *The Japan times*. <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20111121a3.html> accessed on 25.11.2012

So this part has clearly analysed that how Senkaku Island dispute arose and what are all the claims of both China and Japan put forth to establish their hold on Senkaku Island. So in the next part it's discussed how the relationship between China, Japan and USA is affected due to Senkaku Island dispute and how their political, economic and security affairs are connected and what role they play in dealing with Senkaku island disputes.

Part –III

Position of USA in East China Sea dispute

In midst of scholar's discussion on polarity of the world and changing world order we have to note that international relations are a complex area which is subject to unpredictable change. In post -cold war era USA had remained a hegemonic power and rest of the world had been controlled by the Single super power giving rise to a unipolar world. USA had been and continues to be economically, militarily and politically strong than any other country in this world. Though Japan rose economically and simultaneously remilitarized in 1990's it dare to go against USA because it could not match the USA's growth but on the other hand China's growth has raised a fear in minds of USA to lose its control over Asian region. This is due to China's attempt to rise as a regional super power. Though China's recent interest in its military expansion and economic rise is no were to match the supremacy of USA, still USA consider China as a threat to its hold over Asia.

In this final part of the research paper firstly we shall discuss what Japan expects USA to do in East China Sea territorial dispute. Secondly what China expects USA to do in East China Sea territorial dispute? Thirdly whether USA's evasion to support Japan in East China Sea territorial dispute will reduce the factor of trust and reliability in mind of Japan? Fourthly how Japan and other East Asian allies of USA will react to USA's non-responsiveness? Fifthly whether USA will lend its supportive hands to Japan in East China Sea territorial dispute by taking a chance of straining their prospering trade relationship with China? Finally concluding the research paper by analysing How USA wants to deal this East China Sea territorial dispute that is whether it will join hands with Japan or with China or will USA stand neutral? The following paragraph attempts to give the answer for the above questions.

The answer for the first question what Japan expects USA to do in East China Sea territorial dispute would be, to resolve the issue in Japan's favor. There is no wrong in Japan's expectation

because it is one of the most important allies of USA in the Asian region. Japan will expect USA to assist in any conflict that will break out in future regarding Senkaku Island. Japan would certainly expect a token of trust as a result of it being USA's ally from USA, to interfere and help solving the Sovereignty issue in the North East Asian region. Japan also expects interference of USA in resolving East China Sea territorial dispute because it knows China will become flexible as China on one hand would fear in breakage of its strong trade ties with USA and on the other hand USA's military power could cause fear in mind of China to protect itself from any confrontation towards USA.

The only possible answer for the second question would be China will expect USA to stay away from Senkaku Island Dispute. China's above expectation was cleared during 2008 East Asian Summit when it said that it would like to resolve its territorial dispute in South China Sea bilaterally with those countries with which it has the issues. The choice of bilateral mode of solving the issue clearly shows that China wants to avoid a third party especially USA involving in resolving the disputes. This is because, firstly China feels that presence of USA's powerful military in the Asian region will act as a threat and will make China comply with USA's condition to resolve the SCS dispute. Secondly China also fears if it allows USA to interfere in SCS Territorial dispute then USA will take undue advantage of interfering in other territorial dispute that involves China and USA's allies. Thirdly China is afraid to lose the economic prosperity which it has achieved by its flourishing trade ties with USA, if China decides to go against the condition put by USA. Hence these are the very reasons why China would expect USA to stay away from Senkaku Island dispute.

The answer would be certainly 'yes' for third question that is, whether there will be reduction in factor of trust and reliability in mind of Japan if USA evades supporting Japan in East China Sea territorial dispute. Then answer for fourth question, what will be the reaction from Japan and USA allies for USA's non-responsiveness towards East China Sea territorial dispute would be to stay with USA because they know that they need support of USA for their security and economic issues. Even though USA does not act to the expectation of its East Asian allies they have to stick with USA because on one hand they will be punished by USA as USA has large military settlement in East Asian region and USA's powerful weapons will make it easier for USA to contain the region. On the other hand going against USA will lead to giving space to China developing in to a regional hegemon and exercising China's control over its neighbours for China's personal interest. Though East Asian allies of USA develop factor of mistrust and

reliability they cannot act against USA, because they clearly know that USA is the only state that could help them in case of attack by rising China.

The answer for fifth question would be, as USA and China have large trade ties, USA will not lend its supportive hands to Japan in East China Sea territorial dispute, considering USA's economic downfall. The answer for the final question would be USA will stand neutral in dealing with East China Sea Territorial Dispute. The reasons for USA opting for neutral position would be to avoid straining its improving relationship with that of China. Secondly USA clearly knows that East Asian allies have to rely on USA, because if they don't support USA they will suffer on economic and security vice issues. Thirdly USA will maintain its neutrality that is, USA will remain silent over East China Sea Territorial Dispute because on one hand USA will not take chance of straining its trade relationship with China and on the other hand it expects such tension to prevail in East Asian region, which would place rising China in a difficult position to achieve the regional hegemon status. Another important reason for USA to maintain healthy trade relations with China is to restore its loss due to recession of 2008. Because USA knows that one of the most important reasons for recession in 2008 was its excessive expenditure on military and war on terror. Hence USA will not take any chance in straining its relationship with China and will not use USA's military force on war, unnecessarily leading to economic downfall.

So the final outcome of analysis of the above set of questions is that USA will stand neutral in East China Sea Territorial Dispute. The USA's role to stand neutral in East China Sea Territorial Dispute on one hand will benefit USA by maintaining its good rapport with China. On the other hand the political tensions resulting due to East China Sea Territorial Dispute will help USA maintaining its control over East Asian region by placing rising China in a difficult position to achieve the regional hegemon status. Hence East China Sea Territorial Dispute is the good sign for USA to stabilise its hegemonic status on the world.

Conclusion

So from the above discussion its being concluded that USA will stand neutral in East China Sea Territorial Dispute which will allow it to have prosperous relationship with China and Japan. USA will not directly try resolving East China Sea Territorial Dispute to prove the factor of trust and reliability to its allies, because USA knows that its East Asian Allies badly need

USA's economic and military support in order to escape from rising China's attack. USA also wants such territorial dispute in order to maintain tension in the East Asian region which will make USA's East Asian Allies seek for USA's support. USA does not aim to utilize this East China Sea Territorial Dispute to join hands with Japan and contain China because it does not want to strain its economic relationship with China. Hence from the above analysis we could adjudge that USA will stand neutral in East China Sea Territorial Dispute.

Abbreviation

ECS – East China Sea

PRC – People's Republic of China

ROC- Republic of China

SCS- South China Sea

USA- United States of America

USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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