

Will China Refashion the Asian Maritime Order?

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I . Introduction

Over the past three years, China's activities in the Yellow (West as Korea names it) Sea, the East China Sea (ECS) and the South China Sea(SCS) have, along with North Korea, become the most frequently addressed security issues in East Asia. The confrontations China has had with its neighbors have raised concerns throughout East Asia, as well as in the United States. Do these events provide a glimpse into the future? Are they indications of how a powerful China is going to act? Must the rest of Asia contemplate a future where China is going to be habitually assertive and unwilling to compromise in the pursuit of its interests? Beijing's behavior in the seas that have "China " in their name is an issue of direct concern to Washington because it challenges the central premise of U.S. policy in East Asia: that the United States is a stabilizing presence in the region.

II . Lay of the land

Approximately 70 percent of China's eastern seaboard forms the western limit of the ECS and coterminous Yellow Sea basin. The Ryukyu Chain is the East China Sea's eastern boundary. The East China Sea/Yellow Sea basin is essentially home waters for the navies of China, Japan, and both Koreas. As a result, it is a "local" training area for four – or, if one includes Taiwan, five – littoral navies. If we include the United States Seventh Fleet, these are waters where all parties routinely operate their navies. These waters are also of enormous economic import for China. Commercial traffic must traverse the East China Sea and/or Yellow Sea to reach six of China's 10 largest ports.

The East China and Yellow seas served for several decades as the maritime buffer between "Red China" and Washington's offshore allies of South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. While U.S. strategic thinking no longer includes notions of containing Asian continental powers, China understands that historically these waters were the routes that the West crossed to attack it. Beijing considers them "near seas," and has embarked upon a military program to ensure that it can establish sea control over this "first island chain" maritime basin.

The SCS is another of China's near seas. It poses a complex policy problem for U.S. policymakers because of an overlapping set of issues. Sovereignty disputes in the SCS involve six countries: China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei. China and Taiwan claim all of the islands, rocks, and shoals in the SCS.

Vietnam claims the Spratly and Paracel groups. Five of the countries (all but Brunei) occupy some of the islands with military or paramilitary forces. The SCS picture is further muddied because China also makes claims based on assertions of "historic waters" delimited by a vague, un-demarcated line on maps, known as the "U" shaped or "nine-dashed" line, which covers virtually the entire sea. This line is the cause of significant confusion, because Beijing has so far refused to define what it means legally, and because the line overlaps the legitimate EEZ and continental shelf claims of the other SCS coastal states. This state of affairs, and the attendant political uncertainty it generates, is a major disincentive for large international oil companies in invest in exploration and hydrocarbon extraction activity.

Despite genuine protestations of neutrality regarding sovereignty issues in the SCS, the United States has willingly become more deeply involved than ever before by encouraging a collaborative or multilateral solution that is at odds with Beijing's preferred bilateral approach. In a departure

from past policy, in the summer of 2010 the Obama administration clearly began to signal, through a combination of diplomacy and enhanced military presence, that it does consider rule-based stability in the SCS to be an important U.S. national objective.

As a result, whether intended or not, Washington has made the SCS an implicit test case of its "post-rebalance" credibility as a stabilizing power in Asia. Starting with the 2010 ASEAN Regional Forum in Hanoi, Washington has become more involved, and as a result the United States now has strategic "skin in the SCS game."

III. Flashpoint: The Yellow or West Sea

The West Sea is of enormous economic import for China and Korea. Commercial traffic must traverse the East China Sea and/or West Sea to reach Korea's major ports and six of China's 10 largest ports. The major ports along the West Sea rim—Pusan, Incheon, Qingdao, and Tianjin—are some of the largest ports in the world in terms of throughput of containers. The West Sea is one of the world's largest continental shelves covered by shallow water—the average depth is only 144 feet. It is a rich fishing area for both Koreas and China, and, as a result, suffers from over-fishing and the concomitant conflicts among all three parties over disputed fishing grounds. About 600 million people live in the West Sea catchment area, and more than a dozen urban areas there have populations over 1 million people.

1. The Korean maritime boundary dispute

The West Sea has been the scene of numerous naval incidents between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) since the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement on July 27, 1953. Since the late 1990s, these incidents have been characterized by brief clashes between the navies of the two Koreas in the relatively confined waters surrounding the five ROK islands of Pangnyong-do, Taechong-do, Socheong-do, Yeonpyeongdo, and U-do. In 2010, the character of these incidents escalated as North Korea carried out a covert attack that sank a South Korean patrol vessel (Cheonan) and eight months later launched an artillery attack on Yeonpyeongdo that killed ROK Marines and civilian occupants of the island.¹⁾

These islands were specifically allocated to South Korea in the 1953 Armistice Agreement, a month after the Armistice Agreement was signed. General Mark Clark, then commander of United Nations Command, unilaterally drew a military line of control in the West Sea to ensure that South Korea's navy and fishing vessels did not stray too far north and inadvertently restart hostilities. The result is a very unorthodox de facto maritime boundary between North and South Korea. The two Koreas dispute this maritime boundary, which has become known as the Northern Limit Line or NLL.²⁾

Economically, the area around the line is a valuable fishing ground. Blue crab and other migratory fish are in particular demand and draw not only Korean fishing vessels to the area, but also Chinese trawlers that fish illegally on both sides of the NLL. For

1) Dr. Terence Roehrig, "The Northern Limit Line: The Disputed Boundary between North and South Korea," *NCNK Issue Brief*, September 30, 2011.

2) Ibid.

both countries, however, security considerations are of paramount importance and are the main reason why the two Korea have not reached an accommodation on the NLL. For Seoul, any shift of the NLL farther south would jeopardize the security of the Northwest islands. Agreeing to the North Korean boundary line which is a prolongation of the inter-Korean frontier, would make the five islands very difficult to defend, as well as giving North Korea easy access to the Han River estuary, the maritime gateway to Seoul.

2. Fishing confrontations with China

Beyond the controversy over the correct maritime boundary between the two Koreas, the West Sea has seen increasing number of fisheries disputes. Starting in 2010 Chinese fishermen grew bolder in their pursuit of resources within South Korea's EEZ. There were reportedly 370 such incidents in 2010 (more than one per day), and more than 470 such incidents in 2011.⁷ In October, South Korean Coast Guard forces used tear gas and rubber bullets to subdue Chinese fishermen wielding clubs and shovels.⁸ An escalation occurred in December 2011, when the captain of a Chinese fishing boat fatally stabbed one South Korean Coast Guard officer and injured another after they boarded the fishing trawler to arrest the crew for fishing about 100 miles east of Incheon.³⁾

3. U.S. interests in the Yellow Sea

For the United States, the Yellow Sea is important because it is the

3) Donald Kirk, "High-seas stabbing of Korean commando worsens ties with China," *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 12, 2011 and "Chinese fishermen 'stab South Korean coast guards,'" *BBC News*, December 12, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16134647>

area where U.S. naval forces can demonstrate support to its ally, South Korea, in times of tension. By exercising its right to operate on the high seas, or in the territorial seas of its ally, the United States, in support of that ally, has created a new issue for China. In the past two years, China has periodically taken umbrage over aircraft carrier strike groups' operations off Korea in the Yellow Sea, because from this area carrier based aircraft are within easy striking range of Beijing. While it is ludicrous to suggest that the United States would conduct a sneak-attack on China—with a single carrier, no less—it is useful to remember that in China's historic memory the West Sea was the route that Western powers and Japan used to gain access to Beijing.⁴⁾

4. West Sea Final Thoughts

For the two Koreas and China the West Sea represents home waters. The three countries will all be assiduous in protecting what is considered sovereign maritime areas. As a result, the West Sea will continue to be troubled by ongoing disputes among all three interested parties over maritime boundaries because they define exclusive fishing rights. For the two Koreas, the dispute over maritime boundaries has led to violent clashes at sea. This is likely to persist as long as the prospect of conflict between the two remains a credible possibility. It is unlikely that the Koreas will compromise on their respective views of what constitutes an acceptable maritime dividing line because they do not want to provide the other with a more advantageous geographic security position.

More broadly, by giving the impression that it is trying to make the

4) Jeremy Page and Julian Barnes, "China warns US as Korea tensions rise," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 26, 2010, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052748704008704575638420698918004>

West Sea a maritime keep-out zone for U.S. Navy ships, Beijing has effectively made the United States more conscious than ever of the need to exercise its high-seas freedoms in this body of water. In truth, the West Sea is not a comfortable operating environment for U.S. Navy surface forces. It is very shallow, is crowded with fishing boats and large commercial vessels, has limited sea room, is within the tactical operating of large numbers of land-based aircraft, and is home waters for a large number of Chinese and North Korean submarines. Other than showing support for South Korea by sending deterrence signals to Pyongyang, and periodically exercising high seas freedoms, the West Sea is not likely to become a frequent operating area for the US 7th Fleet.

IV. Flashpoint: The East China Sea

While the SCS has grown in importance for Washington, it is in the East China Sea where the stakes are much higher. This is the one area along the East Asian littoral where a shooting war with China is conceivable. Taiwan, which lies at the southern end of the East China Sea, has been a perennial flashpoint. Fortunately, cross strait relations between Taipei and Beijing are probably as good today as they have ever been, and as a result the risk of conflict is very low. But, since China refuses to renounce the use of force against Taiwan, the possibility of a military crisis or even conflict cannot be completely ruled out.

More recently, the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, also in the southern portion of the ECS, have become a second potential source of direct Sino-U.S. conflict. In August 2012 the long simmering dispute between China and Japan over sovereignty of these five small, inconsequential islands burst into open confrontation when the government of Japan effectively nationalized the islets by purchasing three of them from a

private individual. This created a nationalist outburst from all three claimants—Taiwan (the Republic of China), the People’s Republic of China, and Japan. The five uninhabited islands and three rocky reefs that constitute the island chain are currently under Japanese control, and for years have been routinely patrolled by the Japanese Coast Guard to keep Taiwanese and Chinese fishermen out of what Japan considers its territorial waters. Neither China nor Taiwan acknowledge Japanese sovereignty and have authored detailed position papers explaining why the islands should have been, but were not, returned to the Republic of China along with Taiwan at the end of World War II. The United States considered the Senkakus to be part of Okinawa prefecture, which was not returned to Japanese control until 1972.

The current confrontation between Japan and China has been going on for over a year now, and the public statements of both sides suggest no room for compromise on who has sovereignty. While Japan’s decision to purchase the islands was intended to avoid a dispute with China by preventing them from falling into the hands on a far-right nationalist group led by the Mayor of Tokyo, the well-intentioned action has backfired. Beijing accuses Japan of changing the status-quo, and has used that rationale to begin to patrol the waters around the islands as if they were Chinese territory. China is using its Coast Guard to demonstrate that sovereignty over the islands is in dispute, despite Tokyo’s position that there is no territorial question—the islands are Japan’s, period. So far Beijing, Taipei and Tokyo have successfully kept this dispute confined to diplomatic and maritime constabulary arenas, and avoided the direct involvement of naval warships. But the United States is keeping a close eye on developments because it considers the Senkakus to be under Japanese administrative control—though it takes no position regarding under whose sovereignty they ultimately will fall—and as a result the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty does apply should China attack

Japanese forces around the islands or attempt to seize them, and potentially bring the U.S. into direct conflict with China.

At first glance, the disputes China has with the Philippines over Scarborough Shoal in the SCS appear similar to the situation in the ECS with Japan, because the U.S. is a treaty ally of the Philippines. Actually, however, the two situations are different. In the case of Scarborough Shoal, the Philippines did not have undisputed "administrative control" prior to the 2012 confrontation over the islet. Second, the U.S. is not directly involved in the Scarborough Shoal dispute because its mutual defense treaty with the Philippines does not obligate Washington to take sides over sovereignty questions. However, the treaty does include language related to attacks on "its [the Philippines'] armed forces, public vessels or aircraft in the Pacific."⁵⁾

In the unlikely event that China were to attack a Philippine naval or coast guard ship, Washington therefore could find itself in a difficult position regarding its willingness to live up to treaty obligations and its perceived reliability as a security provider in East Asia.

V. Keeping Escalation under Control?

So far, the PLA Navy has not played a direct role in the disputes in the East and South China Seas. They have remained an "over the horizon force," demonstrating presence through routine operations and transits in the East China Sea (ECS) and training, exercise and resupply missions to Chinese garrisons in the Spratly Islands in the

5) *Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines*, August 30, 1951, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/phil001.asp.

South China Sea (SCS).

Beijing has opted to employ China's five civil maritime enforcement agencies (four of which have recently been combined into a Chinese Coast Guard) rather than the PLA Navy to enforce its claims. This has kept maritime confrontations at sea at the constabulary level in an apparent attempt to reduce the possibility of escalation. Furthermore, the protection of China's EEZs is the responsibility of China Maritime Surveillance (CMS), and fisheries law enforcement was the responsibility of Fisheries Law enforcement Command (FLEC). While the PLA Navy has not been an active participant it has made certain that its nearby presence has been noted.

In mid-June 2011, China explored a more moderate approach to managing claims disputes in the South China Sea after it realized that its "hard-nosed" attitude was harming its broader foreign policy objectives, especially its ties with regional states. China's turn toward moderation did not last long, however. It unraveled during and after the standoff with the Philippines over Scarborough Shoal in April 2012. Since then, China has returned its previous approach of taking unilateral action. While no one knows for certain why this reversal took place, in this author's judgment it was because the Chinese leadership concluded that such temperance made no appreciable difference in the behavior of the Philippines and Vietnam.⁶⁾

6) From Beijing's perspective, despite a more moderate tone, the Philippines conducted very active and public diplomacy regarding its claims including pushing for proposals that China viewed as harming its claims at the East Asian Summit, *attempting to persuade ASEAN in April 2012* to negotiate a code of conduct without China and seeking international attention and support during the standoff at Scarborough Shoal. (2) Several Vietnamese actions in June 2012 probably strengthened the argument in China for a return to a more unilateral approach, including Vietnam's first patrol of the islands with advanced Su-27 Flanker fighter aircraft flying as low as 500m over disputed features and the National Assembly's passage of a Maritime Law that affirmed Vietnam's claims over the Paracels and Spratlys.

At the same time, growing tensions with Japan amid plans by Tokyo's governor to purchase three of the Senkaku Islands in the ECS may also have caused China's leadership to adopt a consistent approach toward China's maritime claims everywhere.

China scholar Bonnie Glaser captured China's return to assertiveness in a statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing. She wrote:

China's behavior in the South China Sea is deliberate and systematic: its actions are not the unintentional result of bureaucratic politics and poor coordination. In fact, the spate of actions by China in recent months suggests exemplary interagency coordination, civil-military control and harmonization of its political, economic and military objectives. The clear pattern of bullying and intimidation of the other claimants is evidence of a top leadership decision to escalate China's coercive diplomacy. This has implications not only for the Philippines and Vietnam, the primary targets of China's coercive efforts, but also has broader regional and global implications.⁷⁾

In her statement, Glaser also pointed out that China's claims, policies, ambitions, behavior, and capabilities are significantly different from those of other claimants:

Beijing refuses to engage in multilateral discussions on the territorial and maritime disputes in the region, preferring bilateral mechanisms where it can apply leverage over smaller, weaker parties. China rejects a role for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in resolving the territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea. Although

7) Bonnie Glaser, *Statement before the House Foreign Affairs Committee*, September 12, 2012, <http://csis.org/testimony/beijing-emerging-power-south-china-sea>.

Beijing has agreed to eventually enter into negotiations to reach a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, Chinese officials have recently stated that discussions can only take place "when conditions are ripe."⁸⁾

In short, China is offering a choice. States that take actions directly challenging Chinese claims will be faced with demonstrations of Chinese power in all its various guises. If, however, states pursue moderate policies or actually acquiesce to Chinese claims, they will reap mutually beneficial economic and political rewards.⁹⁾

Beijing, moreover, is undoubtedly pleased with how things have turned out since it has adopted this more aggressive posture. It has, for example, successfully changed the status-quo in its favor in both Scarborough Shoal (contested with the Philippines) and the Senkakus (contested with Japan). It has also highlighted the split in ASEAN between those states that border China, where the People's Liberation Army (PLA) can walk or drive to the frontier, and those ASEAN states that have the advantage of water or distance to separate them from China. This split over what position to take on the SCS suggests that the leadership in Beijing could conclude that ASEAN is unlikely to ever become a cohesive anti-China bloc. In fact, that perception is reinforced by the actions of almost all of the ASEAN states today. Each works carefully to hedge its relationships between Beijing and Washington.

There is no question that Beijing has paid some political price for being assertive, in that it has facilitated greater U.S. involvement with

8) Ibid.

9) This interpretation is based upon Robert Sutter and Chin-hao Hunag, "China Muscles Opponents on South China Sea," CSIS Pacific Forum *Comparative Connections* 11, no. 2 (September 2012), 62-63.

the Philippines and Vietnam. But Beijing clearly believes it can manage these apprehensions because of the important trade and economic linkages it has with all of its neighbors. It also realizes that its neighbors are quite aware of the fact that China is always going to be a very powerful neighbor with a strong sense of grievance and a willingness to play "hard ball" with weaker powers when it is crossed. In short, the Chinese leadership recognizes that these countries are always going to live in the shadow of China, and will ultimately have to come to terms with that reality. As a result, a significant change in its uncompromising view of sovereignty questions is not likely.

VI . Regional Reactions

China's neighbors are increasingly jittery over these developments. For a number of years, Japan has been warily eyeing China's defense modernization, especially its large and growing submarine force and long-range conventionally tipped ballistic missiles, and has gradually shifting its focus south to the Ryukyu chain. The Senkaku confrontation has accelerated those efforts, which now include an increased defense budget as well as plans to develop a modestly sized marine corps-like capability trained to recapture small islands.

In the South China Sea, by contrast, the defense strategies and capabilities of Vietnam and the Philippines, as they relate to maritime disputes, are negligible when compared to the PLA Navy. While the Philippine are slowly trying to build some maritime, off-shore defense capability, this will be a long term process.

Vietnam, on the other hand, began an effort several years ago, largely supplied by Russia, to defend its maritime approaches and

territory. U.S. assistance in organizing its command and control of its new capabilities would be useful, as would U.S.-supplied real-time surveillance of its maritime areas of interests. If Vietnamese plans all reach fruition, and the country is able to knit its new capabilities together and combine them with effective maritime surveillance, then in few years Vietnam could have in place an effective way to deter a replay in the Spratlys of Beijing's seizure of the Paracel Islands in 1975. But today, it does not.

As a result, the dominant regional response to China's encroachment has been diplomatic and legal – and the Philippines have been on the front lines. On January 22, 2013, the Philippines officially notified China that it had instituted arbitral proceedings against China under Annex VII of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The legal challenge is focused primarily on China's claim to rights and jurisdiction in the maritime space inside the infamous nine-dash line on Chinese maps of the South China Sea.

The International Tribunal for Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in Hamburg, Germany is preparing to conduct the proceedings. This is significant because even if China refuses to participate, as it has so far, the tribunal will go forward. Any finding it issues will be legally binding on both China and the Philippines. The issue of sovereignty will not be resolved because determinations of sovereignty are beyond the legal writ of UNCLOS. But the Philippines could achieve a major legal victory if the Tribunal rules that China cannot make claims to maritime space based on history and the nine-dash line.¹⁰⁾

10) Robert Beckman, "The Philippines v. China Case and the South China Sea Disputes," paper presented at the Asia Society/LKY PP Conference on the South China Sea: Central to Asia-Pacific Peace and Security, New York, March 13-15, 2013, <http://cil.nus.edu.sg/programmes-and-activities/cil-members-activities/director-beckman-s-paper-from-asia-society-conference-on-south-china-sea/>.

VII. A Role for America

When it comes to the East China Sea; whether the situation is coercion against Taiwan or a flare-up over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, the U.S. faces the prospect of direct involvement either because of the implied defense obligation found in the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act or the defense treaty with Japan. U.S. policy statements have urged both sides to avoid any unilateral attempts to change the status quo that could trigger a spiral of escalation. Also, it has almost certainly taken advantage of private meetings with leaders in both Japan and China to consider carefully how dire the implications would be if China and Japan and possibly the United States became involved in conflict.

In the South China Sea the policy is clear:

The United States has a national interest, as every country does, in the maintenance of peace and stability, respect for international law, freedom of navigation, unimpeded lawful commerce in the South China Sea. The United States does not take a position on competing territorial claims over land features, but we believe the nations of the region should work collaboratively together to resolve disputes without coercion, without intimidation, without threats.¹¹⁾

Beyond this policy statement, any further U.S. involvement is discretionary, and the range of options for a more active role for Washington is not infinite. Only four policy approaches seem possible. They could be generally divided into the categories below, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive:

Make the situation better. The United States could work to reduce the

11) Hillary Clinton, "Remarks with Indonesian Foreign Minister Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana Natalegawa," September 3, 2012, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2012/09/197279.htm>.

risk of conflict escalation. This could involve direct U.S. mediation – for example, active involvement in trying to reconcile the competing claims of the Philippines, Vietnam, and Malaysia. By negotiating a resolution to these differences, the United States would set a positive example for subsequent resolution with China, make it easier for ASEAN to speak with one voice to China, and create useful legal precedents that could more broadly apply to other maritime disputes in East Asia.

Wash our hands of the entire problem. Washington could try to turn the SCS matter over to a regional power such as Indonesia, and indicate to Beijing that the Sino-U.S. relationship is more important to Washington, over the long run, than becoming involved in SCS territorial disputes. At the same time, Washington could make it clear that such a policy would not be offering a "green light" for Beijing to use force but is merely a statement of the obvious fact that United States has no important interests at stake so long as high seas freedoms are respected.

Take a much more assertive posture with China. The United States could take sides, especially by improving its own capabilities and other claimants' military postures. In so doing, it would adopt a posture clearly aimed at deterring Chinese attempts to coerce. This policy would risk turning the Sino-U.S. relationship into one of confrontation that would make East Asia less stable and force many countries in the region into difficult choices that might not be resolved in favor of the United States.

Enhance the status quo. While undertaking no change in official U.S. policy, Washington could become more explicit about its views. For example, the State Department could issue a White Paper that spelled out what the U.S. consider to be claims in the SCS that are beyond the writ of UNCLOS and general international law. Such a paper would

address in very explicit terms what baselines are considered excessive, what islands or islets qualify for an EEZ, and what the United States means by "freedom of navigation." Even though the United States has not ratified UNCLOS, it can still read and interpret international maritime law.

There is no easy or quick resolution. China appears to be satisfied that its current approach in both the East China Sea and the South China Sea has strengthened its claims, assuaged nationalist sentiment at home and effectively created a "new normal." In this author's opinion, Beijing is unlikely to dramatically change its proactive approach to real or perceived challenges to what it considers its sovereign territory—even if the territory in question is an uninhabited islet or rock.

Over the past few years, the prominence of maritime-related confrontations between China and its neighbors has resulted in increased Sino-U.S. tension, because most of the countries that live in the shadow of China turn to the United States as their only practical way to counterbalance Beijing. Washington has been willing party in this hedging dynamic because of its traditional strategic vision of itself as a regional stabilizer, because of treaty obligations to prevent or respond to aggression against its allies, and because Washington wants to be a major player in the economic life of East Asia.

As a result, disputes over the sovereignty of uninhabited islands between China and its neighbors; geographic features that the United States has no direct stake in, seems likely to be a persistent irritant in the relationship between China and the United States. These friction points are also symptoms of the larger strategic competition between China and the United States—a competition for military access, political and economic influence, and for rules based values that is playing out between Beijing and Washington in East Asia.

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요 약

중국이 아시아 해양질서를 개편할 수 있나?

마이클 맥데빗 *

시진핑 시대를 맞이하여 중국은 국제사회에서 높아진 중국의 위상에 부응하는 지위와 권한을 인정받을 수 있는 외교정책으로서 최소한의 요구조건이 바로 핵심 이익(Core interests)을 지켜내는 것이며 이와 관련하여 국정 목표로 ‘중국의 꿈’의 실현을 제시했다. 이에 따라 중국은 해양 분야에서 해양강국의 특징으로 다음 네 가지를 들고 있다.

첫째는 해양 경제 발전이며, 둘째는 해양 과학기술의 혁신, 셋째는 우아하고 아름다운 해양생태환경 조성, 넷째는 해양 방위능력을 증강하여 국가주권을 효과적으로 방위하고 해양의 평화발전을 수호하는 강력한 실력을 갖추는 것이다. 작금의 정세에서 보여지듯이 중국은 서해를 비롯하여 동·남중국해에서 매우 도전적인 해양활동을 보이고 있다. 이는 그동안 미국의 지역에 안정과 평화를 유지하기 위해 군사력을 주둔시켜 온 미국의 동아시아 해상정책에 대한 도전으로도 인식되기에 충분하다. 그렇다면 이에 대한 미국의 역할은 무엇인가. 필자는 다음 네 가지를 주장한다.

첫째, 더 좋은 상황 조성을 위해 역할 한다.

둘째, 모든 문제에 대해 방관자적인 입장에 선다.

셋째, 중국에 대해 보다 강경한 입장을 취한다.

넷째, 현상유지를 위해 노력한다.

핵심 주제어: 중국 부상, 중국의 해양 공세적 행태, 동아시아 해양안보, 미 - 중 관계, 중국해, 미국의 동아시아 정책

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