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Washington Aggravating Asian Territorial Disputes

By John Glaser

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Tensions between various Asian countries have been [on the rise](#) over territorial disputes and Washington keeps sticking its nose in where it doesn't belong in an attempt to undercut its global competitor, China.



Late last year, President Obama announced a strategic shift into Asia-Pacific. This so-called 'Asia pivot' is [an aggressive policy that involves surging American military presence throughout](#)

[the region](#) – in the Philippines, Japan, Australia, Guam, South Korea, Singapore, etc. – and backing basically all of China’s rivals.

The disputed territories center on the great potential for natural resources surrounding several island chains and control over some of the world’s most highly trafficked shipping lanes.

The US has mutual defense agreements with countries like the Philippines, which came very close to squabbling with China over these territorial conflicts in the South China Sea. Last week, the Pentagon [announced](#) it would conduct surveillance drone missions over a Pacific island chain called the Diaoyutai Islands, which have become the focal point of a simmering territorial dispute between China and Japan, who Washington also has deep military ties to.

New war strategies floating around the Pentagon are being referenced in this new Asia-pivot called “Air-Sea Battle,” which reveal Washington’s broader goals in the region and illustrate how a war with China – which the US apparently yearns for – would play out.

“Stealthy American bombers and submarines would knock out China’s long-range surveillance radar and precision missile systems located deep inside the country,” [reports](#) the *Washington Post*. “The initial ‘blinding campaign’ would be followed by a larger air and naval assault.”

Chinese officials have not appreciated this unprovoked bellicosity. In May the Chinese Defense Ministry [accused the Pentagon](#) of hyping a Chinese military threat out of thin air. Others have said these Pentagon moves could start an arms race.

“If the U.S. military develops Air-Sea Battle to deal with the [People’s Liberation Army], the PLA will be forced to develop anti-Air-Sea Battle,” one officer, Col. Gaoyue Fan, said last year in a debate sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a defense think tank.

A [recent report from the Center for Strategic International Studies](#) predicted that next year “could see a shift in Chinese foreign policy based on the new leadership’s judgment that it must respond to a US strategy that seeks to prevent China’s reemergence as a great power.”

“Signs of a potential harsh reaction are already detectable,” the report said. “The US Asia pivot has triggered an outpouring of anti-American sentiment in China that will increase pressure on China’s incoming leadership to stand up to the United States. Nationalistic voices are calling for military countermeasures to the bolstering of America’s military posture in the region and the new US defense strategic guidelines.”