



## **United Nations Security Council**

# **China Sea Crisis**

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Dear delegates,

Welcome to the UN Security Council simulation at the ZAMUN 2014 Conference. My name is Michaela Dorčíková and it is a great honor to be acting as the President of this Committee.

The Security Council is the most powerful body of the United Nations since its foundation in 1945. While other committees can only make recommendations, the UNSC makes decisions. Based on its small number of member states (only 15!) you will have the ideal opportunity to create some fruitful debates.

Since the UNSC is dealing with complex and alarming problems of today's world, a good preparation for the conference is the key to success. As Benjamin Franklin once said, "By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail." So do your research thoroughly and keep yourself up to date with the latest news concerning the issue. Please bear in mind that the main responsibility of the UNSC is to maintain international peace and security.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at ZAMUN 2014!

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at [michaeladorcikova@yahoo.com](mailto:michaeladorcikova@yahoo.com).

Sincerely,  
Michaela Dorčíková, President of the Security Council

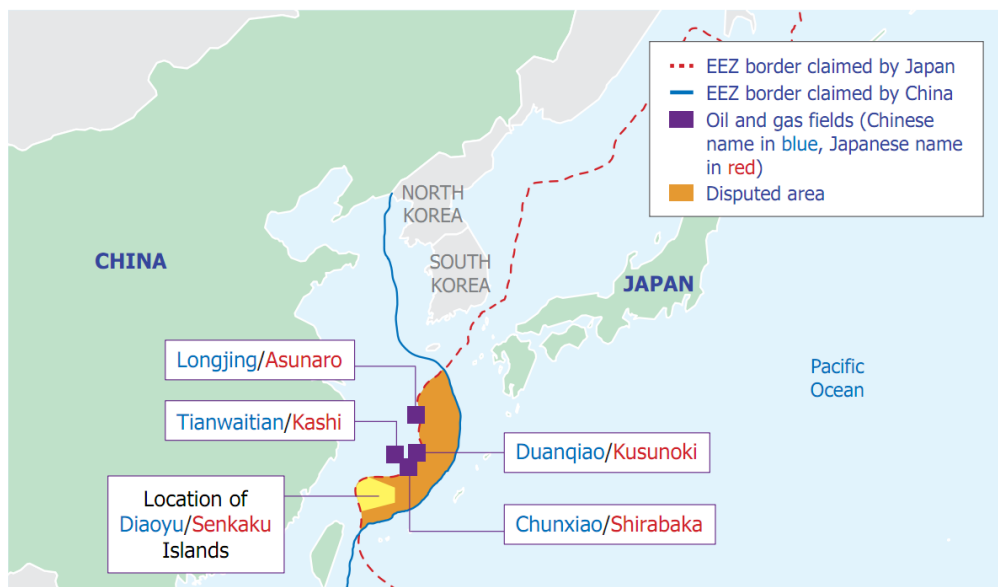
# Senkaku Islands Dispute

## Introduction

Determination of maritime boundaries in the South and East China Sea has always been very difficult and challenging task. Despite the number of bilateral and multilateral efforts the crisis still remains unresolved. Moreover, presence of eight sovereign states with different political interests makes this situation one of the most heterogenous territorial disputes. With regards to the complexity of this conflict we decided to choose only one issue to be discussed. The main focus of this year's Security Council will be the Senkaku Islands. These group of islands has been a regular source of tensions between China and Japan as both countries claim sovereignty over them.

## Geography

The islands are located in the East China Sea approximately 120 nautical miles northeast of Taiwan, 200 nautical miles east of Chinese mainland and 200 nautical miles southwest of the Japanese island of Okinawa.<sup>1</sup> The archipelago is controlled by Japan as a part of the Okinawa prefecture. The Senkaku islands are formed by five islets and three barren rocks with no population.



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## History

**1895:** Treaty of Shimonoseki signed between the Empire of Japan and the Qing Empire ending the First Sino-Japanese war and incorporating the islands into the Japanese sovereignty.<sup>3</sup>

**1896 - 1945:** Japan controlled the islands from 1896 until defeat in World War II in 1945 when the United States took control over the islands.

**1945-1971:** United States administration of the Senkaku islands.

**1969:** Publishing of reports indicating the presence of the oil deposits in the waters surrounding the islands.

**1971:** Okinawa Reversion Agreement signed between USA and Japan returning the islands to Japan in 1972. As a result of the oil discoveries in 1969 both Taiwan and China objected the treaty.

**2012:** Japan bought three other islands from their Japanese owner which started series of military provocations from China.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UC Berkeley: UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (November 15, 2010)

<sup>2</sup> [www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=ecs](http://www.eia.gov/countries/regions-topics.cfm?fips=ecs) (February 27, 2014)

<sup>3</sup> [thediplomat.com/2013/11/getting-senkaku-history-right/](http://thediplomat.com/2013/11/getting-senkaku-history-right/) (February 27, 2014)

<sup>4</sup> [www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24709148](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24709148) (February 27, 2014)

## Japanese position

Japan considers the Senkaku Islands to be an inherent part of their territory and sees no issue to be resolved concerning the sovereignty over the islands. Furthermore, Japanese government states that the islands were incorporated legally as a vacant territory (*terra nullius*) in 1895 by signing Treaty of Shimonoseki. According to the official statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan the Senkaku Islands have been continuously an integral part of the Nansei Shoto Islands which were administered by Japan. On top of that, Japan refuses any claims from the Government of China and Taiwanese authorities as they started to object the Japanese sovereignty over the islands after the oil deposits were found in the area.<sup>5</sup>

## Chinese position

China also claims sovereignty over the Diaoyu Islands (Chinese equivalent name of the Senkaku Islands). In 1992 China unilaterally adopted a domestic law incorporating the Senkaku Islands into its sovereignty. Subsequently Japan strongly criticised this act accusing the Chinese government of escalation of the situation. The government in Beijing argues that the proof of the Chinese control over islands can be found in old documents from Ming and Qing Dynasty.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, China affirms that Japan simply usurped the islands by military means during the First Sino-Japanese war and therefore Japanese control over the island is not in accordance with the international law.



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## Issues to be solved

If this territorial dispute escalates it may represent significant danger for international peace, therefore it is necessary to solve following issues:

- political status of the islands
- share of the gas and oil resources in the area
- potential UN mediation role in the conflict
- military actions from both sides of the conflict

<sup>5</sup> [www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/basic\\_view.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/basic_view.html) (February 27, 2014)

<sup>6</sup> [thediplomat.com/2013/11/getting-senkaku-history-right/3/](http://thediplomat.com/2013/11/getting-senkaku-history-right/3/) (February 27, 2014)

<sup>7</sup> [www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11341139](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11341139) (February 27, 2014)

## Further research

<http://www.un.org/>

<http://www.un.org/en/sc/>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

[http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d\\_act/ryouku/index.html](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/ryouku/index.html)

<http://www.dw.de/analysts-fear-escalation-of-china-japan-dispute/a-17404274>

<http://indianexpress.com/article/world/asia/will-defend-every-inch-of-territory-no-room-for-compromise-china-warns-neighbours/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-25062525>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24709148>

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/index.html>

<http://jurist.org/forum/2013/12/michael-kelly-china-senkaku.php>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/09/20/us-china-japan-gas-qa-idUSTRE68J0NX20100920?pageNumber=2>

<http://thediplomat.com/2014/02/chinas-military-trains-for-war-against-japan/>

[http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/qa\\_1010.html#qa08](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/qa_1010.html#qa08)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6pMik1uY7s> (21.03.2014)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T94I1FLIOq8> (21.03.2014)