The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia, China to Hold Joint Military Drills in Sea of Japan

By The Moscow Times

July 30, 2015



Marines of Chinese People's Liberation Army

BEIJING — China and Russia will hold joint naval and air defense drills in the Sea of Japan, China said on Thursday, the latest exercises between the two countries which could concern Japan, involved in a marine dispute with China to the south.

The maneuvers also come as the United States ramps up military cooperation with its allies in Asia in response to China's increasingly assertive pursuit of territorial claims in the disputed waters of the South and East China seas.

China and Russia are veto-wielding members of the U.N. Security Council, and have held similar views on key policy questions like the crisis in Syria, putting them at odds with the United States and Western Europe.

The exercises, which will take place from Aug. 20-28, will take place in the Gulf of Peter the

Great, which lies off the strategic Far Eastern Russian port city of Vladivostok, and in the Sea of Japan, Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Yang Yujun told a monthly news briefing.

The drills will include anti-submarine and anti-ship exercises. Chinese fighter jets, destroyers, frigates and supply vessels will take part, Yang said.

The Russian side plans to dispatch ships, submarines and fixed-wing aircraft, he added. Both sides will send helicopters and marines, Yang said.

The drills could especially alarm Japan, which is involved in an ongoing spat with China over a group of uninhabited islets in the East China Sea.

Last week, Japan called on China to halt construction of oil-and-gas exploration platforms in the East China Sea close to waters claimed by both nations, concerned that Chinese drills could tap reservoirs that extend into Japanese territory.

China responded by saying it had every right to drill.

Yang said that certain people in Japan were "hyping up" the issue as an excuse to promote legislation that could see Japanese troops sent to fight abroad for the first time since World War Two.

"We hope that certain people in Japan can calmly reflect on what they have done," he said.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/07/30/russia-china-to-hold-joint-military-drills-in-sea-of-japan-a48643