



November 24, 2013

Statement by the Minister for Foreign-Affairs
on the announcement on the “East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone” by the Ministry of
National Defense of the People’s Republic of China

1. On November 23rd, the Ministry of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China announced that it has established “the East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone” and that aircrafts flying in the said zone must abide by the rules set forth by the Ministry.
2. The Government of Japan expresses deep concern about China’s establishment of such zone and obliging its own rules within the zone, which are profoundly dangerous acts that unilaterally change the status quo in the East China Sea, escalating the situation, and that may cause unintended consequences in the East China Sea.
3. The announcement issued by the Chinese Ministry of National Defense obliges aircraft flying in international airspace to abide by its domestic procedures, and refers to the recourse to “defensive emergency measures” by Chinese Armed Forces in case where such aircraft does not follow the instructed procedures. The announced measures unduly infringe the freedom of flight in international airspace, which is the general principle of international law, and will have serious impacts on the order of international aviation. As many flight routes of civil airplanes run across the airspace above the East China Sea, Japan is deeply concerned about such measures from the viewpoint of its impact on the order and safety of civil aviation.
4. The announced measures have no validity whatsoever on Japan, and Japan demands China to revoke any measures that could infringe upon the freedom of flight in international airspace.
5. In addition, the “zone” set by the Chinese Ministry of National Defense seemingly describes the airspace over the Senkaku islands, an inherent part of the territory of Japan, as if it were a part of China’s “territorial airspace”. Japan cannot accept at all such description.
6. The Government of Japan has already made strong protests to China, conveying the above-mentioned concerns to China, and demanded China to revoke such measures. Concerning China’s announced acts, Japan is working and consulting closely with its ally, the United States, and will coordinate with other relevant countries and partners which have common interests in the stability and safety of the region. Japan will, in partnership with the international community, strongly urge China to exercise self-restraint.
7. Japan will continue to respond firmly but in a calm manner against China’s attempt to unilaterally alter the status quo by coercive measures with determination to defend resolutely its territorial land, sea and airspace.

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