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## CHINESE AND RUSSIAN WARSHIPS STEP UP ACTIVITY IN STRAITS AROUND JAPAN

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*And in doing so, test the definition of a strait.*

Japan defined its territorial seas as extending 12 nautical miles seaward with the enactment of the Act on Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone in 1977. However, there are still several sea areas where the breadth of territorial waters is 3 nautical miles, which are called as specified sea areas. In its appendix, the Act refers to the definition of an international strait in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), when limiting the breadth of the territorial waters of Soya Strait (23 nautical miles wide), Tsugaru Strait (10 nautical miles wide), Tsushima Strait East Channel (25 nautical miles wide), Tsushima Strait West Channel (23 nautical miles wide), Osumi Strait (16 nautical miles wide) to 3 nautical miles, leaving high seas at the center of these straits. In doing so, it avoids the application in these straits of the transit regime adopted by the UNCLOS.

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