



NPI

Nakasone Peace Institute

# Research Report

FY2024 Maritime Security Study Group Report

Building Response Procedures and a Multilateral Joint Posture  
to Deter a Taiwan Contingency

Part 2: Analysis of Hybrid Warfare by China for Taiwan  
Unification

Maritime Security Study Group

March 2025

中曾根平和研究所  
Nakasone Peace Institute

## Contents

<b>Introduction: Overview of research design .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>(1) Research in FY2023 (first year) .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>(2) Research in FY2024.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>(3) Research direction for FY2025 (final year) .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Assumptions For Examining a Predictive Model of Hybrid Warfare by China Against Taiwan .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(1) The relationship between hybrid warfare by China against Taiwan and a full-scale military invasion .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>(2) The “hardline approach” and “coaxing approach” in hybrid warfare against Taiwan .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Hybrid Warfare Against Taiwan .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(1) General overview (hardline approach and coaxing approach) .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>(2) Hardline approach against Taiwan (details).....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>(3) Coaxing approach toward Taiwan (details).....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Chapter 3 Hybrid Warfare Against Japan .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>(1) General overview.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>(2) Decoupling Japan and the U.S. (Details) .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>(3) Decoupling Japan and Taiwan (details).....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Hybrid Warfare Against the United States and Other Countries .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>(1) Hybrid warfare against the United States .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>(2) Hybrid warfare against countries other than the United States.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Chapter 5 China's Hybrid Methods and Japan's Vulnerabilities in Each Domain .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Chapter 6: Policy Proposals to Address Japan's Vulnerabilities in Hybrid Warfare.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>34</b>

## **Introduction: Overview of research design**

### **(1) Research in FY2023 (first year)**

The Conceptual Model for Hybrid Threat Analysis developed by the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid COE) was analyzed to set guidelines for this study.

Based on these guidelines, and as a premise for constructing an original conceptual model concerning a Taiwan crisis, hybrid warfare in this study is defined as follows:

Hybrid warfare means “achieving objectives that were traditionally achieved through full-scale military warfare by utilizing a variety of methods, both military and non-military, without escalating to full-scale military warfare.”

On the basis of this definition, the research proceeds with the assumption that China, in aiming for the unification of Taiwan, will combine various hybrid warfare methods in a gray zone situation without causing a full-scale war.

Referring to the 40 tools presented in the European Hybrid COE conceptual model, use of these tools for specific predicted activities together with past examples of their use were extracted and compiled into a case collection. Compilation of case studies is ongoing.

### **(2) Research in FY2024**

Based on the assumption that hybrid warfare by China would skillfully employ both a “hardline” and a “coaxing” approach in order to unify Taiwan, this study considers a predictive model based on the “methods” and “activities” identified in the process of compiling the case studies.

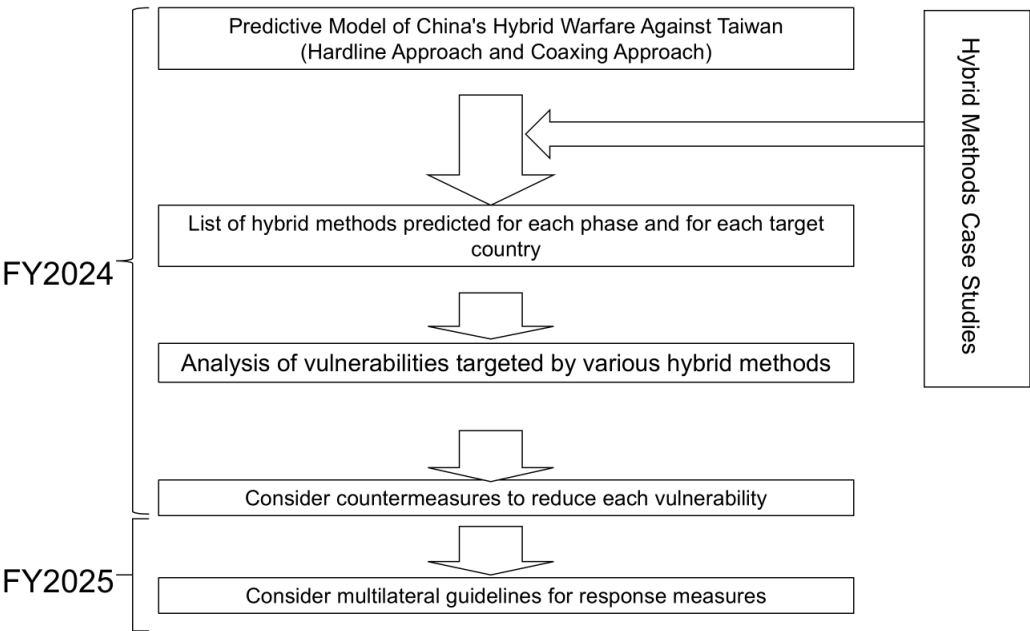
This predictive model analyzes hybrid threats to Japan, the United States, and other relevant countries, with Taiwan as a focal point, and evaluates the vulnerabilities to hybrid warfare.

Rather than pursuing the probability of each individual predictive model, this study aims to comprehensively cover scenarios that could arise from a combination of “methods and activities,” extract possible vulnerabilities from these scenarios, and consider strategies to overcome those vulnerabilities.

It should be noted that in China, the “Three Warfare (public opinion warfare, psychological warfare, and legal warfare)” has been officially adopted by the People’s Liberation Army, while “Unrestricted Warfare” and “Intelligentized Warfare” have been advocated by influential military personnel and scholars. These concepts advocate the use of a comprehensive range of military and non-military methods across all situations ranging from peacetime to full-scale war. It has been judged that China, in practice,

envisages not only full-scale war but also the use of hybrid warfare that does not escalate to full-scale military war, as defined in this study.

The overall picture of research for 2024 and 2025 is as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Overview of Research in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

**(3) Research direction for FY2025 (final year)**

We will further analyze strategies that Japan can employ to address its vulnerabilities, formulate them into proposals, and evaluate multilateral cooperative strategies in the realm of hybrid warfare.

## **Chapter 1: Assumptions For Examining a Predictive Model of Hybrid Warfare by China Against Taiwan**

When examining a predictive model for hybrid warfare by China against Taiwan, the following assumptions were made regarding possible actions by China.

### **(1) The relationship between hybrid warfare by China against Taiwan and a full-scale military invasion**

First, regarding the relationship between hybrid warfare and full-scale military invasion, rather than predicting actions by China, this study enumerated possible courses of action as Cases 1 to 4.

#### **Case 1: Sticking to hybrid warfare below the threshold of a full-scale military invasion**

This Case assumes that even if China recognizes that their hybrid warfare has failed, a full-scale military invasion is not undertaken. Instead, objectives and methods are adjusted and hybrid warfare is continued.

#### **Case 2: Pursuit of hybrid warfare but full-scale military invasion launched if necessary**

This Case assumes that while pursuing the achievement of objectives through hybrid warfare, preparations are simultaneously carried out for the possibility that the situation may escalate into full-scale military conflict.

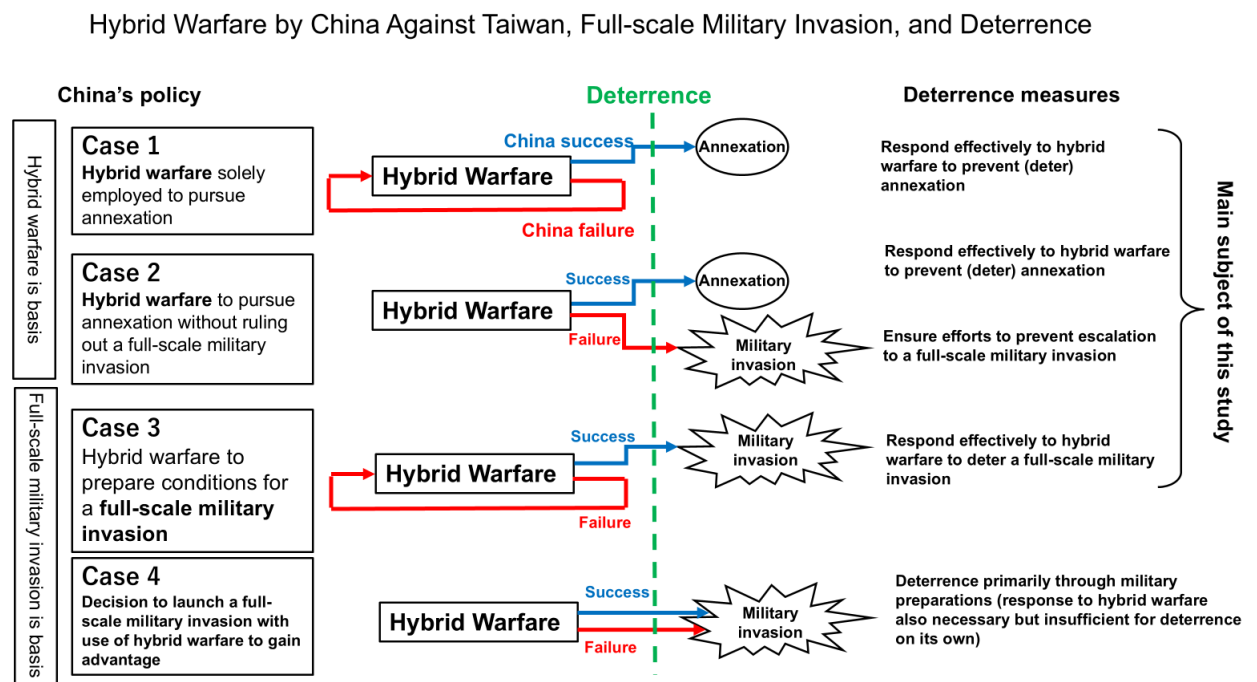
#### **Case 3: Hybrid warfare is carried out first to set favorable conditions for a full-scale military invasion to be launched**

This Case assumes that at the hybrid warfare stage, if it is determined that such conditions as decoupling between Japan and the United States have been met, a full-scale military invasion is launched. However, if it is judged that the conditions have not yet been met, efforts continue in the hybrid warfare stage to create the necessary conditions.

#### **Case 4: A military invasion is planned from the outset**

In this Case in which a full-scale military invasion is planned from the outset, hybrid methods are employed to support it, and even if those hybrid methods fail, a full-scale military invasion proceeds as intended.

Cases 1 to 4 and the characteristics of the relevant deterrence efforts are organized as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2** Hybrid Warfare by China Against Taiwan, Full-scale Military Invasion, and Deterrence

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

## (2) The “hardline approach” and “coaxing approach” in hybrid warfare against Taiwan

The nature of hybrid warfare against Taiwan described in Case 1 to Case 3 is thought to have a core commonality in that the methods are used as an alternative to military invasion. Based on this classification, we broadly divided the three cases into “hardline” and “coaxing” approaches. The specific objectives of these approaches were inferred and used as the assumption for this research. Hybrid warfare in Case 4, however, differs from the other three cases as it is regarded as the supporting element for a full military invasion, so Case 4 is excluded from the scope of this study.

### ① Descriptions of the “hardline approach” and “coaxing approach”

#### Hardline approach

The hardline approach is meant to provoke internal conflict in Taiwan, create a state of civil war, and then establish a government that will lead to unification amid the chaos. For this purpose, Taiwan is isolated from the international community, and various methods are used to generate chaos in Taiwan’s politics, economy, society, etc., creating an extremely unstable political situation. If necessary, China will not hesitate to send in security forces or the military at Taiwan’s request, in order to achieve de facto unification.

To prevent the U.S. from intervening in Taiwan even in a situation of civil unrest, hybrid warfare will be carried out in parallel in order to cause decoupling between Japan and the U.S. To achieve this goal in the current state of U.S.-China relations, China may adopt a hardline approach against the U.S. while adopting a coaxing approach towards Japan.

### **Coaxing approach**

The coaxing approach is set as a policy of promoting a pro-China status in Taiwan by suppressing anti-China factions and establishing a pro-China government working toward unification. For this purpose, the government will increase Taiwan's dependence on China in terms of the functions that support Taiwan, especially in the economy, and create a situation in which Taiwan cannot function without China. It will also work to have Taiwan recognized as part of China in the international community, thereby guiding the entire island in a pro-China direction.

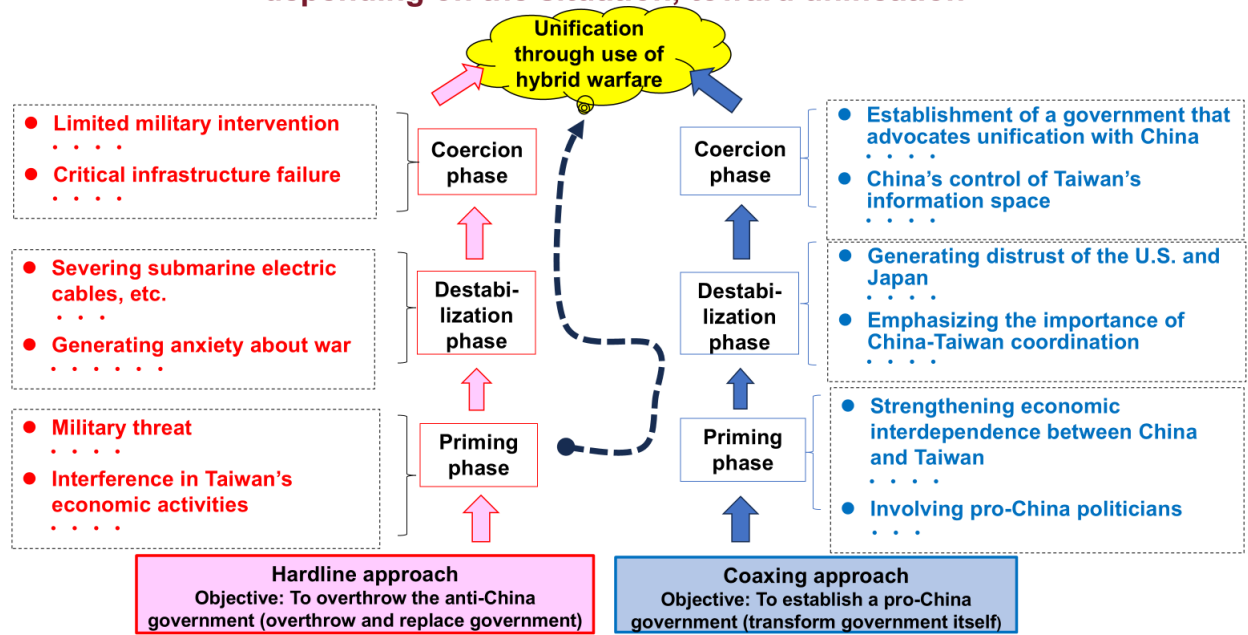
For this strategy to be successful, the Chinese economy must remain strong, even while the trend of severing economic ties between China and Japan, China and the U.S., and China and other U.S.-friendly nations continues. On that basis, hybrid warfare will be carried out against various countries including Japan, the United States, and other countries in an attempt to weaken Taiwan's relations with those countries.

### **② Relationship between the hardline and coaxing approaches**

Figure 3 shows the relationship between hardline and coaxing approaches. However, actual hybrid warfare is unlikely to follow the straight line for a hardline approach (red arrows) or a coaxing approach (blue arrows) depicted in the diagram. Rather, it is believed that in practice, hybrid warfare would fluctuate between the two approaches, as suggested by the black dashed line.

For example, as indicated by the black dashed line, rather than pursuing a strictly hardline approach from the beginning, it is considered to be more realistic that, in the current international environment surrounding China, there would first be a shift to a coaxing approach before ultimately returning to a hardline approach.

## Flexibly shifting between a “hardline approach” and a “coaxing approach,” depending on the situation, toward unification



**Figure 3** Example of a Predictive Model of Hybrid Warfare Against Taiwan

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

### ③ The likelihood of individual Cases

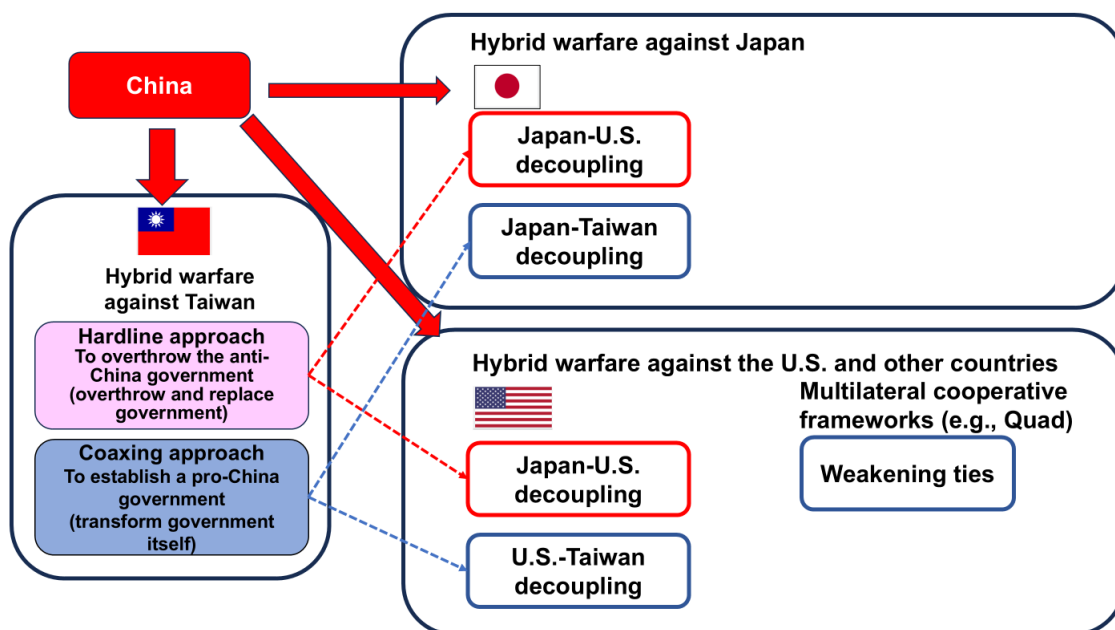
It will be necessary to consider the future likelihood of alternating between the hardline approach and coaxing approach due to major policy changes, or the likelihood of individual actions implemented by specific departments and agencies. However, the focus of the current study is to identify vulnerabilities in the context of hybrid warfare. For this reason, rather than focusing on the likelihood of each of the cases discussed above, the objective is to identify hybrid capabilities that China may employ. Therefore, the analysis will proceed by dividing between the hardline approach and the coaxing approach.

### ④ Overall picture of hybrid warfare aimed at Taiwan unification

Based on the assumptions in the study, Chapter 2 details direct hybrid warfare against Taiwan, Chapter 3 details hybrid warfare against Japan as part of a Taiwan campaign, and Chapter 4 details hybrid warfare against the United States and other countries as part of a Taiwan campaign. The overall picture of hybrid warfare aimed at Taiwan unification is shown in Figure 4.



## Overall Picture of Hybrid Warfare for the Unification of Taiwan



**Figure 4** Overall picture of hybrid warfare aimed at Taiwan unification

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

## Chapter 2: Hybrid Warfare Against Taiwan

### (1) General overview (hardline approach and coaxing approach)

To examine and compare the hybrid warfare that may be launched in an attempt to unify Taiwan, we broadly classify the two types into a) a “hardline approach” (red box on the left) and b) a “coaxing approach” (blue box on the right) (Table 1). Detailed explanations of each approach will be provided with specific cases (tools).

Table 1: Hybrid warfare against Taiwan at each phase of the hardline and coaxing approaches

Hardline Approach	Coaxing Approach
<b>【Priming Phase】</b> Taiwan / Hardline / Priming THP1 : Intelligence activities (operations) THP2 : Intimidation of politicians and erosion of trust THP3 : Political and social division <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division between pro-unification and pro-independence factions, etc.</li> </ul> THP4 : Prevention from joining international organizations THP5 : Disruption of Taiwan's economic activities THP6 : Military intimidation (high intensity) Military exercises, airspace violations <b>【Destabilization Phase】</b> Taiwan / Hardline / Destabilization THD1 : Generating distrust in Taiwan's administrative capabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption of civilian ship navigation.</li> </ul> THD2 : Instigating social unrest and anxiety about war <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption of banking and medical services, stirring up a crisis</li> </ul> THD3 : Disruption of Taiwan-U.S.-Japan cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severing of submarine cables, etc.</li> </ul> <b>【Coercion Phase】</b> Taiwan / Hardline / Coercion THC1 : Disruption of social and economic activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interference with critical infrastructure</li> <li>• Disruption of economic activities due to military exercises</li> <li>• Disruption of economic activities</li> </ul> THC2 : Isolation of Taiwan's information dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disruption of communication networks</li> </ul> THC3 : Instigating civil war THC4 : Limited military intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military intervention in civil wars</li> <li>• Missile launch on islands</li> </ul>	<b>【Priming Phase】</b> Taiwan / Coaxing / Priming TCP1 : Intelligence activities (operations) TCP2 : Inviting pro-China politicians TCP3 : Pro-China initiatives TCP4 : Disruption of Taiwan's diplomatic activities TCP5 : Strengthening economic interdependence with Taiwan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic carrot and stick</li> <li>• Dependence on infrastructure</li> </ul> TCP6 : Military intimidation (low intensity) TCP7 : Undermining trust between Japan and the United States <b>【Destabilization Phase】</b> Taiwan / Coaxing / Destabilization TCD1 : Anti-China forces lose credibility TCD2 : Promoting importance of cooperation with China <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting a “peace framework”</li> <li>• Cooperating to strengthen economic ties</li> </ul> TCD3 : Generating distrust of the United States <b>【Coercion Phase】</b> Taiwan / Coaxing / Coercion TCC1 : Strengthening ties with China TCC2 : China's control of Taiwan's information space TCC3 : Open and covert interference in elections TCC4 : Establishment of an authority that advocates unification

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

## **(2) Hardline approach against Taiwan (details)**

### **Priming Phase (Hardline Approach)**

\*THP: Taiwan / Hardline / Priming

#### **THP1: Intelligence activities (operations)**

##### **Tool 8 (Cyber espionage)**

- Cyber infiltration without leaving traces, preparation to switch to attack when necessary (APT).

##### **Tool 25 (Intelligence preparation)**

- Explore vulnerable points in the Taiwanese military.
- Explore vulnerable points in critical infrastructure.

##### **Tool 27 (Infiltration)**

- Infiltration of personnel into the military, police, Taiwanese authorities, political parties, etc., and acquisition of collaborators.

#### **THP2: Intimidation and undermining of trust in politicians**

##### **Tool 33 (Discrediting leadership)**

- Exposing scandals. Manipulating information.

##### **Tool 35 (Coercion of politicians and/or government)**

- Blackmail and intimidation, illegal interference in elections.

#### **THP3: Political and social division**

##### **● Division between the unification faction and independence faction**

##### **Tool 37 (Media control and interference)**

- Acquiring foreign media companies and publishers, exerting influence through advertising and investment.

##### **Tool 31 (Creating confusion or a contradictory narrative)**

- Fortifying the narratives of both the unification and independence factions to create an atmosphere in which compromise is mutually impossible.

##### **Tool 18 (Exploitation of sociocultural cleavages (ethnic, religious, cultural))**

- Exploiting religious ties with the mainland (exerting influence through the Mazu belief on both sides of the Taiwan Strait).

##### **● Division between Taiwanese and Mainlanders**

##### **Tool 18 (exploitation of sociocultural cleavages)**

- Exploiting contradictions related to social superiority (discrimination) stemming from historical circumstances to cause domestic chaos.

#### **THP4: Boycott from international organizations**

##### **Tool 28 (Diplomatic sanctions)**

- Disrupting diplomatic relations with countries that recognize Taiwan as a nation or are pro-Taiwan (isolating Taiwan).

##### **Tool 29 (Boycotts)**

- Prevent Taiwan from joining international organizations and events.

#### **THP5: Interference with Taiwan's economic activities**

#### **Tool 6 (Undermining economy)**

- Import and export regulations by government agencies.
- Temporary suspension of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA).
- Extensive restrictions on multinational corporations in Taiwan.

#### **THP6: Military intimidation (high intensity)**

#### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Military exercises around Taiwan (approaching and passing through the contiguous zone).
- Multiple long-range missile tests in Taiwan's airspace and surrounding areas.

#### **Tool 10 (Airspace violation)**

- Crossing the median line and other borders by balloons and unmanned and manned vehicles.

#### **Tool 11 (Territorial water violation (including EEZ))**

- Fortifying the activities of fishing boats and the China Coast Guard around Kinmen and Matsu.
- China Coast Guard and naval activities around the Pratas Islands and Taiping Island.

#### **Destabilization Phase (Hardline Approach)**

\*THD: Taiwan / Hardline / Destabilization

#### **THD1: Generating distrust in the government's administrative capabilities**

##### **● Obstruction of civilian vessel navigation**

#### **Tool 11 (Territorial water violation)**

- Obstruction of vessels navigating near Kinmen and Matsu.

##### **● Violation of territorial airspace**

#### **Tool 10 (Airspace violation)**

- Flying swarms of drones over Kinmen and Matsu.

#### **THD2: Social unrest, inciting fear of war**

##### **● Bank outages**

#### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- DDoS attacks making the website of banks inaccessible.

#### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation such as "XX bank transactions are unavailable."

##### **● Medical disturbances**

#### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- Medical anxiety and disorders due to disruptions to a medical institution's electronic medical records.

#### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns)**

- Spreading disinformation about disruptions to many medical institutions.

##### **● Inciting a crisis**

### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading rumors that Taiwanese officials are making personal escape plans.

### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Missile firing exercises into the waters around Taiwan.

### **Tool 19 (Promoting social unrest)**

- Generating social unrest by using criminal organizations to increase violent crimes, etc.

## **THD3: Disruption of cooperation between Taiwan, the U.S., and Japan**

### ● Severing of submarine cables

#### **Tool 1 (Physical operations against infrastructure)**

- Severing of submarine cables using fishing boats etc., to disrupt information sharing between Japan, the U.S., and Taiwan.

## **Coercion Phase (Hardline Approach)**

\*THC: Taiwan / Hardline / Coercion

## **THC1: Disruption of social and economic activities**

### ● Critical infrastructure failures

#### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- Failures related to air traffic control, railways, electricity, gas, water, logistics, and oil infrastructure.

### ● Disruption of economic activity through military exercises

#### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- China-Russia joint exercises in the Taiwan contiguous zone.
- Establishment of legal basis for ship inspections.
- Blockage of approach to Taiping Island.

### ● Interference with economic activity

#### **Tool 6 (Undermining economy)**

- Severe restrictions on imports and exports, ban on visa issuance.
- Forced landing of Taiwanese cargo planes in China.

## **THC2: Isolation of Taiwan's information transmission**

### ● Communication network disruption

#### **Tool 1 (Physical operations against infrastructure)**

- Severing of submarine cables and covert destruction of submarine cable landing stations by operatives to disrupt information transmission to the world.

#### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- Cyberattacks on data centers.
- Cyberattacks on communication networks.

#### **Tool 40 (Electronic operations)**

- Electronic jamming of satellite line.

### **THC3: Instigating civil war**

#### **Tool 14 (Paramilitary organizations (proxies))**

- Pro-China proxy forces in Taiwan launch an armed uprising, creating a state of civil war.

### **THC4: Limited military intervention**

#### **● Military intervention in domestic affairs**

#### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Provide military support upon request from pro-China forces (administration), and dispatch troops depending on the situation.

#### **● Missile attack on island areas**

#### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Launch missiles toward island areas (Pengjia Islet, etc.) to check the U.S. response.

### **(3) Coaxing approach toward Taiwan (details)**

#### **Priming Phase (Coaxing Approach)**

\*TCP: Taiwan / Coaxing / Priming

#### **TCP1: Intelligence activities**

#### **Tool 8 (Cyber espionage)**

- Cyber intrusion without leaving traces, preparation to switch to attack when necessary (APT).

#### **Tool 25 (Intelligence preparation)**

- Identification of pro-China and anti-China networks.
- Clarification of capital relationships, etc. within the Taiwanese business community.

#### **Tool 27 (Infiltration)**

- Infiltration of personnel into political parties, government agencies, private companies, military, etc., and acquisition of collaborators.

#### **TCP2: Incorporate pro-China politicians**

#### **Tool 34 (Support of political actors)**

- Economic support / policy coordination / manipulation of public opinion.

#### **TCP3: Incorporate pro-China factions**

#### **Tool 3 (Creating economic dependencies)**

- Strengthen economic ties to win over pro-China factions.

#### **Tool 4 (Foreign direct investment)**

- Increase direct investment in Taiwan to strengthen influence within the Taiwanese business community.

#### **Tool 37 (Media control and interference)**

- Acquire Taiwanese media to create a pro-China public opinion.

#### **Tool 17 (Financing cultural groups and think tanks)**

- Provide financial support to pro-China organizations to expand influence.

#### **TCP4: Obstructing Taiwan's diplomatic activities**

##### **Tool 28 (Diplomatic sanctions)**

- Interference in Taiwan's diplomatic relations with countries that recognize Taiwan as a state (recognition of strengthening of relations between countries that have diplomatic relations with China and Taiwan, and guidance in the direction of unification of China and Taiwan).

#### **TCP5: Strengthening economic interdependence with Taiwan**

##### **● Economic carrot and stick**

##### **Tool 3 (Creating economic dependencies)**

- Strengthening economic dependence of Kinmen and Matsu on China and expanding China's influence over these islands.
- Opening a model district for "Taiwan unification" in Fujian Province.
- Promoting or restricting economic activity to pressure Taiwan residents and expand China's influence over them.

##### **● Dependency on infrastructure**

##### **Tool 2 (Creating infrastructure dependency)**

- Strengthening dependency on energy supplies and communications infrastructure and expanding influence.

#### **TCP6: Military intimidation (low intensity)**

##### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Vary the intensity of military exercises in the region in line with the degree of the administration's pro-China sentiment to keep anti-China factions in check.

#### **TCP7: Generating distrust of Japan and the U.S.**

##### **Tool 31 (Creating confusion or a contradictory narrative)**

- Dissemination of narratives favorable to China regarding "Japan's past invasion of Taiwan."
- Dissemination of narratives that the U.S. thinks only about itself in the midst of the global U.S.-China conflict.

##### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Dissemination of disinformation such as "Japan is skeptical about supporting Taiwan" and "The United States will not help Taiwan."

#### **Destabilization Phase (Coaxing Approach)**

\*TCD: Taiwan / Coaxing / Destabilization

#### **TCD1: Discrediting anti-China forces**

##### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation such as anti-China faction scandals.

##### **Tool 26 (Clandestine operations)**

- Inciting riots and assassinations disguised as anti-China faction actions.

#### **TCD2: Promoting the importance of Taiwan-China cooperation**

## ● Promoting the “peace framework”

### Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)

- Promoting the “peace framework,” which emphasizes more autonomy than “one country, two systems.”

### Tool 9 (Cyber operations)

- Expanding support for Chinese propaganda (false postings by bots, etc.) on social media.

## ● Coercion to strengthen economic partnership

### Tool 35 (Coercion of politicians and/or government)

- Reemphasizing the importance of trade with Taiwan and investment and coercing politicians to take a pro-China policy.

### **TCD 3: Generating distrust of the United States**

#### Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)

- Disinformation (propaganda) that “the United States and China have agreed on a trade deal in exchange for the United States not supporting Taiwan.”

### **Coercion Phase (Coaxing Approach)**

\*TCC: Taiwan / Coaxing / Coercion

### **TCC1: Strengthening ties with China**

## ● Institutionalization of economic ties

### Tool 3 (Creating or exploiting economic dependencies)

- The pro-China administration and the government have officially agreed on a framework to integrate the economies of the two regions.

### **TCC2: Chinese control of Taiwan’s information space**

## ● Strengthening information dissemination in cyberspace

### Tool 9 (Cyber operations)

- Interference in Taiwan’s cyberspace.

### Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)

- Dissemination of discourse that the Chinese model is superior to the American model for the safe use of cyberspace.

## ● Media capture

### Tool 37 (Media control and interference)

- Controlling Taiwanese media from a capital perspective, eliminating anti-China reporting.

### **TCC3: Open and covert intervention in elections**

### Tool 9 (Cyber operations)

- Intervening in election campaigns by using bots, etc. on social media, etc.
- Hacking election systems and manipulating the results.



**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Disseminating disinformation, such as that a state of war will immediately break out if anti-China forces come to power.

**TCC4: Establishment of a government that advocates unification****● Fully support the newly established pro-China government and cooperate in the suppression of anti-China factions****Tool 34 (Support of political actors)**

- Financial support for pro-China political parties and politicians.

**Tool 21 (Exploiting vulnerabilities in public administration)**

- Support for police capabilities to suppress anti-China factions, including the provision of expertise and equipment.

**Tool 24 (Leveraging legal institutions)**

- Immediately after the establishment of a pro-China administration, the enactment of laws to crack down on anti-China factions.

## Chapter 3 Hybrid Warfare Against Japan

### (1) General overview

Based on hybrid warfare against Taiwan, hybrid warfare against Japan is broadly divided into “Decoupling Japan and the U.S.” (red frame on the left) and “Decoupling Japan and Taiwan” (blue frame on the right) and compared in general (Table 2).

The details of each hybrid warfare are described in (2) and (3) with case studies (tools).

Table 2: Hybrid warfare against Japan in each phase of the hardline and coaxing approaches

Attempts to Decouple Japan and the U.S. (Oriented mainly by hardline approach)	Attempts to Decouple Japan and Taiwan (Oriented mainly by coaxing approach)
<p><b>【Priming Phase】</b>            (Japan / Hardline / Priming)            JHP1 : Intelligence activities            JHP2 : Interference in Japan’s security policy            JHP3 : Hardline operations against the U.S. and coaxing operations toward Japan            JHP4 : Military exercises in the waters around Japan            JHP5 : Division of public opinion over Okinawa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generating distrust and anxiety toward the U.S. military</li> </ul> <p><b>【Destabilization Phase】</b>            (Japan / Hardline / Destabilization)            JHD1 : Generating distrust in the government’s administrative capabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social anxiety due to limited social functioning, leading to distrust of the government</li> <li>Generating distrust of the government regarding protection of civilian vessels</li> </ul> <p>JHD2 : Risk to the Japan-U.S. Alliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening Japan-China economic relations</li> <li>Risk of Japan getting involved in a war</li> <li>Risk of U.S.-China conflict</li> </ul> <p>JHD3 : Obstruction of communication between Japan and the U.S.</p> <p><b>【Coercion Phase】</b>            (Japan / Hardline / Coercion)            JHC1 : Divisive operations toward Japan and the U.S.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interference with sensitive information</li> </ul>	<p><b>【Priming Phase】</b>            (Japan / Coaxing / Priming)            JCP1 : Intelligence activities            JCP2 : Taiwan issue is touted as an internal matter            JCP3 : Hardline operations against Japan, including the economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening China’s dominance in the Asian economy</li> </ul> <p>JCP4 : Intimidation through military exercises near the Nansei Islands            JCP5 : Communicating the narrative of unity between China, Taiwan, and Okinawa</p> <p><b>【Destabilization Phase】</b>            (Japan / Coaxing / Destabilization)</p> <p>JCD2 : Operations to hinder strengthened Japan-Taiwan cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excluding Japan and the U.S. from Taiwan’s economy</li> <li>Appealing for stronger economic cooperation with China</li> </ul> <p>JCD3 : Obstruction of communication between Japan and Taiwan</p> <p><b>【Coercion Phase】</b>            (Japan / Coaxing / Coercion)            JCC1 : Divisive operations toward Japan and Taiwan’s democratization forces</p>

<p>exchange between Japan and the U.S.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interference with the operational capabilities of the Japan Self-Defense Forces and U.S. military bases in Japan</li> <li>• Generating anxiety among residents living near bases</li> </ul> <p>JHC2 : Building public opinion for non-intervention in Taiwan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinformation that “the unification faction has an overwhelming advantage in Taiwan”</li> </ul> <p>JHC3 : Delaying the designation of a “Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan’s Peace and Security,” etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinformation that “Taiwan is democratically moving toward unification”</li> <li>• Scandal disinformation about anti-China forces</li> <li>• Economic benefits on the condition of recognition of unification as a fact.</li> </ul> <p>JCC2 : Forming public opinion in favor of unification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disinformation that international opinion largely supports unification</li> </ul>
--	---

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

## (2) Decoupling Japan and the U.S. (Details)

### Priming Phase (Decoupling Japan and the U.S.)

\*JHP: Japan / Hardline / Priming

#### JHP1: Intelligence activities

##### Tool 8 (Cyber espionage)

- Cyber intrusion without leaving traces, preparation to switch to attack when necessary (APT).

##### Tool 25 (Intelligence preparation)

- Explore vulnerable points of the Japan Self-Defense Forces and U.S. military forces stationed in Japan.
- Explore vulnerable points in critical infrastructure.

##### Tool 27 (Infiltration)

- Infiltration of personnel into government agencies, political parties, economic organizations, etc. and acquisition of collaborators.

#### JHP2: Interference in Japan’s security policy

##### Tool 31 (Creating confusion or a contradictory narrative)

- Spreading the narrative that the Japan-U.S. Alliance contributes to war involvement without ensuring security for Japan.

##### Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)

- Spreading disinformation such as that the U.S. has decided not to intervene in a cross-strait conflict and that Taiwan will not resist China.

#### JHP3: Hardline operations against the U.S. and coaxing operations toward Japan

##### Tool 3 (Creating or exploiting economic dependencies)

- Offering economic incentives while making diplomatic overtures.

##### Tool 11 (Territorial water violation)

- Softening stance on the Senkaku Islands issue (e.g., regulating the operations of Chinese fishing boats).

#### **JHP4: Military exercises in the waters around Japan**

##### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Reducing exercises that pose a direct threat to Japan while conducting provocative exercises against U.S. Military Forces in the surrounding waters, creating a sense of anxiety among the Japanese public.

#### **JHP5: Division of public opinion over Okinawa**

- Generating distrust and anxiety toward U.S. Forces.

##### **Tool 37 (Media control)**

- Spreading biased information related to incidents and accidents involving U.S. Forces.

##### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation about crimes committed by U.S. military personnel, etc.

##### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- Using bots and other means on social media to spread anti-Okinawan sentiment in mainland Japan and anti-mainland Japan sentiment in Okinawa.

#### **● Emphasis on the historical connection between Okinawa and China**

##### **Tool 31 (Creating confusion or a contradictory narrative)**

- Spreading the narrative that China has historically been favorable towards Okinawa, and that Okinawa has instead been oppressed by Japan.
- Dramatically emphasizing the faults of the former Japanese and U.S. governments regarding the Battle of Okinawa.

#### **Destabilization Phase (Decoupling Japan and the U.S.)**

\*JHD: Japan / Hardline / Destabilization

#### **JHD1: Generating distrust in the government's administrative capabilities**

- Social anxiety due to limited social functioning, leading to distrust of the government

Bank outages

##### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- DDoS attacks making the website of banks inaccessible.

##### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation such as that transactions with XX Bank are not possible.

#### **Medical disturbances**

##### **Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- Medical anxiety and disorders due to disruptions to a medical institution's electronic medical records.

##### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation about disruptions to medical institutions.

● **Generating distrust of the government regarding the protection of civilian ships**

**Tool 11 (Territorial water violation (including EEZ))**

- Generating distrust of the government within Japan due to large numbers of fishing boats intruding into the EEZ, etc.

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading fake images and other disinformation to generate distrust in Japan Coast Guard.

**Tool 24 (Leveraging legal institutions)**

- Exploiting ambiguity between law enforcement and military activities.

**JHD2: Evoking attention to the risks of the Japan-U.S. Alliance**

● **Strengthening economic relations between Japan and China**

**Tool 3 (Creating or exploiting economic dependencies)**

- Giving preferential treatment to Japan in terms of imports and investments, and strengthening cooperation with Japanese companies.

● **Risk of Japan getting involved in a war**

**Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Conducting missile launches and airstrike drills simulating attacks on U.S. military bases, publicizing the risks of war.

● **Risk of U.S.-China conflict**

**Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- By launching missiles over the Second Island Chain, China shows that it is willing to go to war with the U.S., and the risks of the U.S.-Japan Alliance are made known to the Japanese people.

**JHD3: Obstruction of communication between Japan and the U.S.**

● **Communication disruptions between Japan and the U.S.**

**Tool 1 (Physical operations against infrastructure)**

- Severing submarine cables using fishing boats, etc. to disrupt information sharing between Japan and the U.S.

**Coercion Phase (Decoupling Japan and the U.S.)**

\*JHC: Japan / Hardline / Coercion

**JHC1: Divisive operations toward Japan and the U.S.**

● **Interference with Japan-U.S. information exchange**

**Tool 1 (Physical operations against infrastructure)**

- Interfering with sensitive information exchange between Japan and the U.S. through communication disruptions (submarine cables, satellite communications).

**Tool 40 (Electronic operations)**

- Using spoofed communications and other methods to create discrepancies between Japan and the U.S.

● **Interference with the operational capabilities of the Japan Self-Defense Forces and U.S. military bases in Japan**

- Cyberattacks on Japan's critical infrastructure (electricity, gas, water, etc.) to disrupt the operational capabilities of the Japan Self-Defense Forces and U.S. military bases in Japan, which depend on it.

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Using disinformation to cause anxiety among residents near bases and the families of personnel of U.S. military bases in Japan.

**JHC2: Building public opinion for non-intervention in Taiwan**

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation that "the unification faction has an overwhelming advantage in Taiwan."

**JHC3: Delaying the designation of a "Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security," etc.**

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Propaganda that the designation of a "Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security," etc. is an act of war against China.

**(3) Decoupling Japan and Taiwan (details)**

**Priming Phase (Decoupling Japan and Taiwan)**

\*JCP: Japan / Coaxing / Priming

**JCP1: Intelligence activities**

**Tool 8 (Cyber espionage)**

- Cyber intrusion without leaving traces, preparation to switch to attack when necessary (APT).

**Tool 25 (Intelligence preparation)**

- Explore events that could lead to division between Japan and Taiwan.
- Explore vulnerable points in critical infrastructure.

**Tool 27 (Infiltration)**

- Infiltration of personnel into government agencies, political parties, economic organizations, etc., and acquisition of collaborators.

**JCP2: Weakening anti-China faction and cultivating pro-China faction**

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation such as claims that anti-China factions in Taiwan are funded by the U.S. and that the majority of Taiwanese people want unification.

**Tool 35 (Coercion of politicians and/or government)**

- Applying various pressures on pro-Taiwan politicians.

**JCP3: Hardline operations against Japan, including the economy**

**Tool 3 (Creating or exploiting economic dependencies)**

- Strengthening China's dominance in the Asian economy and disrupting economic relations between Japan and other Asian countries.

#### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Maintaining a tough stance on the Fukushima treated water issue.

#### **Tool 11 (Territorial water violation)**

- Escalating the Senkaku Islands issue by involving Taiwan.

#### **JCP4: Intimidation through military exercises near the Nansei Islands**

##### **Tool 15 (Military exercises)**

- Intensifying exercises near the Nansei Islands to intimidate.

#### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Condemning Japan's militarization of the Nansei Islands.

#### **JCP5: Communicating the narrative of unity between Mainland China, Taiwan, and Okinawa**

##### **Tool 31 (Creating confusion or a contradictory narrative)**

- Spreading the narrative that China, Taiwan, and Okinawa have historically been united, and that only through unity can they prosper.

#### **Destabilization phase (Decoupling Japan and Taiwan)**

\*JCD: Japan / Coaxing / Destabilization

#### **JCD2: Operations to hinder strengthened Japan-Taiwan cooperation**

##### **● Exclusion of Japan and the U.S. from Taiwan's economy**

##### **Tool 6 (Undermining the target national economy)**

- Applying pressure on Taiwanese, Japanese, and U.S. companies to regulate imports and exports.
- Imposing extensive restrictions on multinational corporations in Taiwan.

##### **● Promoting strengthened economic ties between Taiwan and China**

##### **Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Reemphasizing trade with Taiwan and investment.
- Promoting the "peace framework," which emphasizes more autonomy than the "one country, two systems."

#### **JCD3: Obstruction of communication between Japan and Taiwan**

##### **● Communication disruptions between Japan and Taiwan**

##### **Tool 1 (Physical operations against infrastructure)**

- Severing submarine cables using fishing boats, etc. to disrupt information sharing between Japan and Taiwan.

##### **● Inducing Japan Coast Guard actions over the Senkaku Islands**

##### **Tool 24 (Leveraging legal institutions)**

- With the view that sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands belongs to Taiwan, provoking public opinion among Taiwan's anti-Japan factions by triggering Japan Coast Guard

actions, thus decoupling Japan and Taiwan.

● **Spreading the rumor that Taiwan has no expectations of Japan**

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading the rumor that Taiwan has no expectations of Japan.

**Coercion Phase (Decoupling Japan and Taiwan)**

\*JCC: Japan / Coaxing / Coercion

**JCC1: Divisive operations toward Japan and Taiwan's democratization forces**

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation that "Taiwan is democratically moving toward unification."
- Spreading scandal disinformation about anti-China forces.

**Tool 3 (Creating or exploiting economic dependencies)**

- Offering economic benefits if Taiwan recognizes unification as a fact, or imposing sanctions if not.

**Tool 9 (Cyber operations)**

- Using bots and other means on social media to spread a tone that incites anti-Japanese sentiment within Taiwan and anti-Taiwan sentiment within Japan.

**JCC2: Forming public opinion in favor of unification**

**Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)**

- Spreading disinformation that international opinion largely supports "Taiwan unification."



## **Chapter 4: Hybrid Warfare Against the United States and Other Countries**

### **(1) Hybrid warfare against the United States**

#### **Case of a hardline approach against Taiwan**

In the case of a hardline approach against Taiwan, the primary objective of hybrid warfare by China against the U.S. is thought to be to prevent the United States from intervening in a civil war in Taiwan.

For this reason, China will likely use various hybrid methods with the following goals:

- Increase distrust and decrease support for Taiwan in the U.S.
- Increase anxiety in the U.S. about the risk of war (including military risks as well as the economic impact)
- Generate international and domestic public opinion that the principle of non-interference in Taiwan's internal affairs should be respected
- Increase distrust and dissatisfaction with Japan, especially increasing uncertainty regarding the use of U.S. military bases in Japan
- Obstruction of communication between Japan and the United States (physical disruption of communications, information manipulation, etc.)
- Undermine U.S.-Philippine cooperation, especially regarding the use of bases in the Philippines

#### **Case of a coaxing approach towards Taiwan**

In the case of a coaxing approach towards Taiwan, the primary objective of hybrid warfare by China against the U.S. is thought to make the U.S. distrust Taiwan's pro-China stance and to reduce U.S. willingness to support Taiwan. For this reason, China will likely use various hybrid methods with the following goals:

- Generate distrust within the U.S. towards Taiwan authorities, who suppress anti-China forces, and towards Taiwanese residents who are becoming more pro-China
- Incite debate within the U.S. about whether U.S. involvement is necessary in a situation of peaceful unification without the use of force
- Consistent with China-Taiwan integration in the economic aspect, use economic carrot and stick approach to any actions or responses by the U.S.
- Obstruction of communication between the U.S. and Taiwan (physical disruption of communications, information manipulation, etc.)

### **(2) Hybrid warfare against countries other than the United States**

If China adopts a hardline approach against Taiwan, it will likely try to shape international opinion that even if civil unrest breaks out in Taiwan, it is an internal Chinese issue and that the United States and other countries should not intervene.

If China adopts a coaxing approach, it will likely work to internationally justify

China-Taiwan unification and to ensure that countries that support it become the majority.

For this reason, regardless of which approach China takes, it is likely to use a variety of hybrid methods, such as information manipulation, narrative spreading, economic inducements (carrot and stick), and the use of international organizations (such as China-Taiwan unification membership).

Specifically, by exercising the various hybrid warfare methods mentioned above against target countries, the goal will likely be to undermine multilateral cooperation.

- Undermine multilateral cooperation such as Quad and AUKUS, and minilateral cooperation such as Japan-U.S.-Australia and Japan-U.S. cooperation
- Undermine Japan's relations with ASEAN countries, especially those surrounding the South China Sea
- Undermine the region by expanding engagement with Pacific Island nations

## **Chapter 5 China's Hybrid Methods and Japan's Vulnerabilities in Each Domain**

Table 3 shows the results of an analysis of Japan's domains targeted by each hybrid method exercised by China against Japan, as identified in Chapter 3.

**Table 3** Relationship between China's Hybrid Warfare Methods Against Japan and Japan's Domains

Target Category	Tool	Japan's Domains Targeted by Cyberattacks										
		Diplomacy	Politics	Culture	Society	Law	M&D Industry	Space	Government	Infrastructure	Economy	Intelligence
JHP1 Intelligence activities	Tool 8 (Cyber espionage)	O	O				O			O	O	O
	Tool 25 (Intelligence preparation)	O	O				O			O	O	O
	Tool 27 (Infiltration)	O	O				O			O	O	
JHP2 Interference in Japan's security policy	Tool 31 (Creating a narrative)	O	O	O	O	O	O					O
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O		O					O
JHP3 Hardline against US; coaxing toward Japan	Tool 3 (Creating economic dependencies)	O	O							O		
	Tool 11 (Territorial water violation)	O	O				O	O				
JHP4 Military exercises in waters around Japan	Tool 15 (Military exercises)	O	O		O		O					O
JHP5 Public opinion divided over Okinawa	Tool 37 (Media control)				O							O
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)			O	O							O
	Tool 9 (Cyber operations)				O							O
	Tool 31 (Creating a narrative)		O	O	O							O
JHD1 Generating distrust in the government's administrative capabilities	Tool 9 (Cyber operations)			O	O				O	O	O	O
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)			O	O				O	O	O	
	Tool 11 (Territorial water violation (incl. EEZ))		O		O		O					
	Tool 24 (Leveraging legal institutions)		O			O						
JHD2 Evoking attention of risk of Japan-US Alliance	Tool 3 (Creating economic dependencies)	O	O							O		O
	Tool 15 (Military exercises)	O	O		O		O					O
JHD3 Disruption of communications between Japan and the US	Tool 1 (Physical operations (infrastructure))	O						O		O		O
JHC1 Decoupling Japan and the US	Tool 1 (Physical operations (infrastructure))	O					O	O		O		
	Tool 40 (Electronic operations)						O	O			O	
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)		O		O		O					O
JHC2 Building public opinion in favor of non-intervention in Taiwan	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O
JHC3 Delay in designation of Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)		O		O	O	O					O
JCP1 Intelligence activities	Tool 8 (Cyber espionage)	O	O							O	O	O
	Tool 25 (Intelligence preparation)	O	O							O	O	
	Tool 27 (Infiltration)	O	O							O	O	
JCP2 Weakening anti-China faction and cultivating pro-China faction	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O
	Tool 35 (Coercion of government)		O					O				
JCP3 Hardline approach against Japan, including economy	Tool 3 (Creating economic dependencies)	O	O							O		
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O			O							O
	Tool 11 (Territorial water violation)	O	O		O		O					O
JCP4 Threatening military exercises near the Nansei Islands	Tool 15 (Military exercises)	O	O		O		O					O
JCP5 Communicating the narrative of Mainland China-Taiwan-Okinawa unity	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O
	Tool 31 (Creating a narrative)			O	O							O
JCD2 Operations to hinder strengthened Japan-Taiwan cooperation	Tool 6 (Undermining economy)	O	O							O		
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O
JCD3 Obstruction of Japan-Taiwan communications	Tool 1 (Physical operations (infrastructure))	O						O		O		O
	Tool 24 (Leveraging legal institutions)	O	O			O	O		O			
	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O
JCC1 Operations to divide Japan and Taiwan's pro-democracy forces	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O
	Tool 3 (Creating economic dependencies)	O	O							O		
	Tool 9 (Cyber operations)	O	O	O	O							O
JCC2 Formation of public opinion in favor of unification	Tool 38 (Disinformation campaigns and propaganda)	O	O		O							O

Source: Maritime Security Study Group, NPI

Note regarding Table 3: Because tools are employed in different ways according to the phase and the goal, the same tool can be used in multiple domains. For specific examples of the use of each tool, see Chapter 3.

Each targeted Japan domain has its own unique vulnerabilities. It is believed that China will use individual tools to take advantage of these vulnerabilities and increase their effectiveness. Assuming that the tools targeted against each target domain in each phase are as shown in Table 3 above, the vulnerabilities of each domain that may be exploited at that time can be analyzed as follows.

### **Vulnerabilities in each domain in Japan**

#### **Diplomacy**

- While the Japan-U.S. alliance remains the cornerstone, distrust toward the United States is deeply rooted in public opinion. Economic and diplomatic pressures, social anxiety over crises, and other factors could cause public opinion to increase significantly toward distrust of the United States.
- The Senkaku Islands issue is not just an issue between Japan and China but could become a complex issue involving China and Taiwan.

#### **Politics**

- Possibility of being caught in a political dilemma between accommodating China due to economic interests with China, and the strict U.S. economic policy towards China.
- Possibility of China taking advantage of the deep-rooted anti-American sentiment of some political forces in Japan and Japan's being drawn into pro-China positions through scandals, economic support, etc.

#### **Culture**

- Possibility of exploiting the gap in perception between residents of Okinawa and residents of Mainland Japan.
- Possibility of generating distrust of Taiwan among the Japanese public through the dissemination of a narrative that culturally Okinawa belongs to China and Taiwan.

#### **Society**

- Possibility of military intimidation through missile launches and other actions in surrounding waters, the spread of disinformation, cyberattacks, etc., causing increased anxiety among local residents, especially those living near military bases, potentially leading to anti-base protests.
- Possibility of a large number of refugees flooding into Japan due to the destabilization of the situation in Taiwan and spread of such disinformation leading to the possibility

of social unrest.

- Social unrest over the possibility of the Nansei Islands being drawn into war.

## **Law**

- Possibility that there could be a delay in parliamentary approval to designate a “Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan’s Peace and Security” or a “Survival-Threatening Situation” due to the complexity of the relevant legal system.
- On the assumption that China does not recognize Taiwan as a state, can the U.S. exercise the right of collective self-defense with respect to Taiwan? Such ambiguity could lead to a quagmire in designating a Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan’s Peace and Security by Japan, possibility leaving the domestic consensus unreached.
- Possibility that Japan Coast Guard actions related to the Senkaku Islands issue could be used as propaganda portraying them as a military operation against Taiwan and China, leading to a perception gap between Japan and the U.S., or that they could be used as propaganda to strengthen China-Taiwan cooperation.

## **Military/Defense**

- Possibility that Japan’s contribution to U.S. strategy against China (Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan’s Peace and Security) and the defense of Japan (a situation affecting national defense) may be concurrently recognized.
- Possibility of confusion in JSDF operation when concurrently carrying out evacuation of residents of the Nansei Islands and protection of refugees in the event of a Taiwan crisis.
- Violation of Japan’s territorial waters and airspace, along with the intensification of military exercises around Japan, not only has the potential to incite hardline factions and divide society, but it could also increase the burden of the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operation which can potentially drain defense resources among relevant government agencies.
- Deception of GPS signals and disinformation could have a direct impact on effective ISR operation, potentially leading to misjudgments and irrelevant responses.

## **Space**

- Disruptions to Japan-U.S. command and control (C2) functions utilizing space could lead to a breakdown in communication between Japan and the U.S.
- Because many aspects of social life, such as communications, geodesy (GPS), and information rely on space infrastructure, satellite interference could lead to social unrest and eventually fuel distrust of the government.

## **Government**

- Possibility that such actions as interference by China Coast Guard ships with Japanese civilian vessels and the government's response to the protection of various maritime interests as a maritime nation could fuel public distrust of the government.
- Possibility that public distrust in the government could be heightened due to concerns over the safety and protection of residents in the Nansei Islands.

### **Infrastructure**

- The functions of the U.S. military bases in Japan and the Self-Defense Forces bases depend on civilian infrastructure (electricity, water, gas, logistics). Disruptions, particularly from cyberattacks whose perpetrators are unknown, could cause concern about the reliability of Japan-U.S. cooperation.
- Both Japan and Taiwan are highly dependent on submarine cables, and disruptions to these cables could obstruct policy coordination between Japan and the U.S., and between Japan and Taiwan.

### **Economy**

- Given the high reliance of the Japanese economy on China, economic pressure, both hard and soft, could become political pressure.
- There is a possibility that pressure could be applied to hinder cooperation with Taiwan on semiconductor technology.

### **Intelligence**

- Limited sources of intelligence on Taiwan, combined with disruptions in communications with Taiwan (isolation), may lead to discrepancies in the perceptions between Japan, the U.S., and Taiwan.

### **Information**

- The massive spread of disinformation related to domestic infrastructure failures using fake accounts and simultaneous cyberattacks, as well as the massive spread of disinformation, especially fake images using AI, about Taiwan, the United States, and the international community, could increase social unrest and divide public opinion in Japan.
- Cyber activities or covert operations by operatives may be noticed only when it is too late.

### **Cyber**

- During the Ukraine war, it is said that government and private sector support from the United States and others was crucial in responding to serious cyber situations. In Japan's case, if legal frameworks, systems, and division of roles for accepting such support are not discussed in advance, there is a risk of confusion in the event of a

crisis.

There is a possibility that response to cyber security incidents that may involve state actors may be delayed. In particular, there are many instances of private cyber groups contracted by the state, and there is a possibility that response to cyberattacks in which the state's involvement is unclear may be delayed.

- Although cyber warfare and electromagnetic warfare are inseparable, there is a possibility that the insufficient consideration of security in Japan's electromagnetic wave management system may be exploited.



## **Chapter 6: Policy Proposals to Address Japan's Vulnerabilities in Hybrid Warfare**

### **① Establishment of a system to comprehensively respond to hybrid methods that are exercised in a complex manner**

- Build a mechanism that can grasp the overall picture, rather than just responding to individual hybrid threats.
- Create a command center function to comprehensively coordinate the responses of each department.
- Strengthen the strategic communications framework guided by the principles and values of Japan as a democratic nation.

Note: Strategic communication refers to the totality of activities aimed at influencing other countries by ensuring consistency not only in information dissemination but also in real actions across various fields such as the economy, politics, and military in order to achieve the country's strategic objectives.

### **② Ongoing and well-developed discussions on diplomatic relations with the U.S. and China and the Okinawa issue**

- It is natural for Japan, as a democratic country, to have various opinions within the country regarding diplomatic relations with the U.S. and China.
- On that basis, ongoing and well-developed discussions should be encouraged in peacetime to prevent divisions from growing rapidly in times of crisis.
- With regard to the Okinawa issue, dialogue should be strengthened on a regular basis to avoid cause division within Japan.

### **③ Establishment of a national consensus on a basic defense policy that balances Taiwan crisis response and homeland defense**

- Reach a consensus on the basic policy for Japan's defense in the event of a crisis in Taiwan.
- Based on the above, establish a common understanding regarding the recognition of a Situation that Will Have an Important Influence on Japan's Peace and Security as well as a Survival-Threatening Situation for a smooth designation.
- Continue efforts to ensure that the actions of the Self-Defense Forces and measures for protecting the citizens are always consistent, from peacetime to the time of a crisis.

### **④ Improvement in the resilience of various infrastructures, including space and ocean**

- Improving the resilience of communication infrastructures such as space and submarine cables is essential for sharing information both domestically and

internationally.

- Along with the physical strengthening of various infrastructures, provide information in a way that does not cause anxiety among the public.
- Strengthen the infrastructure that serves as the foundation for the activities of the Self-Defense Forces and U.S. military.

**⑤ Reduction in Japan's economic dependency on China (diversification of trade and investment destinations, etc.)**

- Build an economic relationship with China that can be expanded or contracted to withstand pressure from China.
- Strengthen measures against China's covert attempts to steal technology and build capital ties.
- Build a framework for multilateral cooperation with China in mind.

**⑥ Increase in communication channels between Japan and Taiwan**

- Expand diverse exchanges within public frameworks as much as possible.
- To supplement the above exchanges, expand opportunities for exchanges and the exchange of opinions between NGOs and other private organizations.
- Expand cooperation with Taiwan within multilateral frameworks in areas such as cyberspace, counter-disinformation, AI, and maritime affairs.

**⑦ Promotion of measures against disinformation in government and the private sector**

- Establish a common social understanding regarding the freedom and restrictions of information dissemination and data management in a democratic society.
- Strengthen government and non-government fact-checking systems.
- Establish a system in which the competent authorities publish a rebuttal within a certain time frame in the event of disinformation about government policies or statistical facts.

**⑧ Improvement in Japan's cyber defense capabilities**

- Establish a national organization to centrally plan and execute cyber defense.
- Create a system of active cyber defense that takes democratic values into account.
- Promote comprehensive cyber human resource development measures covering all levels from the general public to the expert level.
- Expand public support for private suppliers and others who find it difficult to invest resources in cyber security.

**⑨ Establishment of a stable response system for the Senkaku Islands**

- Maintain stable response under established policies regardless of the situation. Strengthen joint training and joint operations to enable smooth cooperation and coordination among the relevant agencies. In particular, regarding specific responses in times of crisis (including the launch of Japan Coast Guard operations), the information-sharing mechanisms between the Self-Defense Forces and the Japan Coast Guard, and between Japan and the United States, should be strengthened.
- Promote exchanges of opinions at the academic level between the private sectors in Japan and Taiwan.

**⑩ Strengthening Japan-U.S. coordination functions for hybrid threats**

- The new Japan Joint Operations Command (JJOC) established in the JSDF and the acquisition of counterstrike capabilities are highly evaluated for strengthening operational-level coordination between Japan and the U.S., as well as enhancing the integration of command and control.
- In addition to strengthening cooperation between the JSDF and the U.S. military, cross-government Japan-U.S. coordination mechanisms to respond to hybrid warfare should also be strengthened.

**⑪ Compilation of a database on hybrid threat cases and creation of a database with the assumption that it will be made public**

- A compilation of case studies was developed to serve as the basis of this research. However, it is only one example of efforts, and other Japanese research institutions should aim to build a system to continuously monitor evolving hybrid threats with the recognition that such a compilation is important also in building diplomatic strategies.
- At this time, it is important to create a comprehensive database and build a system for consolidating following up efforts. In addition, consideration should be given to publishing part of the information online to raise public awareness.
- Further, a government database should be established to monitor hybrid threats against Japan in real time and record and accumulate information on their progress.

## **Conclusion**

Fiscal Year 2025 will be the final year of this research. Building on the research conducted up to this year, the Study Group will research how to overcome vulnerabilities to hybrid threats together with deterrence and response measures, including through multilateral cooperation.

## Maritime Security Study Group Members

(honorifics omitted)

Chairman: Saito Takashi, Former Chief of Staff, Joint Staff, JSDF

Fukumoto Izuru, Former President, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Command and Staff College

Tokuchi Hideshi, Senior Research Advisor, Nakasone Peace Institute; President, Research Institute for Peace and Security

Hirata Hidetoshi, Former Commander, Air Training Command, Japan Air Self-Defense Force

Matsumura Goro, Former Commanding General, Northeastern Army, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force

Nakamura Susumu, Senior Research Fellow, SFC Research Institute, Keio University

Sato Koichi, Professor, Oberlin University

Murakami Masatoshi, Associate Professor, Kogakkan University

Yamamoto Katsuya, Senior Research Fellow, Sasakawa Peace Foundation

Yoshida Yukari, Senior Fellow, National Institute for Defense Studies

Aizawa Riho, Research Fellow, National Institute for Defense Studies

Yamamoto MaximillianTakuma

Kawashima Takashi, Senior Research Fellow, Nakasone Peace Institute

Yasue Mariko, Senior Research Fellow, Nakasone Peace Institute