

Japan

Japan PM vows ‘resolute’ response after Chinese aircraft accused of locking radar on to Japanese fighter jets

China’s ambassador summoned over alleged weekend incident that saw Chinese J-15 fighter aircraft twice train their radar on Japanese F-15s



📷 File shot of a J-15 fighter jet, the type of Chinese aircraft that Tokyo says twice locked radar on to Japanese jets at the weekend. Photograph: VCG/Getty Images

**Helen Davidson** in *Taipei and agencies*

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The diplomatic dispute between Japan and **China** appeared to deepen over the weekend after Chinese military planes were accused of locking their radar on to Japanese fighter jets near the Okinawa islands.

Japan’s prime minister, Sanae Takaichi, vowed to “respond calmly and resolutely” to the alleged incident, saying her country would take all possible measures to strengthen maritime and airspace surveillance and closely monitor Chinese military activities. The country’s foreign ministry also summoned China’s ambassador on Sunday. China’s government has roundly rejected Japan’s accusations, instead lodging its own counterprotests.



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The alleged incident occurred south east of Okinawa’s main islands, where China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) said it was conducting “far-sea training”. Japan’s defence ministry said it recorded about 100 fighter jet take-offs from China’s Liaoning aircraft carrier.

The ministry said Chinese J-15 fighter aircraft from that carrier directed their fire-control radar on to Japanese F-15s twice – at 4.32pm and again about two hours later on Saturday. Visual confirmation was not possible due to the distances involved, it said, and no damage or injuries were caused.

A fire-control radar lock is one of the most threatening acts a military aircraft can take because it signals a potential attack, forcing the targeted aircraft to take evasive action.

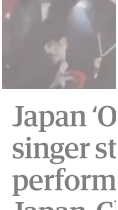
It was the first time Japan’s defence ministry has disclosed a radar lock by Chinese warplanes, Japan’s Kyodo news agency reported.

The Japanese defence minister, Shinjiro Koizumi, said on Sunday the incident was “dangerous and extremely regrettable”.

“These radar illuminations went beyond what is necessary for the safe flight of aircr

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when Takaich’s mentor, Shinzo Abe, was prime minister – permits it to exercise collective self-defence in certain situations, even if it is not directly under attack.

**In response** Beijing has launched a range of diplomatic and economic retaliatory moves, including reimposing a ban on Japanese seafood into China, and sending military and coast guard vessels and planes into the disputed waters of the Senkaku Islands and close to Japan’s outlying Okinawan territories near Taiwan. Chinese state media has also revived a campaign questioning Japan’s territorial claims over the Ryukyu Island chain, which includes Okinawa.

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