**Move II**

**Scenario:**

On December 29th, 2012, China initiated maritime patrols of Taiwan based on intelligence gathered that suggested Taiwan and Japan were secretly negotiating missile technology. While there were rumors that China’s civilian leadership preferred a withdrawal of the Chinese forces and inspections in Taiwan, assertive elements in China’s leadership and military are rumored to have pushed a more assertive Chinese approach. Taiwan immediately denied all charges and calls upon the international community, particularly the United States, in condemning China. Taiwan’s steadfast refusal of nuclear inspections without the withdrawal of Chinese forces and reparations has frustrated some American policymakers looking for ways to diffuse the crisis.

China has engaged in strategic mining of the eastern coast, patrol of major shipping lanes in the north and south of the island, and mandatory inspections of Taiwanese vessels. The PLA’s patrols are supported by a fleet of Russian-made kilo submarines supported by many less-capable Chinese-manufactured Song submarines. Thus far, the PLA has permitted air traffic in and out of Taiwan. China requests the USA not intervene in an internal matter, and calls upon the US to withdraw its carrier group in the region in order to avoid possible miscalculation.

(Top map of blockade showing territorial waters showing mining and blockading strategy, major shipping routes)

Taiwan has prepared for an all-out amphibious assault and invasion by the PLA. However, conscripted soldiers and the national police force are rumored to be largely sympathetic to Beijing, soldiers are under-trained and have long been deemed “too soft” by the United States, and it could take hours to days to mobilize Taiwan’s forces should an invasion occur. Taiwan’s special forces, Airborne Special Services Company (ASSC), and Marine Corps feature small units, are heavily trained, and may be able to mobilize quickly enough to assist the Military Police Command (MPC) in defending critical targets in Taipei.

Japan’s reaction to the PLA mining contested international waters was extremely negative. Since Japan permanently stationed members of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces on Senkaku/Diaoyu islands in October, Japan has been particularly aggressive in patrols of the region. After an at-sea close call confrontation with a Chinese vessel, Japan recalled its ambassador to Beijing in protest and approached the UN regarding the situation. Japan has asked assistance from the US, calling upon the mutual defense treaty signed by both states.

South Korea’s struggles with the DPRK did not cease with the crash of Korean Air Flight 706. 12 fishing boats and seven patrol boats crossed the Northern Limit Line (NLL) off the west coast of the peninsula in the name of protecting North Korea’s access to traditional fishing grounds. They were met by the ROK navy. According to a UN commission report, the DPRK patrol boats
fired first. Both sides exchanged gunfire, and as a result, several DPRK boats were severely
damaged over the next three days of confrontation before retreating back across the NLL.

On January 2nd, 2013, a MiG-29 fighter from North Korea’s Wonsan air base defected to South
Korea. The MiG-29 was escorted to a South Korean landing strip and presented both the U.S.
and South Korea with what could be a wealth of valuable information. The pilot, whose identity
has not yet been released, broke away from a training operation near North Korea’s Wonsan air
base. North Korea gave chase, but was turned back by two South Korean fighter jets. North
Korea denies that the pilot purposely flew to South Korea. An official statement released from
the DPRK claims that the pilot was disoriented after a skirmish with the two South Korean jets.
The embarrassment of the defection is a major blow to North Korea’s new leader, and comes at a
time of escalating tension on the peninsula.