

Japan Protests Russian Military Drills on Disputed Island

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Christopher Jue / EPA / TASS

Japan has rebuked Russia's planned military exercises on a Pacific island claimed by both countries in the latest row over the territory that has kept the countries from signing a formal peace agreement marking the end of World War II.

Tokyo [said](#) last week it regretted Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's visit to one of the four Russian-held islands known in Russia as the Kurils. On Monday, the Kyodo news agency reported that Russia had notified Japan of its plans to hold live-fire exercises off one of the islands from Aug. 5-11.

Related article: [Japan Says Russian Prime Minister's Visit to Disputed Island Is Regrettable](#)

"We've lodged a protest through a diplomatic channel because the drills are linked to Russia's military buildup on the Northern Territories," Japan's cabinet spokesman Yoshihide Suga was [quoted](#) as saying by The Japan Times newspaper.

Japan, which calls the islands the Northern Territories, [lodged](#) similar protests against Russian shooting exercises there in April.

The drills and Medvedev's visit come barely a month after Russian President Vladimir Putin said the neighbors had moved toward establishing joint economic activities on the disputed islands.

Japan has previously expressed displeasure with Russian [buildup](#) on the islands, which Moscow has [rejected](#).

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