

# Japan, US hold space cooperation talks

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A Japanese H-IIIB rocket lifts off from the Tanegashima Space Centre in the southern island of Tanegashima on July 21, 2012. Japan and the United States held talks Monday on wide-ranging cooperation in space, including the satellite monitoring of ships, a joint statement said.

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The collaboration is apparently aimed at countering China's growing assertiveness at sea and the expansion of its space exploration

programme, according to Japanese media.

The statement, released by the Japanese foreign ministry said experts from the two governments met in Tokyo for the first "Comprehensive Dialogue on Space".

The creation of the forum was agreed by US President [Barack Obama](#) and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe when they met in Washington last month.

Both sides reaffirmed their interest in joint "maritime domain awareness", a concept including the space-based monitoring of ships, the statement said.

Tensions have been high between China and Japan over rival claims to a group of islands in the East China Sea, while Beijing is also at odds with several Southeast Asian countries over islands in the South China Sea.

The statement said the forum was focused on a "wide range of interests, including resource and [disaster management](#), environmental monitoring, technology development, [scientific discovery](#), national and international security, and economic growth".

The officials discussed ways to further collaborate in positioning, navigation, and timing services from the US [Global Positioning System](#) (GPS) and its Japanese counterpart, the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS).

They also discussed cooperation in Earth observation, data exchange, and space science, including "weather observation from space and asteroid detection and mitigation to protect the planet."

The statement also said the two countries had agreed on a legal

framework for the provision of information on [space debris](#) from the United States to Japan.

A second meeting of the forum in Washington early next year.

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