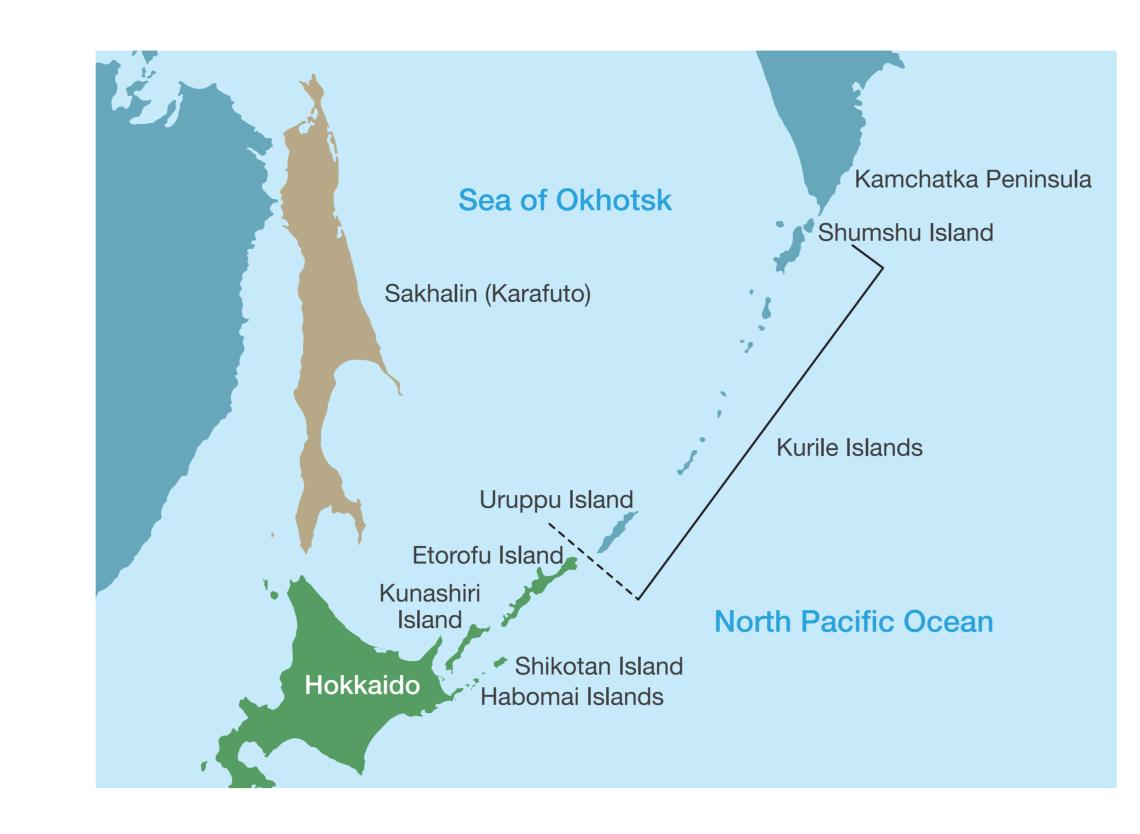
### Since early 17th century, the Four Northern Islands have been Japanese territory at all times.

## 1855: Border based on the Treaty of Commerce, Navigation and Delimitation between Japan and Russia

The Matsumae Domain recognized the Four Northern Islands as part of its own fieldom as early as the beginning of the 17th century, and gradually established control over them.

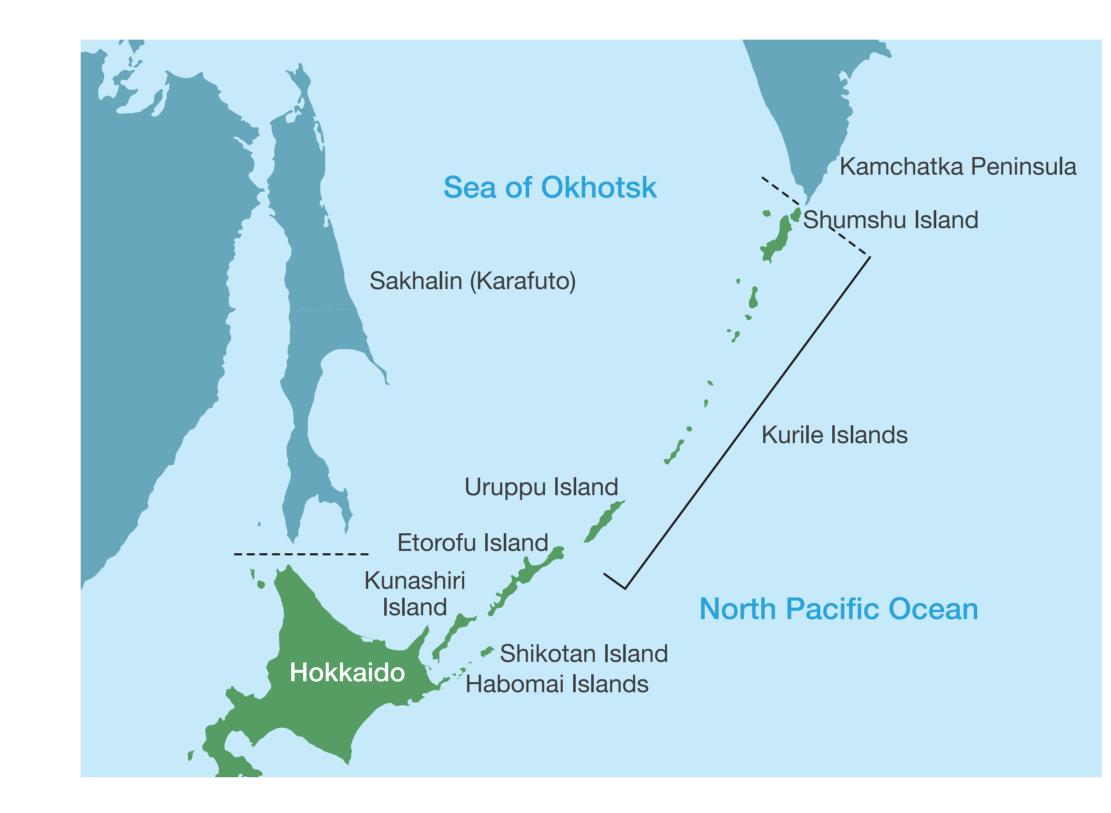
In the late 18th century, the Edo Shogunate established direct control of the Four Northern islands and promoted their development.

The Treaty of Commerce, Navigation and Delimitation between Japan and Russia confirmed the border between the two countries as had been naturally formed between Etorofu Island and Uruppu Island.



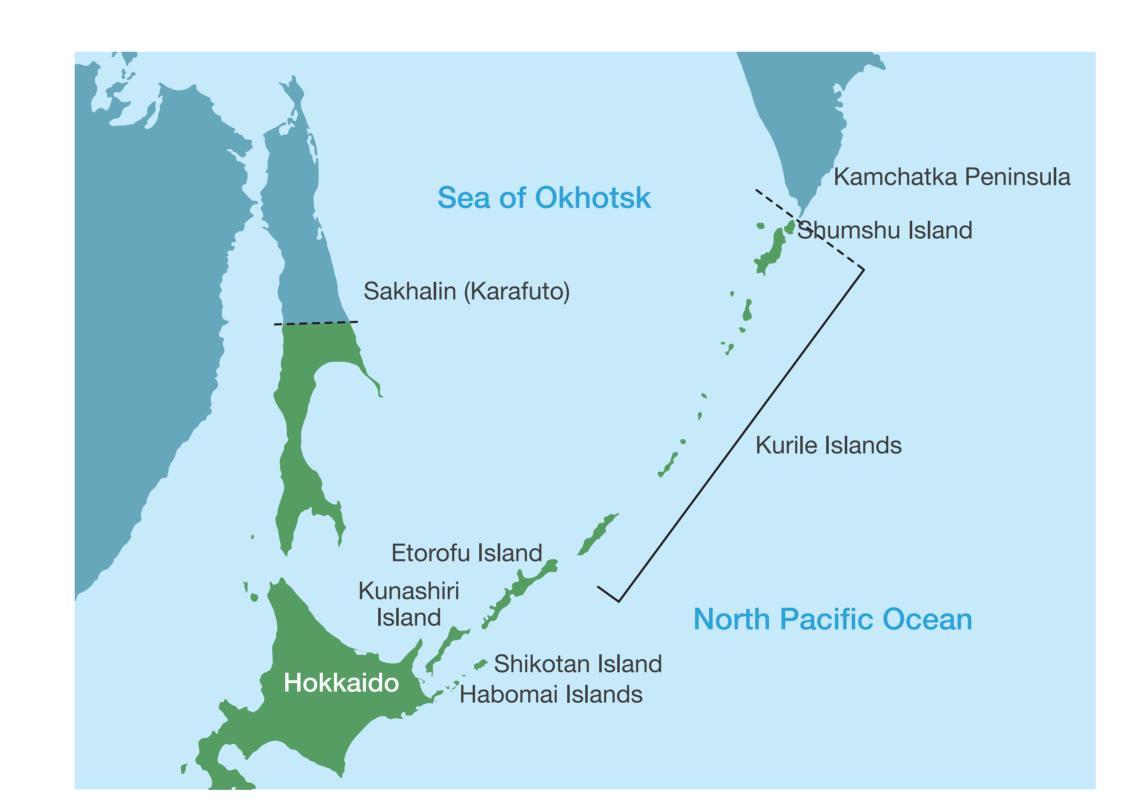
## 1875: Border based on the Treaty for the Exchange of Sakhalin for the Kurile Islands

In the Treaty for the Exchange of Sakhalin for the Kurile Islands in November 1875, the rights to the Kurile Islands were ceded from Russia to Japan, in exchange for the cession of the rights to the island of Karafuto (Sakhalin). This treaty enumerated the Kurile Islands as the islands from Shumshu Island in the north to Uruppu Island in the south. This fact indicates that the Four Northern Islands have been clearly differentiated from the Kurile Islands.



### 1905: Border based on the Portsmouth Peace Treaty

In the Portsmouth Peace Treaty, concluded after the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Russia ceded to Japan a part of Karafuto (Sakhalin) Island lying to the south of 50 degrees north latitude.



The Four Northern Islands have been Japanese territory since the Edo period! Although Japan's northern border has changed many times since the Meiji period, the Four Northern Islands have always been Japanese territory! The Four Northern Islands are not included in the "Kurile Islands" that Japan renounced in the San Francisco Peace Treaty!



# The Four Northern Islands have remained illegally occupied by Russia up until the present day.

### August 1941 Atlantic Charter

In August 1941, the leaders of the US and the UK signed the Atlantic Charter to state the common principles of the Allies, among which was to seek no territorial aggrandizement. The Soviet Union also joined the Atlantic Charter in September of the same year.

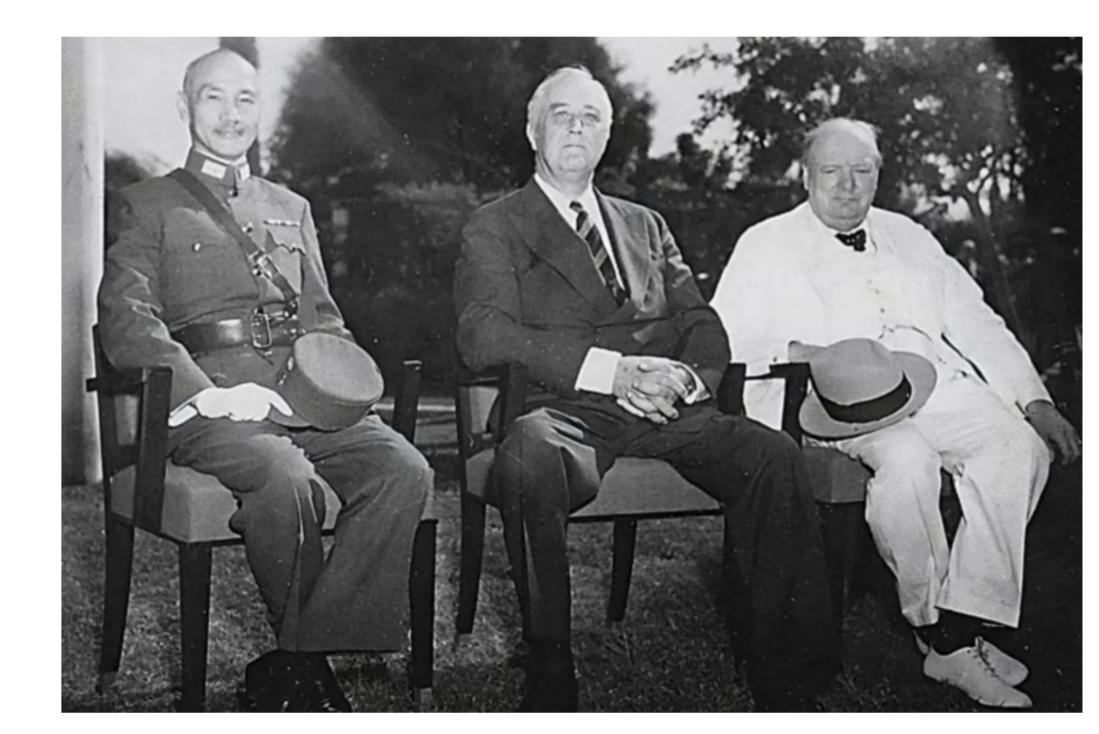


In August 1941, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt (front left) and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (front right) met on a warship in the Atlantic Ocean.

Imperial War Museum

#### November 1943 Cairo Declaration

In the Cairo Declaration, the Allies confirmed the principles to seek no territorial aggrandizement and stated, "Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed." This is not the case with regard to the Four Northern Islands.

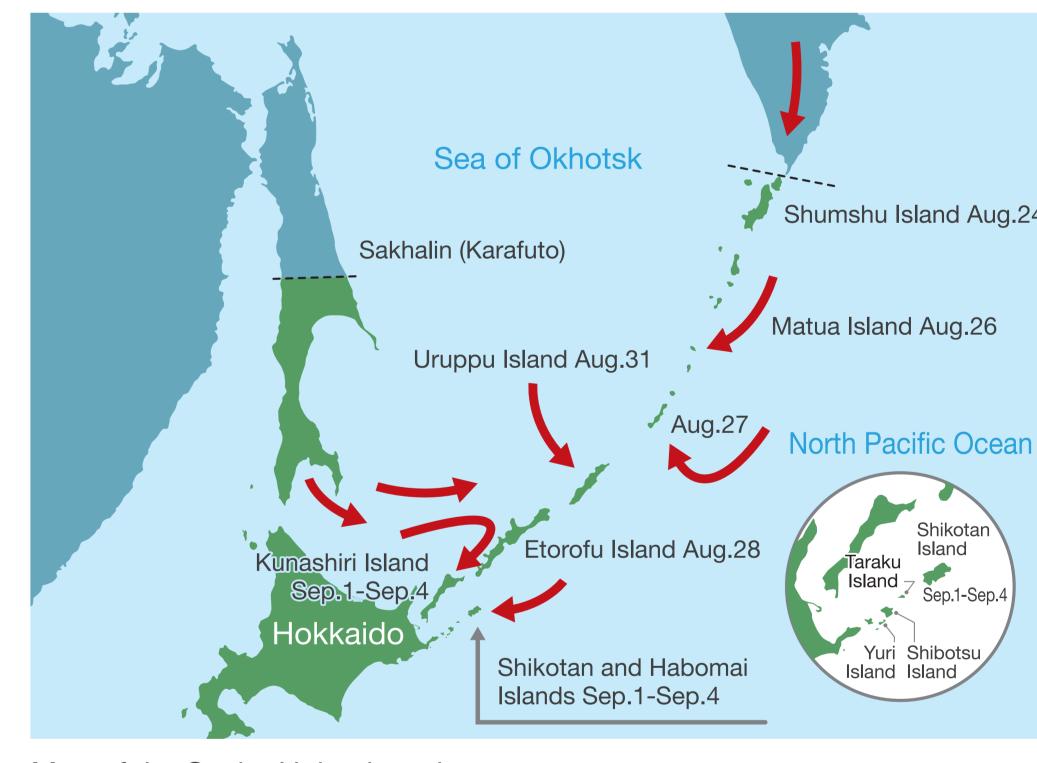


In November 1943, Chiang Kai-shek, President of the Republic of China, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States, and Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, met in Cairo.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

## August-September 1945 Occupation of the Four Northern Islands by the Soviet Union

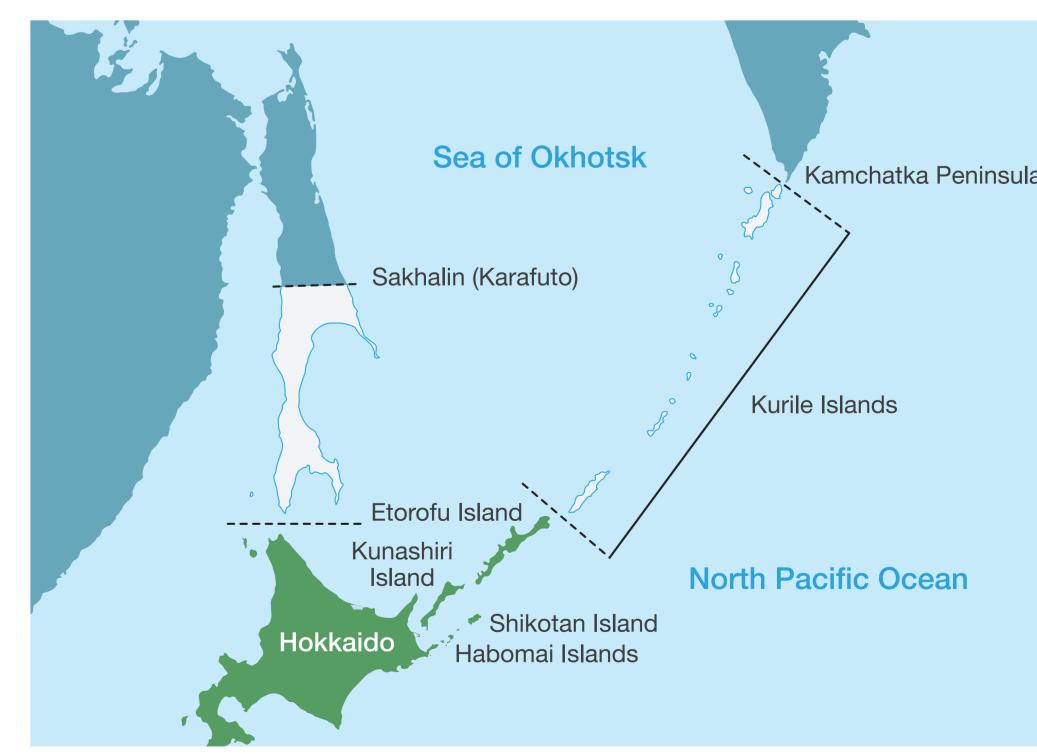
On August 9, 1945, the Soviet Union, in violation of the Neutrality Pact that was still in force between Japan and the Soviet Union, opened war against Japan. Even after Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration on August 14 of the same year, making clear its intent to surrender, the Soviet Union continued its offensive against Japan and occupied the Four Northern Islands from August 28, 1945 to September 5, 1945. About half of the Japanese residents in the Four Northern Islands were forced to flee the islands and the rest were forcibly deported by 1948.



Map of the Soviet Union invasion

## September 1951 Signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

The San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed in September 1951, legally defined the territory of Japan after WWII. Under the treaty, Japan renounced all right, title and claim to the Kurile Islands. However, as made clear in the treaties including the Treaty for the Exchange of Sakhalin for the Kurile Islands in 1875, "the Kurile Islands" is a term referring to Uruppu Island and other islands to the north, and does not include the Four Northern Islands. Nevertheless, the Four Northern Islands have remained illegally occupied by Russia up until the present day.



The border based on the San Francisco Peace Treaty