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The Thickening Web of Asian Security Cooperation

Deepening Defense Ties Among U.S. Allies and Partners in the Indo-Pacific

Scott W. Harold, Derek Grossman, Brian Harding, Jeffrey W. Hornung, Gregory Poling, Jeffrey Smith, Meagan L. Smith

Prepared for the MacArthur Foundation

For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/RR3125

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available for this publication.
ISBN: 978-1-9774-0333-9

Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif.

Cover photo by Japan Maritime Self Defense Force.

Preface

Since the turn of the century, an important trend toward new or expanded defense cooperation among U.S. allies and security partners in the Indo-Pacific has been unfolding. Such a trend has the potential to create, realign, or simply reflect changes in regional actors' interests, identities, and commitments in important ways that could reinforce or reduce U.S. influence; help knit the region more closely together in ways that complicate aggression by revisionist powers; and create new and dynamic bi-, tri-, and multilateral groupings. This report tracks and analyzes the growth in defense cooperation among U.S. allies and security partners in several key areas. It looks at three key questions: What sorts of new or expanded defense activities are U.S. allies and security partners in the Indo-Pacific engaging in over roughly the last two decades? Why are these actors cooperating in new areas and/or elevating their engagements in existing spaces? And what are the implications for U.S. national security as well as regional stability of these new or expanded types of defense cooperation?

This analysis should be of interest to several communities: analysts concerned with U.S. national security and foreign policy, observers who pay attention to key Indo-Pacific security developments, and specialists who focus on defense industrial sector developments.

This research was sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation's Asian Security Initiative and conducted within the International Security and Defense Policy Center of the RAND National Security Research Division (NSRD). NSRD conducts research and analysis for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Unified Combatant

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This report is dedicated to the memory of Angel Rabasa, a colleague, friend, and key member of the study team who fell ill in 2015 and passed away in 2016. His loss is still felt, and his warm laugh and sharp insights are sorely missed.

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Summary

Since approximately the turn of the century, key U.S. allies, security partners, and diplomatic interlocutors in the Indo-Pacific have been establishing or deepening their defense ties across a range of important areas. Whereas previously several of such actors (Australia, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea) engaged in defense ties largely or exclusively with their ally the United States, in recent years they have begun to branch out, engaging with each other on high-level security consultations, selling or transferring defense articles, engaging in joint defense industrial development, carrying out bilateral training and exercises, and/or signing defense-related agreements that enable cooperation on maintenance and repair or defense intelligence information sharing. What is more, these key U.S. allies are also cooperating more today with countries such as India, Indonesia, and Vietnam that, while not U.S. treaty allies, have nonetheless aligned themselves more closely with the United States as China has grown both more powerful and more assertive in recent years. As a consequence, a set of important new linkages and security commitments among regional actors is forming, with substantial consequences for the United States, China, and the Indo-Pacific region.

What sorts of new or expanded defense activities are U.S. allies and security partners in the Indo-Pacific engaging in over roughly the last two decades? Why are these actors cooperating in new areas and/or elevating their engagements in existing spaces? And what are the implications for U.S. national security as well as regional stability of these new or expanded types of defense cooperation? While these

developments are important, they have not previously been definitively explored. Do they derive from concerns about China's rise, perceptions of U.S. decline or wavering commitment, growing public expectations, rising costs of defense industrial development, or other factors? Through a review of official documents, policy statements, leadership speeches, media reports, and interviews with subject matter experts, this study explores the dimensions, causes, and consequences for the United States and the Indo-Pacific region of this trend toward greater intraregional defense cooperation among seven key countries that reflect this trend in the region: Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Vietnam.[1] The study's primary contributions to the debate over these important trends in Indo-Pacific security include five key aspects.

First, the report highlights the extent to which regional actors' security initiatives are a response to the perceived threat posed by a rising, assertive China, highlighting the proactive responses U.S. allies and partners have taken to support their own, regional, and U.S. security by broadening and deepening their contributions to regional order. While not all countries in the study are deepening their security ties as a response to China's rise, most are, and those that are not motivated largely by China's growing capabilities and aggressive actions are at least treating expanded defense cooperation as an opportunity to strengthen their ability to resist low-level aggression by state-linked Chinese poachers engaging in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and/or gray zone coercion.

Second, the study calls attention to the strong support that the United States continues to enjoy across the region, with numerous actors expanding their security partnerships out of a desire to reinforce the existing regional order centered on a set of U.S. alliances so as to help share the burdens of security maintenance. Key U.S. allies in Australia and Japan have been the most active in seeking to shape and sustain a regional order centered on the U.S. alliance system, but others—most notably South Korea under the Lee Myung-bak

[1] Further details on the methodology and case study choices employed in the study can be found in Chapter One.

and Park Geun-hye administrations and the Philippines under the Benigno Aquino III administration—have also worked to bolster a pro-U.S. regional order. Other actors who are less oriented toward the United States still often prefer a U.S.-centric order to one dominated by China, and therefore while India, Indonesia, and Vietnam are not looking to contribute to the U.S.-led order, they are often motivated nonetheless to cooperate with the United States as a hedge against Chinese coercion.

Third, the analysis points out the importance of understanding the diverse motivations regional actors have for expanding and deepening their regional security partnerships, some of which derive from concerns about U.S. reliability and/or overdependence on America. Japan and Australia, as noted above, are seeking to help cement the U.S. position in and commitment to the region by expanding their own contributions to a regional order welcoming of Washington, D.C. By contrast, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam are all diversifying their defense engagements at least in part out of a desire to build in resilience if the United States wavers in its commitment to the region, or as a hedge against a perceived overreliance on the United States for security. The study also calls attention to the value the United States and the region derive from the U.S.-centered alliance system, which frequently serves to incentivize wavering allies such as the Philippines, or partners such as India, Indonesia, or Vietnam to remain engaged with Washington and avoid turning too far toward China as a regional strategic competitor.

Fourth, the research highlights key areas for building partner capacity. These include intelligence sharing (especially for ballistic missile defense), maritime domain awareness, cyber policy, counterterrorism, and counterpiracy as well as defense industrial development and training and exercises where U.S. policy, in tandem with that of allies and partners, can contribute to the further deepening of a regional network of security cooperation that can serve to constrain revisionist behavior, in part by taking free or low-cost coercion off the table. By identifying the role of China in spurring balancing behavior among the seven countries and the opportunities for the United States and other regional actors to find synergies among their regional security strategies,

the report seeks to aid the United States in diversifying and distributing risk and buy-in for costly actions across as broad a group of status quo–oriented allies and partners as possible. It also makes explicit some previously poorly understood costs confronting any actor that might choose to threaten the existing regional security order, which could help to deter potential aggression and reassure weaker regional powers by making more explicit the vested interest regional actors have in their neighbors' well-being and security.

Finally, the report clarifies which aspects of deepening security relationships derive from concerns about China and which stem from considerations other than balancing. As the study notes, while geopolitical rivalry and security concerns clearly do play important roles in fueling some of the sorts of defense cooperation under consideration here, other elements of such growing ties stem from the burgeoning costs of defense industrial development, relate to national identity considerations, and/or emerge from the growth of regional norms and domestic expectations about countries' roles in the broader Indo-Pacific. Insofar as the report helps identify the depth of regional anxieties about China's aggressive behavior, it provides insights into where the United States might best find opportunities to work together with partners to counter Chinese assertiveness. On the other hand, by clarifying which cooperative efforts derive from factors not tied to Chinese behavior, it helps provide clues as to pathways that might not work if understood or framed incorrectly, while simultaneously providing an understanding of other issues that are important to local actors.

Acknowledgments

The research effort that this study reflects unfolded over a period of several years and has involved support from numerous individuals whom the project team would like to thank.

To John Fei of the MacArthur Foundation's Asian Security Initiative, we express our gratitude for the initial encouragement to apply for funding as well as guidance on the study's early-stage formulation. Later on, Emma Belcher, Megan Wildebour, and Phillis D. Hollice picked up the ball and served as our points of contact and authorization for grant administration.

Within RAND, Seth Jones, former director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center, gave key moral support and guidance to the effort when it encountered the unexpected initial health setback of Angel Rabasa's illness. Later, Christine Wormuth, as ISDP director, helped shepherd the project to its conclusion and gave us an excellent review focused on ensuring that we effectively conveyed our findings in a way helpful to policymakers.

For research and administrative support throughout the study, Sunny Bhatt, Roshon Bryan, Gina Frost, and Dung Huynh proved critical to ensuring that we were able to line up meetings, arrange facilities, procure travel, and receive timely reimbursement.

Our other formal reviews were provided by Michael S. Chase of RAND and Michael Green of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Dr. Chase gave us the benefits of his deep expertise and critical understanding of regional affairs, while Dr. Green provided an extremely close reading that pushed us to think about additional factors and ensured that we covered every angle.

When the study reached the level of NSRD unit review, the unit quality assurance manager, Sarah Meadows, read the entire study and ensured that it met RAND publishing standards, pressing us to describe our methodology and case study selection justification more clearly and catching issues both big and small that we are grateful to have corrected before the study reached print.

Finally, when the study reached the copyediting and proofreading stage, Brian Carlson, Linda Theung, Erin-Elizabeth Johnson, Cynthia Lyons, and Matt Byrd combined to help us get it into a shape where it was ready to go to print.

In 300-plus pages, errors of commission, omission, oversight, or simple typography may occur. The individuals above have sought to help us catch and correct as many of these as possible—those that remain are purely the responsibility of the authors.

Abbreviations

ACSA	Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement
ADF	Australian Defence Forces
ADIZ	air defense identification zone
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASW	antisubmarine warfare
ATLA	Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Agency (Japan)
CCG	China Coast Guard
CEPA	comprehensive economic partnership agreement
CP	counterpiracy
CUES	code for unplanned encounters at sea
DCA	Defense Cooperation Arrangement
DCWG	Defense Cooperation Working Group

DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DND	Department of National Defense (the Philippines)
DOD	Department of Defence (Australia)
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DPRK	Democratic Republic of Korea (North Korea)
EAS	East Asian Summit
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
FOIP	Free and Open Indo-Pacific
GSOMIA	general security of military intelligence agreement
HA/DR	humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
JMSDF	Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force
JSDF	Japan Self-Defense Forces
KAI	Korea Aerospace Industries
MDA	Maritime Domain Awareness
MIKTA	Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, and Australia
MLE	maritime law enforcement
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MTDP	Mid-Term Defense Program
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NPT	nonproliferation treaty
PAF	Philippines Armed Forces
PASSEX	passing exercises
PLA	People's Liberation Army
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
SAR	search and rescue
SAREX	search and rescue exercise
THAAD	Terminal High Altitude Area Defense
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia
Track 1.5 dialogue	Unofficial dialogue between think-tank and/or academic specialists from one or more countries where current or recently retired officials may be present but are seen to be acting exclusively in their personal capacities
2 + 2 dialogue	Official bilateral dialogue with foreign and defense secretaries from both sides present
UN	United Nations
UNC	United Nations Command
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNPKO	UN peacekeeping operation

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Thickening the Web of Asian Security Cooperation

Trends in Security in the Indo-Pacific Region

For decades after World War II, the U.S.-established security architecture in East Asia was described by most observers as based on a "hub-and-spokes" model that bound countries as diverse as Australia, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand into a set of bilateral security alliances with the United States.[1] The reasons for such an approach were complex but included a desire on the part of the United States to maximize its ability to limit the freedom of action of allies who might otherwise drag the United States into conflicts that Washington hoped to avoid (Cha, 2009/2010); strategies by specific actors to avoid being asked to contribute to other states' security (Dower, 1979; Green, 2001; Pyle, 2007; Samuels, 2007); legal and policy constraints on decisionmakers;[2] issues of historical and territorial disputes and

[1] Additional allies and partners were also part of this network at various points in time. The Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty bound the United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan) together from 1954–1979; likewise, the United States intervened militarily in Southeast Asia from 1955–1973 in an attempt to prevent the communist takeover of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam).

[2] In 1967, Japan issued policy guidance banning arms exports to certain types of destination countries; subsequent policy guidelines were designed to expand these rules into a broader ban on exports of defense articles to any nation (though from the 1980s onward these were relaxed to permit co-development with the United States) (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan's Policies on the Control of Arms Exports"). On April 1, 2014, Japan

political friction among the various potential partner states (Taylor, 2012; Michishita, 2014; Kim, 2014; Glosserman and Snyder, 2015); questions of identity and norms (Katzenstein, 1996; Oros, 2008); and/or shortfalls in capacity to contribute (Green, 1995; Samuels, 1994). Early efforts in the mid-1950s to stand up an anticommunist multilateral alliance system in Asia akin to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) foundered, with the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) ultimately being replaced by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a body that does not incorporate a mutual security commitment among its member states. After the end of the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and the dissolution of the U.S. alliance with the Republic of China (Taiwan) in 1979, the region's overall security architecture essentially settled into the pattern that prevails today, with minor adjustments.

Since the end of the Cold War, significant changes have occurred within the bilateral alliances between the United States and its regional partners, including upgrading and expanding the areas of focus of the U.S.-Japan alliance (Schoff, 2017); broadening and deepening the U.S.-South Korea alliance (Snyder, 2009b; 2018); shifting force levels across the alliances; withdrawing U.S. forces from the Philippines; rotating U.S. forces through Australia; diversifying basing and force mix; and significantly downgrading U.S. defense cooperation with the People's Republic of China after the Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989. However, these changes by and large did not change the fundamental structure of the region's security architecture.

Possible alternative security architectures have emerged or been discussed over time, though these have, to date, not taken on the degree of importance that the "hub-and-spokes" model has. Some of these have included the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum; the possibility of turning the Six-Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear

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issued new guidance governing the export of defense articles that substantially liberalized the restrictions on sales abroad (see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016a). More generally, as Liff has pointed out, in response to changes in Japan's regional security environment changed and developments in the defense technology space, Tokyo repeatedly shifted its broad conceptions of what it could and couldn't do with respect to security affairs, even if it didn't adjust its ban on arms exports until the early 2010s. See Liff, 2017.

program into a regional security dialogue organization; the concept of a "democratic security diamond," an "alliance of democracies," or more recently a "Quadrilateral dialogue" among the United States, Japan, Australia, and India aimed at ensuring a "free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific"; the notion of establishing a "G-2" or a "new-type great power relationship" between the United States and China, operating in a sort of great power condominium; or China's proposed New Security Concept or "community of common destiny" centered around an "Asia for Asians" (as proposed by Xi Jinping at the Conference on Security and Confidence-Building in Asia in 2014). For a variety of reasons largely relating to the different interests of the parties participating in these actually existing or proposed bodies, they have largely remained more notional or prospective than actual and realized.

In recent years, however, a number of U.S. allies and security partners in the Indo-Pacific have begun to expand and deepen their cooperation with each other on defense affairs outside the framework of their bilateral alliances with the United States. From Japan's attempt to export submarine technology to Australia to South Korea's co-development of advanced fighters with Indonesia, from India's inaugural naval exercise with Australia to its training of Vietnamese military officers, to the willingness of the Philippines to establish formal high-level security consultations with Tokyo and Australia, key states in the Indo-Pacific region have been drawing closer in new and important ways. Yet the scale, motivations, and implications of these efforts have been relatively underexplored and poorly understood.

To date, despite the potential importance of these trends for shaping and reshaping regional security dynamics, they have attracted only limited attention from scholars and policymakers. One early and prescient study of this set of trends laid out a number of important hypotheses to explain why the region was forming a new "power web," but since that time little follow-up work has been done to explicate these ongoing changes, their causes and their implications (Cronin et al., 2013). While such cooperation is not terribly relevant for high-end alliance-type kinetic deterrence or war fighting, it is highly relevant for the more likely lower-end situations where intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), especially for maritime domain awareness (MDA), and

the ability to employ maritime law enforcement (MLE) platforms to police one's coastline can be used in tandem with more limited military capabilities to take lower-end coercion off the table as well as improve general regional security against nonstate actors such as poachers and pirates, terrorist groups, or transnational criminal networks. These types of cooperation are also critical because the pathways of communication they lay down, the capabilities development they engender, and the trust that they can facilitate serve as the context against which macroscale competition over visions of regional order unfold; they likely also help shape how various actors respond to initiatives major powers put forth.

As some leading analysts have recognized, the growth of security cooperation among U.S. allies and partners is highly desirable for U.S. national security, and worth encouraging and supporting (Green, Hicks, and Cooper, 2014). Observers have argued that such cooperation could potentially help mute tensions in the U.S.-China relationship and smooth the way for deeper, more sustainable U.S. security cooperation with Asian allies and partners by embedding security norms more deeply in the region and making it harder for China to coerce its neighbors (Ratner, 2013). Indeed, it is worth noting that U.S. policies toward the region under the Obama administration's Asia-Pacific "rebalance" as well as under the Trump administration's "free and open Indo-Pacific strategy" consistently sought to encourage and facilitate the expansion and deepening of regional security cooperation as a strategy to meet the challenges facing this dynamic region. Clearly, understanding the causes, trajectories, and consequences of the growth of defense relationships among key U.S. allies and partners is therefore an important research topic for U.S. national security.

In designing a study that could shed light on these important questions, we have sought to identify the most important actors and forms of security cooperation present and growing among U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific. To that end, we identified seven of the most strategic countries in the region—Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam—and five types of security cooperation: high-level strategic dialogues (variously described as "strategic partnerships," "comprehensive strategic partnerships," or symbolized by new or deeper contacts among senior lead-

ers, most notably in the form of "2 + 2 dialogues" bringing together foreign and defense secretaries from two partner states); joint military training and exercises; arms sales and transfers; joint defense industrial development; and/or the signing of acquisition and cross-servicing agreements (ACSA) or generalized security of military intelligence agreements (GSOMIA).[3] Together, these cover many of the important actors and consequential types of interactions that Indo-Pacific partner nations are engaging in with each other. Others, including Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand (to list a few), are clearly also strategically important but appeared less active and less networked across the various factors examined here and so were given less attention.

We then posited several possible hypothesized explanations for these new contacts.[4] At the risk of oversimplifying, these could be described as related realist considerations related to power; liberal interpretations focused on domestic factors; or constructivist explanations that call attention to the role of identities and norms. An additional set of considerations relates to the growing costs of defense hardware and maintaining a defense industrial base, bringing economics into the explanation as well. The lines between these explanations are not hard and fast, and in fact several explanations can have some substantial degree of overlap. The specific explanations derived from these metanarratives are described below.

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[3] These seven countries also happened to be engaged in some of the highest levels of security cooperation of the types studied here of any countries in the Indo-Pacific region, excepting the United States and China.

[4] Additional explanations are also possible. For example, regional actors do not only cooperate in response to their calculations about the balance of power; threat perceptions, including concerns over North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs, associated ballistic missile delivery vehicles, and sanctions enforcement on that regime have also spurred cooperation among the United States, Japan, and South Korea as well as among the United States, Japan, and Australia. Similarly, concerns over piracy, terrorism, and other transnational criminal activities have fueled engagement among Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines as well as other countries in the region. The role of the United States in encouraging bi-, tri-, and multilateral cooperation—especially between Japan and South Korea, Japan and India, Japan and Australia, the Quad countries, Korea and India, and Korea and the Philippines—should not be overlooked either.

First, it is possible that regional states, especially U.S. allies, could be cooperating more closely with each other out of a fear of U.S. decline and/or abandonment. Traditional international relations theories predict that such concerns over declining allied commitment or capacity could lead to greater efforts on the part of the vulnerable states to self-strengthen and/or tighten cooperation with other partners who share similar interests, values, or threat perceptions (Cha, 1999). A variant of this "U.S. role and behavior as key driver" explanation that surfaced during the research for this report was the insight that, for some countries, their expanded engagement with regional partners stems not from a fear that the United States might abandon the region but rather a fear that they are themselves overly dependent on the United States and that this circumstance unduly constrains their foreign policy flexibility or sense of autonomy and independence. Such a sentiment cuts across political lines in many countries, with widespread concern in Australia about U.S. reliability and the vision Washington has for its own role in the future regional order; resentment of dependency among left-leaning nationalists in South Korea and Japan and right-leaning nationalists in the Philippines; concerns about dependence on the United States among politicians of all stripes in Indonesia; and widespread desire among key bureaucrats in India to work with other partners so as to avoid "capture" by the United States.

Some additional factors relate to power, albeit perhaps at a lower level of abstraction than the focus on systemic polarity or great power competition might suggest on first blush. Such factors could include the positive encouragement the United States has offered to countries in the region—Japan, South Korea, Australia, India, and the Philippines, most notably—to engage in broader and deeper security cooperation, including bilaterally, trilaterally, and multilaterally. A variant of this could be the U.S. request that some of the region's countries—especially Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Australia—contribute to U.S.-led military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which gave these countries experience operating overseas in new environments, sometimes in tandem, and in addressing new types of challenges. For Japan and Australia, for example, operating in the waters of the Arabian Sea/Persian Gulf and on the ground in Iraq contrib-

uted substantially to a sense comfort with interoperability between the two forces.[5]

Additionally, for some countries, most especially Japan, such interactions helped to validate the nations' political leaders, built patterns of cooperation and established the precedent that such engagements were politically acceptable, and contributed to these countries' growing sense of role in international society or "normalization" as a security actor (Green, 2001; Hornung, 2009).

A second possible explanation has more to do with a rising sense of shared threat, most notably from an assertive China that has for some years shifted toward a more aggressive posture toward the Indo-Pacific region for reasons that scholars have been debating (Scobell and Harold, 2013; Yan Xuetong, 2014; Friedberg, 2015; Mastro, 2015). States perceiving a growing threat from China's increasingly capable military power, their ability to wage economic coercion campaigns, and their willingness to play in the gray zones between peace and war and to undertake political warfare by unconventional means may feel increasingly exposed and seek to strengthen themselves, their partnerships, and regional order by striving to invest more in partnerships with like-minded (or similarly threatened) regional partners. Such sentiments affect Japan over the Senkakus Islands; South Korea over the China's economic warfare in reacting to the deployment of a U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery to the peninsula; India over the presence in the Indian Ocean of Chinese submarines and the 2017 Doklam clash at the triborder junction with Bhutan; Vietnam and the Philippines over their maritime disputes with Beijing over the South China Sea; and Indonesia over China's claims to exclusive economic zone waters off the coast of the Natuna Islands, to name just a few concerns.

A subset of this explanation relates not to regional threat perceptions about China but to the risks to regional stability and security stemming from North Korea. Pyongyang's development of nuclear explosive devices, chemical weapons, ballistic missiles, and advanced

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[5] The authors thank Michael J. Green for this insight during the review process.

cyber capabilities has incentivized countries as wide-ranging as South Korea, Japan, Australia, India, the Philippines, and Vietnam to increase their defense cooperation. From coordinating diplomatic positions and defense policy to intelligence sharing, and from acquisition of missile defense capabilities to bi-, tri-, and multilateral group exercises and sanctions enforcement patrols, countries across the Indo-Pacific have been spurred to broader and deeper security cooperation to address the threat North Korea poses to their interests, values, and security.

Related to the threats posed by China and North Korea, as well as poaching, piracy, terrorist groups, and transnational criminal networks, countries across the region have (often with active U.S. encouragement and support) sought to develop capabilities that require bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral cooperation to be truly effective. From countering the ballistic missile threat posed by North Korea to dealing with increasingly capable Chinese and North Korean cyberattacks, regional actors have sought to field systems such as integrated air and missile defenses or effective computer network intrusion detection systems that require information exchanges and policy coordination to be most effective. At lower ends of the conflict and threat spectrum, gray-zone coercion such as China's efforts to surreptitiously leverage maritime militia and fishing fleets to steal neighbors' territories requires substantial MDA and MLE capabilities that have linked countries like Japan and Korea that can provide air and maritime platforms to recipient countries like the Philippines and Vietnam. The United States, through its Maritime Security Initiative, has sought to encourage the proliferation of ISR, MDA, and MLE capabilities so as to prevent China from creating more "facts on the water" than it has already done through its construction and militarization of artificial islands in the South China Sea (Sanger and Gladstone, 2015).

A third explanation for the states' motivations for some forms of enhanced defense cooperation comes less from the international arena and sources it instead to domestic considerations. While the preceding explanations reflect realist balance of power considerations, this narrative draws instead on what international relations theorists would regard as a liberal approach. In such explanations, what happens inside a country matters enormously for its foreign policy, with countries

developing new types of defense contacts and cooperation as a consequence of coalitions seeking to further economic growth in the defense sector. Such coalitions could include defense industrial firms, government representatives, bureaucrats, and key decisionmakers; alternatively, senior leaders may feel that they need to deliver big defense exports or secure high-profile cooperation agreements to help secure their political flanks against real or potential rivals, meaning that they undertake such steps less as a consequence of regional trends and more as a hedge against domestic political competition on security affairs.

A fourth possibility, which can in some cases be regarded as a variant of the third approach, is that these actors are enhancing their regional security cooperation as a consequence of changing expectations among leaders or their supporters about what it means to be developed middle powers. In this view, governments in states like Japan, India, and South Korea may be seeking new and bigger stages on which to play a role in world affairs commensurate with their identities as actors of some means and substance who have to demonstrate to their home audiences that the leaders' visions are indeed sufficiently broad and forward-leaning.

A fifth line of analysis explores whether or not any regional identities or norms are shaping these nations' defense activities, perhaps leading them to cooperate more deeply out of a sense that they are all "in it together" or that they normatively "should" build defense ties because of a common set of values or a common identity. Evidence for such an approach could be seen as reflecting a constructivist emphasis on norms, identity, interests, and interaction over time.

A sixth and related approach inquires about the possibility that such cooperation may grow out of a more calculated cost-benefit approach by weaker actors in the international system who are seeking to improve their bargaining power by enhancing cooperation in and around regional multilateral organizations such as ASEAN and its associated bodies, using defense cooperation to reinforce "ASEAN centrality" as the driving factor in regional political life.

A final explanation derives less from considerations about the international balance of power, domestic interest groups' preferences, or norms and institutions and focuses instead on the growing cost of

maintaining a defense industrial base in an era of explosive growth in the costs of weapons systems. This hypothesis might on first blush be thought to explain only a narrow slice of such expanded defense cooperation—those focused on joint defense industrial development and/or arms sales and transfers. It is, however, possible that, for some countries, some or even many of the broader and deeper security contacts that states in the Indo-Pacific have exhibited since the turn of the century could be related, at least in part, to a desire to support expanded defense exports and off-load costs of developing new systems by sharing costs.

Two important caveats to the above hypotheses are warranted here.

First, not all of the countries under examination in this study are engaged in all of the types of contacts, and so not all of the hypotheses are necessarily applicable to all of the countries. For example, the Philippines does not have a domestic defense industry to speak of and so is not motivated to export weapons nor to engage in joint or co-development of weapons systems; similarly, while Australia is seeking to retain its shipbuilding industry, it is not a producer of all types of weapons platforms or systems.

A separate, and unrelated, caveat is that the explanations are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and in some cases they may all be present in some measure.

Purpose, Approach, and Organization

This study was motivated by a desire to better understand why key U.S. allies and security partners in the Indo-Pacific appear to be engaging in new, or deeper, forms of security cooperation since the turn of the century. A few additional words on the terminology and case selection used in this study are in order here.

First, in this study we employ the terms "defense cooperation," "security cooperation," "defense engagement," or "defense diplomacy" to identify the same things. While in other contexts or studies these terms are used in ways that may be related but distinct, the terms are here used interchangeably to refer to five types of activities: high-level

political-military dialogues, including leadership summits, meetings of foreign and/or defense ministers, and high-level 2 + 2 meetings that bring together leading foreign and defense officials of two countries; arms sales and transfers of defense equipment; joint defense industrial development; military and security services training and exercises, including search and rescue exercises (SAREX), passing exercises (PASSEX), submarine rescue exercises and other types of field engagements; and the signing of ACSAs and GSOMIA. The study also touches tangentially on tri- and multilateral engagement forums and exercises, though it treats these as less directly relevant.

Second, because many of these countries are already U.S. allies or security partners, we did not choose to explore the ways in which they are deepening ties with the United States directly; that is an important trend but is left for a different study. Further, because few of these nations are engaging with the People's Republic of China in the sorts of activities described above, we have not chosen to explore their security relationships with that nation. Indeed, as we will show, in many cases the growth of Asian security cooperation outside of the "hub-and-spokes" model is being driven at least in part by anxiety over China's rise and a desire to augment internal balancing efforts and external cooperation with the United States by adding on a third layer of regional partner cooperation.

Finally, owing to considerations of space and limited resources, we were not able to devote substantial attention to other potential partners in the region or with an interest in Indo-Pacific developments. Clearly, countries like Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand share some elements of the features that made our selection of the seven main cases attractive, and these states do cooperate in some of the same policy spaces with the other Indo-Pacific nations examined here. Similarly, many European nations, whether grouped collectively as the European Union (EU) or under the framework of NATO, also have interests in and contacts with a number of Indo-Pacific states in the realm of defense cooperation, and in some cases (especially with Japan), these have been expanding and deepening significantly in recent years. Finally, despite its growing ties with China, Russia continues to sell arms and engage in defense contacts with at

least some of the key actors in the Indo-Pacific, most notably India and Vietnam, and we recognize that in choosing our seven countries to focus on more closely we have of necessity focused less on Moscow's policies and motivations. Unfortunately, every study has to draw its framework in some way, and some important facts or potential foci are always left outside the scope of analysis. We can do little here except acknowledge this reality, attempt to be cognizant of it to the extent of our limited resources and expertise, and highlight ways in which these choices might shape our analysis. Ultimately, we believe that despite these choices, we are able to add substantial value to the understanding of important mega-trends in security relationships among key Indo-Pacific actors in ways that will explicate where the region is heading and why.

The remainder of this report unfolds in eight chapters. Chapters Two through Four evaluate three large powers—Japan, South Korea, and India—that have been expanding their defense engagement with other Indo-Pacific partners and have the capacity to provide their counterparts with defense financial assistance, hardware, and/or training and insights into military operations. Chapters Five through Eight explore the motivations and capabilities of a set of regional actors—Australia, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines—that have been somewhat less active or more narrowly focused on acquiring hardware, capabilities, and skills from other states.

The chapters generally attempt to organize their discussion of partners and activities in the order of importance of these to each country under study. These descriptions should be taken as indicative but by no means definitive, since on any given area a partner might prove more important than its overall ranking might indicate, and a number of our interlocutors warned us that their own government treats all partners as equally important. As such, while we try to give the reader insights into the dimensions of the relationship and how these are thought about by policymakers and analysts in each country, it is generally best to treat the order in which analyses are presented as largely heuristic rather than a description of some set priority ranking.

The study chapters draw on a wide range of data inputs, including official defense white papers; government policy statements and

officials' speeches; secondary source analyses by subject matter experts; open source media reports; and in situ interviews conducted with current and former government officials and military officers, think-tank analysts, academics, reporters, and industry representatives. For each of the country chapters, the authors traveled to the region and conducted one or more research trips to collect data and ensure that the descriptions of the country's perspectives on the growth of regional security cooperation took into account a range of views from across the political and policymaking spectrum. Further details on the specific data collected are provided in each of the country chapters.

Chapter Two, "Japan: Strengthening Cooperation to Reinforce Regional Order in the Shadow of a Rising China," describes Japan's growing involvement in regional defense cooperation as stemming from numerous sources, including a desire to ensure that Japan offers as much support to the U.S.-led regional order as possible against a backdrop of a rising threat from China; a desire to play a role as a "first-tier" power (i.e., an identity-based explanation); and a clear realization by officials at the Japanese Ministry of Defense that the nation's defense industrial base needs to be a part of the solution to expanding the country's regional influence (as well as helping to preserve and modernize the defense sector). It also highlights some of the continuing constraints on Japan's role in making what the Abe administration has called "proactive contributions to peace," including the continued hesitancy of Japan's public to take on external security commitments and the relative disinterest of Japan's defense industrial firms in the export markets (in part out of a lack of experience but probably more so due to concerns about the potential impact on their reputations of wading into the international arms export market).

Chapter Three, "The Republic of Korea: Middle Power Diplomacy, 'Asia's Paradox' Spur Expanding Regional Defense Cooperation under Constraints," looks at how Seoul has sought to maximize its security and its autonomy while navigating between the United States and China, all while dealing with the existential threat of North Korea. Constrained by domestic sensitivities over ties with Japan and perceptions that a focus on ASEAN, India, or Australia should come secondary to inter-Korean relations, political administrations from both

the left and the right see reasons to pursue greater defense cooperation, whether to enhance South Korea's autonomy (progressives) or to contribute to the regional order and place some constraints on China's assertiveness (conservatives). Interestingly, South Korea's defense industrial firms are not particularly strong advocates of exports, nor have some South Korean defense officials favored expanded security cooperation with the region (which some view as a risky distraction from preparing to deter or defeat North Korea). Instead, regional security cooperation has paradoxically more frequently been pushed by political leaders at the top and their foreign policy advisers looking to find ways to enhance autonomy or tighten alliance cooperation with the United States, with both ends of the political spectrum seeing it as useful to their cause (albeit for different reasons).

Chapter Four, "India: From Nonalignment to Engagement with Strategic Autonomy," identifies New Delhi's motivations as stemming primarily from security concerns related to China's growing power and assertiveness, with additional impetus provided by India's quest to develop a domestic defense industry and to atone for decades of diplomatic neglect in East and Southeast Asia. Concern about U.S. decline is not a primary factor in India's deepening security cooperation, whereas a desire to play a bigger role on the global stage and a need to sustain its domestic defense industrial base are. India's cooperation is deepest and most strategic with Japan and Vietnam, though it is increasingly dense with South Korea and Australia.

Chapter Five, "Australia: Expanding Defense Cooperation amid Alliance Dependency," explores Canberra's calculations when it comes to defense cooperation with regional partners, concluding that Australia's primary motivation is to bolster the position of its U.S. ally and to respond to the disruptions associated with the rise of China. Canberra's motivations do not stem primarily from popular expectations that the government play more of a middle power role nor do they reflect demands to act in support of the domestic defense industry (though neither is entirely absent, given discussions of Australian identity and values as well as concerns about jobs). Australia's concerns over China's growing regional influence are also found in the debate at home over China's ability to influence Australia's domestic politics

and are reflected in the decision to support a revived Quad dialogue format with the United States, Japan, and India in late 2017. Additionally, Canberra has been particularly eager to find ways to ensure that the United States remains engaged in the region, given concerns about U.S. commitment in the wake of the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, evidence that China may be closing the power gap, and questions about U.S. focus and political gridlock.

Chapter Six, "Indonesia: Growing Defense Cooperation in a Period of Transition," finds that Indonesia is developing robust international defense partnerships with all of the countries examined in this study. However, these partnerships are not part of a cohesive strategy for Indonesia to play a particular role in the emerging security architecture of the broader region. Rather, each partnership serves a particular end for Indonesia, most often as an enabler of Indonesia's progress toward developing a modern military to support its goal of playing a greater role on the global stage. While Jakarta favors defense cooperation as a pathway to facilitate the modernization of its armed forces and thereby better protect Indonesian sovereignty as well as to retain and enhance domestic defense industrial capacity, Indonesia does not see such activities as a way to make important contributions to regional order, which is itself not an especially high priority. Indeed, defense policy itself is not seen as especially important but is rather seen as a useful component of overall foreign policy. For Indonesia, reducing dependency on the United States for arms has meant that cooperation with countries like South Korea is increasingly attractive. At the same time, Jakarta has sought to avoid activities that might be perceived by Beijing as part of a balancing strategy, presenting obstacles to any efforts by Japan, India, or Australia to incorporate Indonesia in a collective effort to counter China's rise.

Chapter Seven, "Vietnam: Seeking Partners through Omnidirectional Engagement," highlights Hanoi's reasons for engaging in defense cooperation, which center around the quest to strengthen regional partnerships for the purpose of complicating China's ability to coerce or threaten Vietnam over its claims in the South China Sea. Vietnam's leadership appears to believe that deepening defense contacts

with these countries enables Vietnam to procure the military assets and training needed to more effectively modernize the Vietnamese People's Army across a range of potential mission sets. As a non-U.S. ally and a nondemocracy, Vietnam does not regard itself as having a role to play in helping sustain U.S. regional influence; Hanoi feels the need to balance its greatest national security threat (China) against its greatest regime threat (the prospect of calls for a democratic transition, possibly sponsored or supported by the United States). With limited channels of domestic interest representation and a weak defense industrial base, Vietnam's defense cooperation stems more from security calculations from its senior leadership than from any bottom-up explanation. Owing partly to a shared concern over China's rise, as well as a reluctance to condition cooperation on progress on human rights, Vietnam tends to regard both India and Japan as its most valuable defense cooperation partners. At the same time, the chapter highlights the extent to which managing the potentially explosive relationship with China serves as a continuing constraint on Hanoi's decisions about how fast and how far to go in engaging regional partners on defense affairs.

Chapter Eight, "The Philippines: Modernization with a More Diverse Set of Partners," finds that Manila, concerned about overreliance on the United States and seeking to modernize one of the weakest armed forces in Asia on an extremely constrained budget, is seeking partnership activities primarily with countries that can provide it with low-cost or free military hardware and/or training. Where the Philippines has established its most robust defense relationships, these have been with fellow U.S. treaty allies in the Asia-Pacific: Australia, Japan, and South Korea. They are the three largest suppliers of military assistance and platforms beyond the United States. These three countries enjoy high levels of interoperability with both Philippine and U.S. troops thanks to shared platforms and doctrine, along with closely aligned security interests and shared values. Best of all, from Manila's perspective, they can often provide equipment more cheaply and with fewer restrictions than the United States. The future of the Philippines' defense cooperation with regional partners has been called into question by the 2016 election of the anti-American President Rodrigo Duterte, who has signaled a desire to cooperate more with China and

Russia. The prospect of substantial change in the Philippines foreign orientation and security cooperation therefore cannot be ruled out and, combined with its overall military weakness and constrained resources, mean that Manila is unlikely to be able to serve as much more than a recipient of foreign military assistance and a training and dialogue partner in the years to come.

Chapter Nine, "Conclusions: The Future of a Densely Networked Indo-Pacific Defense Community," summarizes the research findings and explores the implications for U.S. national security and regional stability. It highlights the core takeaway from the study that, while countries in the region are cooperating more with each other than ever before on defense, this is in almost all cases a net positive for U.S. national security and regional stability and should be seen as such by U.S. policymakers. In many cases, U.S. allies are deliberately seeking to contribute more to the maintenance of international order so as to bolster the United States and ensure that China's rise is balanced effectively through the transfer of equipment that is relevant for aerial ISR, MDA, MLE, and antisubmarine warfare (ASW); in most cases, these are areas also prioritized by the United States under its Maritime Security Initiative (The White House, 2015a). While some U.S. partners—most notably U.S. ally the Philippines and nonally Indonesia—are engaging more with other regional actors out of a desire to reduce dependency on the United States, in cooperating with Japan or South Korea they are nonetheless reinforcing ties with U.S. allies who are status quo–oriented and seeking to constrain Chinese aggression. Indeed, Japan and South Korea, together with Australia and India, emerge from the study as key partners of the United States by helping to build partner capacity and take options for no- or low-cost coercion by China off the table by bolstering the capacities of important partner nations like Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. U.S. policy should focus attention on understanding and supporting these nations whenever their efforts to develop ties with other Indo-Pacific nations can be additive to U.S. aims of building partner capacity.

CHAPTER TWO

Japan: Strengthening Defense Cooperation to Reinforce Region Order in the Shadow of a Rising China

Perhaps no other country reviewed in this study as perfectly exemplifies the multiple potential explanations for expanding defense cooperation as Japan. Tokyo has pursued tighter defense and security ties with Australia, India, South Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia in an effort both to help bind the United States to the Indo-Pacific region and to hedge against potential reduction in American commitment to Japan's security; to balance against a more capable and aggressive China; to find ways to offset cost growth pressures in the defense industrial sector; and as a reflection of widespread elite agreement on the importance of remaining a first-tier power. Since the mid-1990s, and at a gradually accelerating rate in the 2000s and a rapidly accelerating rate since the early 2010s, across both the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the Liberal Democratic Party, Japanese policymakers have sought to expand and deepen defense cooperation with Japan's Indo-Pacific neighbors. Such efforts have included high-level political, diplomatic, and defense dialogues; liberalization of constraints on sales of defense technology and transfer of dual-use or MLE hardware; exploratory talks on defense industrial cooperation; increased bi-, tri-, and multilateral training and exercises and military exchanges; and the inking of GSOMIA and ACSAs, as well as discussions on arrangements for visiting forces agreements, all of which serve to facilitate hardware, intelligence, and personnel exchanges.

This chapter reviews Japanese security cooperation with the six Indo-Pacific partner nations considered in this study, exploring Tokyo's steps to date as well as the potential future evolution of Japan's cooperative security ties with the region. It also identifies Japan's motivations for broadening and deepening ties with Canberra, New Delhi, Seoul, Hanoi, Manila, and Jakarta, and the implications of such expanding contacts for the United States and regional stability. It concludes that all four of the main explanations considered in this study—concerns over U.S. reliability, fear of a rising China's growing aggressiveness, anxieties about cost growth, and a desire to continue to play a role as a leading regional power—help shape and inspire Tokyo's policymakers to expand their regional security partnerships. At the heart of Japan's growing profile, however, lies its need to balance China's rising power and attempt to shape the region and the incentive structures Beijing confronts.

The remainder of this chapter unfolds as follows. After a brief discussion of data and methodology, the chapter presents a short overview of Japan's post–World War II approach to national security and how, after a long period of extremely slow change, Tokyo's views, capabilities, legislation, and behavior have evolved rapidly in since 2011. Following this, the chapter turns to a discussion of Japan's relations with partner nations Australia, South Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, India, and Indonesia, listed in the rough order of their assessed importance to Tokyo as partners. In each case, the chapter reviews the overall relationship, identifying key considerations, while also delving into the specific aspects of each of the five types of defense cooperation noted in Chapter One and how these are likely to evolve in the future. The chapter then concludes with an assessment of how such expanded defense and security ties matter for the United States and the region.

Data and Methodology

To describe Japan's defense cooperation with the partner countries that constitute the focus of this research, the study draws on key official documents such as Cabinet and Ministry of Foreign Affairs descrip-

tions of official Japanese policy as well as data drawn from Ministry of Defense (MOD) white papers. It also leverages secondary source scholarly analyses of Japan's foreign and security policies authored by American academics and think-tank experts as well as open source English-language media reporting on Japan's security cooperation activities. Finally, it draws on over two dozen in-person interviews conducted with key Japanese interlocutors. These included current and former defense and foreign policy decisionmakers; military officers; defense-focused academics and think-tank analysts; reporters focused on defense and political affairs; and defense industry officials. We also spoke with U.S. officials tracking Japan's security cooperation. These interviews were conducted in a series of trips to Japan between 2015 and 2018, and all interviewees were offered anonymity so as to encourage them to speak as freely as possible.

Japan's Evolving Approach to National Security

For most of the period from 1945 onward, Japan was almost exclusively focused on its domestic economic development, with foreign and defense policies largely left to the United States, an approach known as the Yoshida Doctrine after former Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru who sought to rebuild his country as an economic superpower. Under this approach, Tokyo minimized expenditures on defense, abjured involvement in any overseas military activity, refrained from alliances (other than that with the United States), and placed substantial policy constraints on its defense industrial firms, including a 1967 Diet policy statement banning arms sales to communist bloc countries, nations under UN sanction, and any country involved in or likely to be involved in an armed conflict (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan's Policies on the Control of Arms Exports"). Further, from 1976 onward, with few exceptions Japanese administrations generally adhered to a policy of capping defense spending at 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) (Wright, 2016).

Japan's approach to defense and security affairs began to shift subtly in the late 1970s as economic recovery plus renewed tensions between Washington and Moscow fueled greater demands for burden sharing from the United States; the outcome was the 1978 U.S.-Japan

Defense Guidelines, which expanded Japan's responsibilities for its own security (Watanabe, Yoshida, and Hironaka, 2016). While the constraints Tokyo operates under have always been more political and policy-based than strictly legal/constitutional in nature (Liff, 2017), the release of the first guidelines saw Japan shift incrementally toward a greater regional defense profile (Przystup, 2015). Indeed, Japan's response to the U.S. Nixon/Guam doctrine, the withdrawal from Vietnam, the severing of the alliance with Taiwan, and especially the Carter attempt to remove forces from Korea was to increase its own cooperation with South Korea, an early version of responding to fears about U.S. staying power (Cha, 1999). Shortly thereafter, in 1981, Tokyo further increased its commitment to regional security, agreeing to take responsibility for policing sea lines of communication out to 1,000 nautical miles, a preview of its twenty-first-century approach to seeking to take onboard expanded roles and missions so as to keep the United States engaged in the region.

Throughout the mid-1980s and on through the end of the 1990s, Tokyo began to relax some of the constraints on its defense industrial cooperation with the United States, moving first to co-develop the FS-X fighter jet and later pursuing research on ballistic missile defense, but still otherwise adhered to its "3 principles" on arms exports (Lorell, 1996; Swaine, Swanger, and Kawakami, 2001). Indeed, during the early 1990s there were even questions about whether and if the alliance with the United States should be maintained with the disappearance of the Soviet Union, though these questions were largely rendered obsolete by concerns over North Korea's emerging nuclear weapons program and China's rapid military buildup and aggressive behavior toward Taiwan (Schoff, 2017).

Tokyo's experience of being criticized for insufficient contributions to the 1991 Gulf War; its 1992 authorization of the first-ever overseas deployment of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) to participate in a UN peacekeeping operation (UNPKO) in Cambodia; the collapse of the Socialists; and the fears stoked in Tokyo by the possibility of a U.S. war with North Korea in 1994 or with China in 1995–1996 (which it could do little to stop but might be asked to do much to support) fueled a continued liberalization of constraints on the JSDF

intended to give the country more policy options. Responding to the growing tensions in the region, Japan released its *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY 1996 and Beyond*, highlighting both the continuing importance of the United States but also for the first time the importance of "various activities . . . to deepen cooperative relations among nations and to achieve regional stability, such as promotion of bilateral dialogues and search for a regional security framework" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1995).

Following up on this somewhat vague and hesitant initial step to promote broader security ties with its neighbors, Japan returned in 1997 to the core focus of its approach to security, the U.S.-Japan alliance, but did so in a way that signaled an evolution in Japan's commitment to the region. Washington, D.C., and Tokyo released revised defense guidelines expanding Japan's commitment to be involved in "situations in areas surrounding Japan," a further evolution in Tokyo's thinking about involvement with the region. Shortly thereafter, North Korea fired a ballistic missile over Japan in 1998 and infiltrated into Japanese territorial waters spy ships that refused to stop when ordered to do so by the Japan Coast Guard, leading to the first-ever postwar use of force by Japan against a vessel at sea. These incidents cast in a more positive light calls by some in the United States for Japan to become a more "normal nation," further relaxing the constraints on its security behavior (Green, 2001).

Still, identity factors relating to mistrust of civilian control over the military and a high degree of domestic political resistance to balancing China more forcefully continued to play a major role in constraining Japan's regional security cooperation (Oros, 2008; Smith, 2016).[1] While Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro moved to assert more strongly Japan's break with its postwar guilt through his visits to Yasukuni Shrine, he and his immediate successors Abe Shinzo,

[1] Oros (2008) notes that Japanese society continues to exhibit a strong mistrust of politicians' ability or willingness to restrain the armed forces, something he dubs a "culture of domestic anti-militarism." Smith (2016) notes that Japanese businesses (especially trading houses and manufacturing firms) regard confrontation with China as highly undesirable for their interests.

Aso Taro, and Fukuda Yasuo all continued to seek a cooperative and largely engagement-focused relationship with China. Still, under Abe's first term in office (2006–2007), Tokyo did take some steps to begin bolstering its domestic defense capabilities, most notably by upgrading the Japan Defense Agency to be the Ministry of Defense in 2007. Still, for the most part Tokyo's approach to security during this period relied on downplaying or deferring efforts to work more closely with other regional actors on defense and seeking instead to manage historical, territorial, and maritime resource disputes with China (Manicom, 2014).

The 2009 election of the Democratic Party of Japan brought to power a political party headed by a prime minister, Hatoyama Yukio, who had expressly sought to reach out to China, as had leading DPJ party heavyweight Ozawa Ichiro. As such, it came as an enormous shock to the Japanese political elite when China reacted extremely negatively to the detention of a drunken fishing trawler captain who twice rammed JCG vessels near the Senkakus Islands in 2010, with Beijing cutting off exports of rare earth elements among other measures. Two years later, China confirmed its threatening status in the minds of many Japanese observers when it refused to accept the Noda Yoshihiko administration's explanation for why it had to nationalize the Senkakus to keep the governor of Tokyo, Ishihara Shintaro, from purchasing them in 2012. Over the following year, Chinese intrusions into the waters and airspace around the islands spiked, and in December 2013 Beijing unilaterally announced an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) that overlapped with the Senkakus.

For many Japanese observers, China's actions during the 2010–2013 time frame constitute the most important explanatory variable in accounting for Japan's growing efforts to shape a counterbalancing coalition and set of norms in the region; as one interviewee put it, these were the years when "Japan's view of China changed dramatically . . . and ordinary Japanese first recognize the threat China poses to our territorial integrity and security" (author interview). In response, Japan initiated a series of policy moves that one expert observer later described as a "growing hard hedge" against China's regional assertiveness and expanding power (Hornung, 2014). At the same time, Tokyo worried

that the U.S. commitment to Asia might be fading, a consideration that was partially offset by the announcement of the "pivot" or "rebalance," but which resurfaced when Washington appeared to embrace Beijing's proposed "new-type great power relationship" and failed to push back effectively on China's construction of artificial islands South China Sea. Such moves further incentivized Japan to bolster its relationships with regional partners in part to keep the United States fully involved and active in the Indo-Pacific.

To do so, Tokyo began revising the JSDF's doctrine away from a static defense against a ground invasion from the north to an air, naval, and missile-centric threat originating from the country's south and west. This approach sough to create a more "dynamic defense force" as described in the 2010 *National Defense Program Guidelines* (NDPG), Japan's basic policy document for defense (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2010). The 2010 NDPG also promoted an expansion of security cooperation with Australia, South Korea, and the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and began to look at the notion of "strategic official development assistance" (ODA). During this period Tokyo also moved procure new high-end defense capabilities such as the F-35 and revisited its constraints on defense exports, with then–DPJ policy chief Maehara Seiji calling for a relaxation on the arms export ban (Kyodo News, 2011).

The election of Abe Shinzo to a second term as prime minister in December 2012 came in part on the strength of concerns in Japan that the DPJ was mishandling relations with the United States and in part due to a perceived need to stand up to China more forcefully. Shortly after his election, Abe delivered a speech in Washington, D.C., at the Center for Strategic and International Studies where he proclaimed that "Japan is back" and that "Japan is not, and will never be, a Tier-Two country." Emphasizing an approach that combined both identity appeals and normative arguments as well as practical considerations, Abe outlined a strategy for Japan centered on self-strengthening, closer cooperation with the United States, and promotion of international rules and norms in tandem with regional partners such as Australia, South Korea, and "like-minded democracies" (Abe, 2013).

In support of his vision of an energetic Japan determined not to slip into the ranks of second-tier middle powers, the Abe administration has undertaken a wide range of steps to bolster the country's national security, in what one close observer has described as nothing less than a "security renaissance" (Oros, 2017). Such moves included reforming the policymaking process by establishing a National Security Adviser, a National Security Secretariat, and publishing the country's first-ever National Security Strategy. The National Security Strategy emphasizes making "proactive contributions to peace" in an effort to define a more activist role for Japan in shaping the regional security environment through intensified cooperation with South Korea, Australia, ASEAN, and India, all of which are specifically named in the document (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2013b).

In April 2014 the government revised its policy on defense equipment transfers abroad, issuing the "New Three Principles" on the transfer of defense equipment and technology that dramatically relax the constraints on export and defense industrial cooperation, permitting such exchanges when "the transfer contributes to active promotion of peace contribution and international cooperation" and it "contributes to Japan's security" (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2016a). Explaining Japan's growing commitment to regional order maintenance at the Shangri-La Dialogue at the end of May 2014, Prime Minister Abe sought to draw a picture of a common commitment to the rule of law among the United States, Japan, Australia, India, and ASEAN. Noting that Tokyo would offer "its utmost support for the efforts of the countries of ASEAN as they work to ensure the security of the seas and the skies, and thoroughly maintain freedom of navigation and freedom of overflight," Abe highlighted Tokyo's willingness to transfer coastal patrol platforms, training and exercises, and defense educational exchanges to ASEAN (Abe, 2014a).

The Diet also enacted a Law on Specially Designated State Secrets intended to facilitate greater intelligence and defense industrial cooperation with partner nations by tightening Japan's regulations on classified information (Umeda, 2015). And in February 2015 the Cabinet, describing its goal as promotion of development "in a broader sense . . . encompass[ing] such activities as peacebuilding and governance"

revised Japan's policies on ODA to be "more strategic." This, the Cabinet pointed out, would help better align Japan's ODA with its new National Security Strategy, further noting that this was required of Japan as "a major player in the world" that was expected to contribute proactively to international peace while at the same time avoiding "any use of development cooperation for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015a). As one interviewee explained, the new "strategic ODA" category permits Japan, through its Japan International Cooperation Agency, to provide support to regional partners' coast guards and MLE authorities, including helping them to procure patrol boats and surveillance equipment (author interview).

In terms of strategic efforts to place itself in a position to shape the region's future evolution, in March 2013 the Abe administration confirmed the intentions of the Noda administration by announcing it would seek to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement so as to help write the rules of trade in the Asia-Pacific. After the United States withdrew from the agreement in early 2017, the Abe administration reorganized the deal and passed it as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership; following ratification by the Australian Parliament on October 31, 2018, the deal is expected to enter into force on December 30, 2018, and will bind together eleven Indo-Pacific nations (Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam) in a trade deal covering roughly 17 percent of the global economy (Smyth and Harding, 2018).

Paired with these legal and policymaking reforms and geoeconomic moves, in the military domain, the Diet began an increase in the budget of the MOD for six consecutive years from FY 2013–2019, enabling it to use the additional funds in part to procure new, high-end defense equipment (Kelly and Kubo, 2017c). The MOD also revised the NDPG in late 2013 and issued a new Mid-Term Defense Program (MTDP). These steps collectively reflect a new approach to security premised on creating a "dynamic joint defense force" that will be more effective at deterrence. As laid out in the NDPG and MTDP, the new approach emphasizes the importance of increased

training, exercises, and exchanges with regional partners; the need to build partner capacity; and the importance of defense industrial cooperation (Itsunori, 2013; Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2013). The new NDPG also listed South Korea, Australia, ASEAN, and India (in that order among the countries under study here). Additionally, Japan established the new post of vice-minister of defense for international cooperation; reinterpreted its right to engage in collective self-defense under Article 9 of the Constitution; issued revised guidelines for U.S.-Japan defense cooperation that extend included working collectively in support of regional peace and security; and passed enabling peace and security legislation in 2016 to further empower the JSDF to operate in support of a broader mission set, all of which further enhance Tokyo's ability to act abroad. Finally, in December 2018, Japan issued a new NDPG and new MTDP. The *NDPG FY 2019 and Beyond* describes the security environment around Japan as "changing at extremely high speeds" and notes that in addition to building up Japan's own capabilities and tightening alliance cooperation with the United States, Tokyo plans to leverage expanded security cooperation, including "joint training and exercises, cooperation in defense equipment and technologies, capacity building assistance, and service-to-service exchange" (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2018d). The NDPG also points to the need to make Japan's defense industrial base "more resilient," a problem the MTDP suggests Tokyo will attempt to address by moving to "actively promote international joint development and production with other countries" (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2018c). Indeed, the MTDP sums up Japan's overall approach to international defense cooperation quite succinctly, stating that

> Japan will further promote bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation and exchanges on the understanding that realizing a security environment that is desirable for Japan is an extremely important and necessary undertaking that contributes to Japan's defense itself and also relates to its basic fundamentals. In particular, in addition to high-level exchanges, policy dialogues and exchanges among military branches, in order to improve interop-

> erability with relevant countries and to strengthen Japan's presence, Japan will appropriately combine and strategically implement specific initiatives such as joint training and exercises, defense equipment and technology cooperation and capacity building assistance[.] (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2018c)

While these moves have expanded Japan's ability to cooperate in the defense space, and can be seen as constituting a "growing hard hedge" or even a "security renaissance," as noted above, they also continue to reflect substantial limitations (Hornung, 2014; Oros, 2017). As one expert describes them, they are more "evolutionary than revolutionary" (Liff, 2015). Another prominent analysis points out that even after these moves, Tokyo still faces substantial continuing statutory, legal, constitutional, and political obstacles to cooperating with foreign militaries on defense affairs, especially those that might require operational risks or actual combat (Hornung and Mochizuki, 2016). A third expert has even argued that Japan has probably gone as far as it can go in liberalizing the restrictions on its defense policies in the absence of any major shock (Schoff, 2017). Japan still operates under an "exclusively defense oriented policy" (Ministry of Defense of Japan, n.d.). Moreover, even in issuing new guidelines covering the use of force, the government is authorized to use force only when "an armed attack against Japan occurs or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness"; when "there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protects its people"; and when the use of force is "limited to the minimum extent necessary" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016b).

Still, while Japan may not be able legally or politically to form alliances with its Indo-Pacific partners, it has taken a wide array of specific steps to tighten up its defense and security cooperation with its neighbors over the past half-dozen years (Harold et al., 2016). These are reviewed on a country-by-country basis in the next section and in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1
Japan's Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	Australia	India	Indonesia	Philippines	South Korea	Vietnam
Partnership Type	Special strategic	Special strategic and global	Strategic	Strategic	None	Strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Arms Sales and Transfers	No	No	No	No	No	No[1]
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	No	No	No	No	No	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No[2]
GSOMIA	No[3]	No	No	No	Yes	No

SOURCE: RAND interviews and open source data collection.

NOTES: [1] Japan has transferred coastal patrol craft to Vietnam, but these are maritime law enforcement platforms, not defense articles.
[2] The Japan Coast Guard has conducted training and exercise exchanges with Vietnam, but these are not considered military exchanges as the Japan Coast Guard falls under the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transportation during peacetime. Japan has trained Vietnamese forces in underwater medicine, but not undertaken any simulated combat or maneuver operations.
[3] Japan has not signed a GSOMIA but has signed an Information Security Agreement with Australia.

Country-by-Country Analysis

Australia: "Our Most Important Partner Next to the U.S."

Despite their difficult past, when Japan attacked Australia during World War II, today Australia has emerged as Japan's closest security partner other than the United States.[2] Relations were normalized

[2] The quote in the subhead ("Our Most Important Partner Next to the U.S.") is from an author interview.

in 1952 (shortly after Japan regained its sovereignty via the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty), and since that time, the two sides have gradually deepened economic ties, diplomatic relations, and other forms of contacts as allies of the United States during the Cold War. Still, they remained largely untethered to each other via security ties for most of the period prior to 1991. Neither country felt particularly threatened in terms of the security of their respective homelands, and even after Japan undertook to manage sea lines of communication out to 1,000 nautical miles, it still did not come close to areas of core security interest to Canberra. For much of the period, Japan viewed Australia as an economic partner and an otherwise distant and relatively unimportant security actor mostly relevant for its alliance with the United States and its intelligence cooperation with America.

On the conclusion of the Cold War, with the outbreak of the 1991 Iraq War, and as a consequence of the explosion in Chinese and North Korean military threats to the security of the Asia-Pacific, during the 1990s Tokyo and Canberra began to explore a closer defense relationship. In particular, Tokyo's revisions of the regulations governing the overseas deployment of the JSDF and the growth of Japan's participation in UN peacekeeping operations during the 1990s gave the two sides more reasons for contact and cooperation in the security domain, especially in Cambodia and elsewhere across Southeast Asia where both Japan and Australia have interests in common. Still, during this period, America was at the peak of its power, China's rise was just at the outset, Japan's economic downturn was at its height and its sense of security threat was relatively low, and defense industrial and identity-based concerns were not central to debates in Tokyo.

Japanese concerns about China began to grow in the first decade of the twenty-first century as Beijing's defense buildup continued and the U.S. focus was drawn away from the Asia-Pacific and toward terrorism in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq. The U.S. war in Afghanistan and the contributions of Japan and Australia to that effort and the war in Iraq, together with the initiation of a trilateral U.S.-Japan-Australia security dialogue in 2003, laid the groundwork for increasingly coordinated security effort by Tokyo and Canberra.[3] By the

[3] The authors thank Mike Green for reminding them of these important points.

time of the first Abe Shinzo administration in 2006–2007 Japan had determined that it wanted to seek closer security cooperation with Australia, partly as a hedge against growing tensions with China and partly out of a desire to manage other aspects of Japan's growing security profile in the region. Foreign Minister (later prime minister) Aso Taro, speaking on March 12, 2007, sought to promote regional values-based diplomacy with Australia and other democratic nations by promoting an "arc of freedom and prosperity" that would leverage deepened foreign and security policy coordination (Aso, 2007). The very next day, on March 13, 2007, the Abe administration issued a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation with Australia's John Howard focusing on coordination and exchanges on a variety of issues, including counterterrorism and countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The joint declaration identified foreign and defense ministerial exchanges as well as a 2 + 2 exchange as action items, also prioritizing personnel exchanges, joint exercises, and cooperation on building partner capacity among other areas of focus (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2007a). These initial steps signaled an interest in leveraging security ties to build a closer overall relationship but did not reflect a true sense of urgency on the part of Japan at this time.

Closer Japan-Australia defense cooperation slowed in the years thereafter due to the departure of Abe Shinzo in November 2007, followed shortly thereafter by the collapse of the first iteration of the Quadrilateral Dialogue among the United States, Japan, Australia, and India in February 2008 and a series of weak successor prime ministers, most of whom were focused on political survival and/or domestic priorities.[4] Nonetheless, the two sides did make some progress, initiating bilateral naval exercises in 2009 (Exercise Nichi Gou/Trident); signing an ACSA in May 2010; and finalizing an information security agreement in May 2012 (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2017). Australia's contribution to the response to the March 11, 2011 "triple disaster" also served to further bind the two sides, both through political

[4] Some observers attribute the collapse of the first version of the Quad to political calculations about China's negative response in Canberra, while other observers note that there was substantial unease in many of the four countries' national security councils (or equivalents) and ministries/departments of state/foreign affairs.

good will and practical military cooperation. Australia sent roughly 900 million yen to the Australian Red Cross Japan and Pacific Disaster Appeal, while a 76-member Urban Search and Rescue Team deployed to Miyagi Prefecture and a Royal Australian Air Force C-17 jet transported more than 500 tons of relief stores, food, water, and personnel around Japan. Two additional aircraft transported specialized pumping equipment to help bring the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant under control, filling a key gap in the response capabilities of Japan, which did not have airlift capability of this sort.[5]

With the return to office of Abe Shinzo in late 2012, Japan-Australia ties took on accelerated momentum on the defense front, driven in large measure by the growing perception in both Canberra and Tokyo that the security threats that had spurred their initial efforts at cooperation in the mid-2000s had continued to deepen since that time. At a summit with then–Prime Minister Tony Abbott in 2014, Prime Minister Abe apologized for Japan's attack on Australia during World War II and offered an identity-based explanation for his desire to strengthen security ties with Australia, stating that

> [s]o far as national security goes, Japan has been self-absorbed for a long time. Now, [however,] Japan has built a determination. As a nation that longs for permanent peace in the world, and as a country whose economy is among the biggest, Japan is now determined to do more to enhance peace in the region, and peace in the world. Ladies and gentlemen, it is to put that determination into concrete action, that Japan has chosen to strengthen its ties with Australia. (Abe, 2014b)

Later that day Abe and his Australian counterpart Tony Abbott agreed to upgrade their strategic ties to a "Special Strategic Partnership for the 21st Century." They also inked an "Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment," noting that

> it has become common among developed countries to improve the performance of defence equipment and technology *and to*

[5] The foregoing description of Australia's contributions to the recovery efforts following Japan's triple disaster are drawn from remarks by Ambassador Bruce Miller (Miller, 2015).

> *cope with their rising costs* by participating in international joint research, development and production. (Government of Japan and Government of Australia, 2014)

As one leading Japanese government official explained, such an agreement is a prerequisite for arms sales, adding that an acquisition and cross-servicing agreement and a general security of military information agreement are also required if sensitive equipment is to be transferred (author interview).

Following the 2014 agreements on further upgrading bilateral strategic and defense ties, Tokyo sought to export its *Sōryū*-class submarine to Australia as the replacement for Canberra's *Collins*-class boat. Although this deal was not ultimately realized, it signaled Japan's intention to try to further consolidate security ties with Australia; it also spurred the creation inside the Ministry of Defense of the Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Agency (ATLA) and a recognition that exporting whole weapons systems is more challenging than had previously been understood. For example, although the Abe administration was forward-leaning on exporting the *Sōryū*, the makers of the boat reportedly declined to submit a bid to Australia during the first-round tender for the submarine and had to be urged to do so by the Cabinet. Although Japan's premier industry association, the Japan Federation of Business (Keidanren), had publicly called for relaxation of the restrictions on arms exports as early as 1995 and described the need to export defense hardware as part of a "national strategy . . . [focused on] a medium- to long-term vision for maintaining and strengthening the base of that industry," individual defense industrial firms were reportedly more reluctant to be involved in such activities (author interview; Kobayashi, 2015). Japan's defense firms are generally subsidiaries of large conglomerates focused primarily on the consumer market and wary of negative publicity over defense exports; as one interviewee argued, "in Japan, we still need to overcome peoples' mind-set that selling arms outside of Japan is a crime" (author interview). Additional concerns in the Australia case may have involved questions about the sensitivity of the technologies involved, issues related to profitability, technical and cost specifications, and pressure from China (Soble, 2015; Gady, 2016b).

While Tokyo was disappointed not to realize the submarine export to Australia, strategic cooperation across a number of fronts did continue to move forward. Japan joined Australia and eleven other nations in the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement and worked to salvage it as the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement after the Trump administration pulled the United States out of that deal in early 2017. More specifically in the defense realm, Tokyo has continued high-level exchanges, including sending a submarine to Australia for the first time in 2016; continuing to participate in naval exercise Nichi Gou/Trident; joining in Australia's premier naval exercise Kakadu (with the Royal Australia Navy); and in 2017, sending a Japan Ground Self-Defense Force unit to join in the month-long, biennial high-end combat exercise Talisman Sabre (with the Royal Australian Army) (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016a; Burke, 2017). As Tatsumi and others have noted, U.S.-Japan-Australia trilateral cooperation has also been used as a vehicle to continuously push the bilateral defense ties between Tokyo and Canberra forward, with the trilateral meeting of the American, Japanese, and Australian leaders in November 2014 a particularly important development in this regard (Tatsumi, 2015).

Since 2014 Tokyo has been negotiating with Canberra over its first visiting forces agreement (VFA) with a nation other than the United States. Although such an arrangement has yet to be concluded, it appears to be a likely next step that Japan and Australia will take, as such an arrangement would facilitate further expansion of training and exercises between the two sides. As of early 2019, the negotiations over a VFA appear to have stalled due to Australian concerns that, in light of Japan's continuing use of the death penalty for certain crimes, giving Japan preferential criminal jurisdiction over visiting Australian forces could conceivably lead to the execution of an Australian military servicemember in Japan (Fujiwara and Kogure, 2019). Yet even in the absence of such an arrangement, Japan and Australia have agreed to expand bilateral military exercises to the air domain in tandem with the United States through the trilateral Cope North Guam (Cook, 2017). Tokyo also agreed on a bilateral air exercise with Australia to be held later in 2018 (Riordan, 2018).

In conclusion, by mid-2018 Japan had established a "special strategic partnership for the twenty-first century" with Australia; had set up a regular 2 + 2 dialogue and separate annual defense and foreign minister meetings; had agreed to arrangements on sale of defense hardware and attempted to export such (albeit unsuccessfully); regularly held a series of bi-, tri-, and multilateral military exercises for naval, ground, and air forces; and had signed ACSA and information security agreements (and upgraded its ACSA in late 2017 to permit the JSDF to resupply the Royal Australian Armed Forces with ammunition in the field). Additionally, the two sides are actively undertaking an annual cyber dialogue, with three meetings having been held between 2015 and 2017 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017e). While the two sides are still negotiating a VFA and a reciprocal access agreement and have not yet engaged in joint defense industrial development or completed an instance of arms sales, these are either in the works or have been attempted and could be pursued again (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2018a). Indeed, on March 6, 2018 the ATLA within the Japanese Ministry of Defense and the Australian Department of Defence co-organized the first ever Japan-Australia Public-Private Defense Industry Forum in Tokyo intended to spur bilateral defense industrial cooperation (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2018b).

Japan's reasons for cooperating closely with Australia and developing defense ties largely center around the need to anchor and augment the United States presence in the region; counterbalance the pressure on Indo-Pacific security posed by China's growing capabilities and assertiveness; mitigate the role of cost growth in the defense industrial sector; and reflect the values and identity Japan has as a major power committed to peace, democracy, and the rule of law. These factors have all grown substantially more important over the past decade, largely as a function of the perception among Japanese elites about the changing balance of power between the United States and China and Japan's place in the regional Indo-Pacific order. As one recent study projects, the case for continued and deepening security cooperation is likely to be compelling due to fears that the liberal international order both Tokyo and Canberra value is under threat not only from China

but also from potential reductions in U.S. commitment to that order (Heazle and Tatsumi, 2018).

India: Partners in Shared Threat Perceptions and Values

Modern Japan's formal relationship with India began in 1952 when they signed a peace treaty and established full, normal diplomatic ties. Despite Imperial Japan's invasion of India during World War II, the relationship did not suffer substantially from negative feelings during most of the Cold War era. With Japan formally allied with the United States and India neutral but leaning toward the socialist bloc, however, ties did not develop beyond formal political relations and limited economic contacts.

In the post-1991 period, with India undergoing substantial economic liberalization and Japan taking its first tentative steps to explore a more fulsome regional profile, the two sides appeared primed to take new steps forward. New Delhi's 1998 nuclear test, however, substantially set back ties, given Tokyo's negative reaction and Indian elites' dissatisfaction with Japan's response. Following the extended visit to India by Bill Clinton in the spring of 2000, Japanese Prime Minister Mori Yoshihiro visited New Delhi and together with Prime Minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee announced a "New Global Partnership for the 21st Century" that included establishment of new dialogue tracks between the foreign and defense ministries (albeit not a formal 2 + 2) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017d). Since that time, the two sides have agreed to hold a vice-ministerial 2 + 2 three times since 2010, and their defense ministers have met roughly annually since 2014.

Following a visit to India in 2005 by Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro, the two sides agreed to an annual exchange of summits. In 2006, they elevated their relationship to a "strategic and global partnership," specifically agreeing on expanded security and defense contacts and cooperation and highlighting military service exchanges and defense technology cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2006c).

From the mid-2000s onward, China's growing military buildup (especially its naval modernization drive), together with its aggressive behavior on the border with India, brought Tokyo and New Delhi

together in ways that were previously unprecedented in terms of security concerns. During the same period, the U.S. relationship with India had continued to deepen, with Washington and New Delhi agreeing to a civil nuclear deal in 2005 that paved the way for deeper security ties. In 2007 the United States and India welcomed Japan to join the Malabar naval exercise for the first time, and in 2008 the United States, Japan, Australia, and India began discussions on a potential Quadrilateral Initiative security relationship. From this point forward, Japan's defense ties with India began to unfold in both bi-, tri, and occasionally quadrilateral settings. As one interviewee commented, the importance of China in Japan-India cooperation over the past decade has grown so great that the Southwest Asia division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is sometimes jokingly referred to as the "Third China Division" (the Ministry's First China Division deals with political and security affairs while the Second Division handles economic ties with China) (author interview).

With the return of Abe Shinzo from December 2012 onward, defense ties with India took additional steps forward. In 2014, Abe was the guest of honor at India's Republic Day celebrations, and in September of that year the two sides announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tokyo that they had decided to upgrade their bilateral ties to a "special strategic partnership." This announcement included promises to continue exchanges between National Security Advisers, an announcement of intent to establish a 2 + 2 foreign and security ministers meeting; a commitment to continue dialogues over the sale of Japan's US-2 maritime patrol craft to India, and the signing of a Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges to facilitate deeper ties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2014c).

Building rapidly on this agreement, in December 2015 Abe visited India where he and Prime Minister Modi announced the Japan and India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership. This wide-ranging cooperation agreement expanded defense and security ties, reaffirmed existing and planned exchanges, and laid out a road map for bilateral defense cooperation that was accompanied by the conclusion of an Agreement Concerning Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Military Information and an Agreement Concerning

the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology (Government of Japan and Government of Republic of the Philippines, 2016).

Over the following two and a half years, Japan's senior ministers and advisers, service chiefs, and leading defense ministry officials have continued regular exchanges with their Indian counterparts. Trilateral naval exercises with the United States and India have been held in the South China Sea, and ship visits have been increasingly routine. The Vision 2025 agreement, together with deals on defense cooperation and exchanges, technology and equipment transfer, and protection of classified information, lay the groundwork for increased hardware cooperation in the future.

To date, arms sales have not been realized, in large part due to the highly bureaucratic nature of Indian defense procurement and the relatively low level of experience with and interest in sales and/or joint development by Japanese firms (as well as the high cost of Japanese equipment). Following the establishment in September 2017 of a Japan-India public-private defense industrial forum, in August 2018 the two defense ministers of the two sides met and agreed to press ahead with defense cooperation, agreeing to upgrade their 2 + 2 from vice-minister to full ministerial exchanges and inking an ACSA deal to facilitate technology and production cooperation (Akiyama, 2018a). This important meeting also concluded a deal establishing a joint working group between Japan's ATLA and India's Defense Research and Development Organization, initiated cooperation on production of unmanned ground vehicles, and inaugurated bilateral land and air exercises (Grevatt, 2018b; Shim, 2017).

In October 2018, immediately after concluding his summit with Xi Jinping in China, Abe hosted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his home near the foot of Mt. Fuji, announcing that the two sides had agreed to commence annual 2 + 2 talks, tri-service joint exercises and military exchanges, and initial negotiations on an ACSA while continuing talks on the sale of US-2 maritime observation planes, together with a raft of trade, investment, and infrastructure initiatives. In his remarks to the press after meeting with Modi, Abe announced that relations between Japan and India "have the biggest potential in the world" and asserted that "a strong Japan benefits India

and a strong India benefits Japan" ("Japan, India Leaders Agree to Step Up Defense, Economic Ties," 2018).

For Japan, India's strategic size, location, and geopolitical orientation hold substantial appeal, and the promise of deepening defense ties to shape the Indo-Pacific region and ensure it remains free of Chinese domination is appealing. As one interviewee commented, "India is an important partner for Japan not because it would help defend our country but because it helps shape the international environment in ways [that are favorable to Japan's security]" (author interview). Yet as one recent study of Japan-India relations notes, Japan's view of India's value as a security partner has largely been defined by its "enormous latent potential," with security ties "the 'caboose' on the bilateral strategic engagement 'train'" (Lynch and Pryzstup, 2017). India continues to manifest distaste for alliances and any hint that it might be drafted into a role as a handmaiden of U.S. national security policy, but at the same time the growing practical cooperation between Washington and New Delhi facilitates deepening Japan-India defense ties, even if Delhi is not seeking to buck up Washington through such security cooperation the way Tokyo is. Defense industrial cost growth has not, to date, been a major feature of Japan's contacts with India; Delhi's relatively substantial defense budget of approximately $52 billion would seem sufficient to procure advanced Japanese hardware, but as the continued delays in the sale of the US-2 show, India remains committed to a policy of offsets, domestic content, and price reductions that limit its appeal to Japanese firms. For Japan, India's other appeal as a partner is its status as a great power, an ancient civilization, and a democracy, factors that Japanese-Indian joint statements constantly reflect on in their preambles, reflecting the appeal of identity framing to Tokyo.

The primary consideration driving the two sides to deepen cooperation has surely been their shared perception of a growing threat from China to a free and open Indo-Pacific architecture. As the United States and its partners increasingly seek to open up opportunities for India to develop and advance within a normative framework that also meshes well with Delhi's perception of its own identity, interests, and values, Japan will likely continue to find success in expanding and deepening its own growing defense partnership with India.

Republic of Korea: A Necessary but Difficult Partnership

The defense relationship Japan has with South Korea (Republic of Korea, or ROK) is complicated in ways unlike any of the other partnerships explored in this chapter. While Imperial Japan invaded or attacked all of the other countries in this study during its rampage across the region during the 1930s and 1940s, Tokyo was largely able to put the historical baggage that came as a consequence of those assaults behind it through a combination of apologies, economic assistance, and trade and investments from the 1950s onward. It also helped that with the exception of Australia, those other states were all colonies of European imperial powers or the United States. This was not the case with Korea, which had long navigated a complex path among China, Japan, and Russia until the late nineteenth century, when the Meiji Restoration led Japan to a position of dominance over the Manchu Qing Empire and Imperial Russia, ultimately resulting in the annexation and colonization of Korea from 1910 onward; Koreans resisted this process in numerous ways both overt and covert, and that experience helped forge a dynamic aspect of modern Korean sociopolitical identity that remains skeptical of and opposed to Japanese influence even down to the present day.

Following Korea's liberation and division into separate countries in the north and south in 1945, Japan had little contact with Korea for the better part of two decades. Japan was itself under occupation until 1951, and while it served as a key staging area for the U.S.-led UN forces responsible for the war in Korea from 1950–1953, Tokyo had little say over the matter and contributed primarily its land, waters, and airspace to the effort to prevent the communist takeover but contributed nothing in the way of fielded forces. Under the Yoshida doctrine from 1955 onward, Japan extended the ROK substantial trade and market access, and with the normalization of ties in 1965 Tokyo sent Seoul a package of aid and interest-free loans on the order of approximately $800 million. While Tokyo and Seoul intended to put their difficult history behind them through their 1965 agreement on normalizing ties and the aid package that accompanied this, the issue of Korea's colonial history, Japan's view of its responsibility for invading the peninsula, Korea's willingness to forgive, and the question of a pair

of small offshore islets was not so easily resolved and has continued to vex the relationship between the two sides down to the present (for more on this, see below).

For most of the Cold War, Japan and South Korea were closely aligned in a de facto anti-Communist alliance relationship through their bilateral defense alliances with the United States. U.S. policy, including through the stationing of nuclear weapons in Okinawa intended for the defense of Japan and the support of other U.S. defense commitments in the region (as noted in the Sato-Nixon Communique of 1969), tied Japan to the security of Korea, if somewhat indirectly via the United States.[6] Additionally, Japan, which serves as a rear area and logistical hub for the UN Command (UNC) at 11 bases across the archipelago, is implicitly tied to the ROK's security through its hosting of United Nations Common System facilities. Indeed, throughout this period, and especially at times when U.S. commitment to Asia appeared to wane during the late 1960s to late 1970s, Japan and South Korea moved to cooperate more closely on security and defense affairs (Cha, 1999). Still, Washington failed to elicit more formal Japanese commitments to Korea through the late 1970s though, with Tokyo adhering to a strict interpretation of *senshu boei*, or a policy of "exclusively defensive defense" at the time of the issuance of the first U.S.-Japan defense guidelines in 1978, and up until the end of the Cold War Japan had no formal 2 + 2 dialogue, no arms sales or transfers, no joint or co-development, no regular training and exercises, and no ACSA or GSOMIA agreements with Korea (Przystup, 2015).

Japan's contemporary view of the importance of a defense relationship with South Korea began take shape in the early 1990s in the wake of the first North Korean nuclear crisis in 1994. In the aftermath of that event, and especially in the years following North Korea's firing of a ballistic missile over Japan in 1998, a 1999 intrusion by a suspected North Korean spy ship, and a 2001 clash with an armed North Korean vessel that resulted in the Japan Coast Guard firing on and sinking that vessel, Tokyo came to realize it needed to work more closely on intelligence sharing, ballistic missile defense, and MLE with South

[6] The authors thank Michael J. Green for reminding them to include this point.

Korea. North Korea's past experience kidnapping Japanese nationals off Japan's coast came to light in the early 2000s just as the North Korean nuclear threat came into clearer view. As a result, the North Korea factor, far more than any shared concern about bolstering the U.S. presence in the region, a desire to respond to the rise of China, the need to deal with growing defense industrial costs, or issues of identity explains Japan's interest in defense cooperation with South Korea.

As a consequence of this growing threat perception, during the mid-2000s Japanese leaders began working to build defense cooperation ties with South Korea, initiating trilateral Japan-U.S.-South Korea training exercises in 2008, and reaching an agreement on defense cooperation and exchanges in April 2009.[7] Over the following decade, trilateral exercises have centered on cooperation on at-sea search and rescue, ballistic missile tracking, and ASW, among other topics (Kyodo News, 2014; AP News and Kyodo News, 2016; Park, 2017). From 1999, the Japan Coast Guard initiated a set of high-level dialogues that met 14 times through 2016 and also undertook SAREX designed to provide an additional security (if not military) cooperation channel between the two sides (Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transportation of Japan, 2016).

During the mid-2010s, tensions in the bilateral relationship between Tokyo and Seoul grew quite strained over issues related to their overlapping territorial claims to offshore islands; history issues, especially the difficult question of the comfort women; and comments and actions taken by activists and individuals in each society that inflamed bilateral tensions, most notably the erection of statues outside Japanese diplomatic facilities in Korea. As a consequence of these disputes, bilateral security cooperation, which in mid-2012 appeared to be on the cusp of a breakthrough in the form of a bilateral GSOMIA deal, slowed considerably. Trilateralism, with the United States playing the key fulcrum role, was key during this period (Kamphausen et al., 2018). Under U.S. pressure, Tokyo and Seoul agreed to an interim

[7] Some information on Japan-South Korea defense cooperation in this paragraph is derived from untitled briefing materials shared with the author by the Ministry of Defense of Japan officials during the course of this research.

intelligence pass-through agreement in December 2014; this deal was later overtaken by the inking of a formal GSOMIA in November 2016 allowing the two sides to share intelligence directly without having to first pass it to the United States (Ministry of National Defense of the Republic of Korea, the Ministry of Defense of Japan, and the U.S. Department of Defense, 2014). In 2013, after it emerged that Japanese peacekeeping forces in South Sudan had provided their Korean counterparts with ammunition (via the United Nations), South Korea publicly returned the ammunition in an incident that attracted substantial negative attention in Japan; in 2017, Japan reportedly gave indications to South Korea that it would welcome the signing of a basic ACSA arrangement that would enable the Self-Defense Forces to provide food, fuel, and ammunition to their Korean counterparts in the event of a possible conflict on the peninsula so as to avoid a repeat of the 2013 incident (Kyodo News, 2013; "Asahi: Japan Proposes S. Korea Deal on Procurement of Military Supplies," 2017).

To be sure, Japan seeks to encourage the Republic of Korea to support the regional order and the U.S.'s role in it; to collaborate with the ROK trilaterally; to encourage Korean participation in regional multilateral forums; and to cooperate in countering Chinese efforts to undercut allied cooperation and international law. But the main logic of Japanese security cooperation is focused on defending against the North Korea threat, not responding to China's rise, possible U.S. decline, cost growth in the defense industrial sector, or issues associated with Japan's identity. Indeed, many Japanese observers see South Korea's approach to defense ties with Japan as constrained by the logic of its left-wing domestic political groups as well as its perceived need to cultivate support from China for dealing with North Korea.

As such, while many Japanese observers agree with the official Ministry of Foreign Affairs characterization that Japan and South Korea are "the most important neighbors to each other," or the Ministry of Defense's characterization that South Korea is "an important country which shares strategic interests with Japan," they tend not to expect South Korea to work much with Japan, especially not to hedge against growing Chinese power and influence (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015b). As one interviewee for this study commented,

even after (and in spite of) the THAAD crisis between South Korea and China,

> tensions in the Japan–Korea relationship have worsened with the rise of China as each side recalibrates how to deal with Beijing and adopts a different approach. [Increasingly] right and left in Korean politics don't matter much anymore. We shouldn't delude ourselves into thinking that conservatives [in South Korea] will be our friends. (Author interview)

Another interviewee echoed this view, stating that

> the issues of the comfort women and history are just symptoms of the divergent strategic calculations between Tokyo and Seoul [about the importance of cooperating against a worsening security backdrop], not the causes of their difficulties [in relations]. Korea is a peninsular nation; Japan is an archipelagic nation; that difference matters for how the two countries are responding to China's rise. If South Korea comes to be defined as part of the Chinese sphere of influence, then Japan and Korea will have less incentive to cooperate in the future. (Author interview)

Developments between late 2017 and late 2018 seemed to signal this trend toward difficult ties would continue. For example, the Republic of Korea served "Dokdo shrimp" (named after a mutually disputed feature) during President Trump's late 2017 visit to Seoul and ensured he was photographed hugging a surviving "comfort woman," both moves guaranteed to provoke negative reactions from Tokyo (Harold and Hornung, 2018). Then, in October 2018, Seoul effectively blocked a Japanese vessel from participating in a Korean-hosted international naval review over the Japanese ship's use of the Rising Sun flag that some Koreans find offensive; reached a Supreme Court decision that Japanese firms that used Korean forced labor during World War II must pay personal compensation to the victims; and announced plans to dissolve a 2015 fund established through a joint agreement to compensate comfort women survivors (Lee and Takanaka, 2018; Reynolds and Kang, 2018; Makino, 2018). Additionally, after repeated rebuffs, Japan gave up trying to invite Korean President Moon Jae-in to Tokyo

in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Kim-Obuchi statement issued by the two sides' leaders in 1998 that focused on putting the past behind them and building a future-oriented relationship (Akiyama, 2018b). Highlighting the value of the U.S. alliance relationship for managing the difficult ties between Japan and South Korea, Tokyo was able to invite the ROK Navy to participate in a visit to Sasebo thanks to their ability to frame that visit around a tour of the USS *Wasp* and related U.S.-Japan naval installations (Bolinger, 2018).

In late 2018 and early 2019, however, bilateral Japan-ROK ties declined further as a Japanese P-1 maritime patrol craft operating in the skies over the Sea of Japan and monitoring a joint South Korean Coast Guard and Navy search and rescue effort for a disabled North Korean fishing boat in Japan's exclusive economic zone reported that it was targeted by the ROK Navy vessel's radar (Kajimoto and Shin, 2018). This "radar lock-on" incident represented a rare instance of operational military and security-side cooperation breaking down and actually fueling greater resentment. Against the backdrop of the South Korean Supreme Court's authorization of the confiscation of assets of Japanese firms involved in exploiting Korean slave labor during the period of colonial occupation, such a development has fueled further mistrust and resentment on the Japanese side.

The primary obstacles to closer Japan-Korean security cooperation at present may be evolving but largely centers around the political response on both sides to the difficult historical unfolding of the relationship—from the colonial occupation to a normalization that occurred while Korea was under its own dictatorship, leading to a sense among many Koreans that they never got a real apology and a sense among those Japanese who follow the relationship with Korea that Seoul will not take yes for an answer and continually moves the goalposts. As Korea's democratic process unfolded, voices of women who were employed or forced to serve as sexual partners for the Imperial Japanese Army and ethnic Koreans who were used as slave labor during the wartime effort were freed to tell their stories and demand justice, though from Japan's perspective such issues were already dealt with, and if Koreans feel unhappy they need to take responsibility for the existence of a dictatorship domestically at the time normal-

ization occurred. Japan has made numerous efforts to address these issues, from the Kono and Murayama statements to the establishment of the Asian Women's Fund, the Kim-Obuchi statement of 1998, and the 2015 agreement on the comfort women, among others. These initiatives held promise, but ultimately failed to mollify some important Korean actors, leading many Korean observers to hold that Japan has never apologized or has apologized without being truly sincere. Additional issues, most notably the question of who rightfully owns the Dokdo/Takeshima islands, have arisen too, further complicating matters. Overlaying all these issues, political actors who seek to gain personally or for their party by painting the other side as unreasonable have made things worse, as have actors on both sides who have made deliberately provocative or hurtful remarks intended to signal and reinforce in-group/out-group boundaries between Japan and Korea. While oftentimes such provocative comments are made by individuals who are not in positions of formal authority, they fit with preexisting narrative frames for those on either side who do not trust or like the other side and further aggravate ties, including undermining the political relationship necessary for deeper security cooperation.

While it appears difficult to be optimistic about bilateral defense ties at present, if Tokyo and Seoul can find their way to cooperate, they have built some aspects of a security relationship that they can draw on. The two sides can share intelligence; they have previously and could once again cooperate on logistics (as the Japanese side has indicated it is willing to do). While arms sales are unlikely, and co-development seems out of reach at present, the latter would not be entirely unfeasible if situated in a trilateral framework with the United States, since all three countries need interoperability and use similar platforms and weapons. Training and exercises as well as high-level dialogues have been held, with mutual chiefs of staff visits and defense minister exchanges in May and October 2015 and fairly regular working-level exchanges even throughout the period of tensions in the mid-2010s. Unit-to-unit exchanges and ship/plane visits to each side have been held, as well as joint participation in multilateral exercises such as Rim of the Pacific and Cobra Gold, and international peacekeeping activities. For the foreseeable future, however, the relationship

is unlikely to deepen substantially and could even retreat if China's continued rise, or a dramatic change in the nature of inter-Korean relations or U.S.-ROK ties leads Seoul to reorient itself away from its previous technical, tactical, and at times strategic willingness to reciprocate Japanese offers to cooperate.

Philippines: "From Dialogues and Confidence-Building to Practical Cooperation"

As democratic allies of the United States in the wake of World War II, Japan and the Philippines initially cooperated primarily in terms of economic cooperation.[8] Tokyo and Manila formally established diplomatic relations in 1956, ten years after the Philippines regained its independence and five years after Japan signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty. The main focus of ties from that time up through the 1990s was Japan's investments in and development assistance to the Philippines, and indeed these have continued to be a priority down to the present. Still, apart from their shared hosting of U.S. military installations and consequently their joint role in deterrence and support for operations during the Korean and Vietnam wars, Tokyo and Manila had little overlap in defense affairs.

Japan's vision of defense cooperation with the Philippines during the post–Cold War period was shaped by a growing view of "ASEAN centrality" throughout the late 1990s onward. In Japan's view, as China's national power grew, it made sense to encourage the Southeast Asian region's disparate, relatively weak, and only loosely-knit-together states to cooperate. This approach was layered on top of preexisting bilateral defense ties that evolved slowly throughout the late 1990s and 2000s but reached its fully articulated form in then–Minister of Defense of Japan Inada Tomomi's 2016 *Vientiane Vision* statement describing Japan's defense cooperation ties with ASEAN. That initiative outlines a program of engagement focused on supporting "ASEAN efforts to uphold principles of international law, especially in the field of maritime and air space"; promoting "maritime security" and ISR

[8] The quote in this subhead ("From Dialogues and Confidence-Building to Practical Cooperation") is from Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2017.

and search and rescue capabilities; and other initiatives related to security. It established a program of "sharing understanding and experience," "conducting capacity building," "transferring equipment and technology [and] developing human resources," and continuing to participate in "multilateral joint training and exercises." In support of this effort, the initiative designated the Japan-ASEAN Defense Vice-Ministerial Forum, bringing together Japan's vice-minister for international cooperation and his regional counterparts, as the venue for advancing multilateral ties (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2016). Subsequently, Prime Minister Abe offered to train up to 1,000 maritime security officials from ASEAN (Tan, 2016). By early 2017, Japan's had promised or provided Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam no less than 29 vessels ("Japan to Provide Malaysia with 2 Large Patrol Vessels," 2016).

While Japan seeks to emphasize multilateral cooperation with ASEAN (including participating actively in the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus, a forum initiated in 2010 that brings together the ten members of ASEAN plus that organization's eight dialogue partners, Japan among them), it has also sought at the same time to continue promoting bilateral defense ties. Thus, in the early 1990s, following the end of the Cold War and the decision by Manila to end the United States basing at Clark Air Field and Subic Bay, Japan initiated security contacts with the Philippines and other members of ASEAN. Initially, these focused on "mutual understanding and confidence[-building] through defense exchanges," an approach that evolved through the 2000s to include "more practical/operational defense cooperation," and evolving in the 2010s to include "new projects such as capacity-building cooperation" (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2017). In 2011, the two sides established a "strategic partnership" intended to boost security cooperation, building off an increasing sense of shared concern over Chinese actions in the maritime domain, and built around a decision to "upgrade the existing Vice-Ministerial Policy Dialogue to a Vice-Ministerial Strategic Dialogue" and deeper cooperation in the maritime field (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2011b). Shortly thereafter, in October 2011, the two sides signed a Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges intended to facilitate deeper defense exchanges.

Following the return of Abe Shinzo to the prime minister's office, defense cooperation with the Philippines was substantially increased. Manila has been one of the main recipients of Tokyo's aid, grants, training and education, and other assistance programs focused primarily on building up regional actors' situational awareness in the maritime domain and abilities to police their own waters. Japan has gifted ten multi-role response vessels to the Philippines Coast Guard and leased five TC-90 maritime patrol craft to the Republic of the Philippines Navy. In addition, the Japan Coast Guard and the Japan International Cooperation Agency have provided funding for training, communications, facilities upgrades, and maintenance and repair, among other aspects of MLE ("Philippine Coast Guard Receives First Japan-Built Multi-Role Response Vessel," 2016).

The Abe administration was particularly supportive of the Philippines' lawsuit against China's nine-dash line claim to most of the South China Sea filed at the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and sought to provide hortatory, diplomatic, and military support to the Philippines in contesting China's claims. During a January 2015 visit to Tokyo by the Secretary of National Defense of the Philippines, the two sides signed a Memorandum on Cooperation and Defense Exchanges that committed them to high- and working-level exchanges; cooperation on capacity-building; training and exercises; service-to-service exchanges; cooperation on defense equipment and technology; and cooperation on logistical support, among other areas ("Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and the Department of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines," 2015). Later, in June 2015, Philippines President Benigno Aquino III visited Tokyo, where he and Abe signed a joint declaration on a strengthened strategic partnership (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015d). Additionally, the two sides initiated talks on a visiting forces agreement that would facilitate bilateral training and exercises and grant Japanese forces access to bases in the Philippines (Parameswaran, 2015b). Several months later, in February 2016, the two sides signed an Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology to facilitate defense hardware sales and transfers, and the next month Japan sent a subma-

rine and two escort vessels to Subic Bay for open sea drills (Government of Japan and Government of Republic of the Philippines, 2016).

After the election of Rodrigo Duterte in summer 2016, Tokyo worried when the new leader of the Philippines abandoned his country's victory at ITLOS, turned against the United States, and appeared to embrace China. As a consequence, Tokyo increased its outreach efforts, sending Foreign Minister Kishida Fumio to visit Duterte in the Philippines in August 2016 to remind Manila of the value of Japan's assistance, to reassure the new Philippines administration that Tokyo intended to continue extending aid, and to issue an invitation to the Filipino leader to Tokyo in October 2016 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2016c). On the eve of Duterte's visit, three Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) ships arrived in Manila for a naval exchange with their Filipino counterparts ("3 Japanese Navy Ships Arrive in Manila," 2016). These engagements were intended to ensure that tensions in the Philippines-U.S. relationship and the outreach to Manila by Beijing did not leave Tokyo sidelined or neglected. They have continued since that time and are supplemented by other assistance such as Japan's aid on counterterrorism hardware and intelligence sharing as well as funding for reconstruction after the siege of Marawi in 2017 (Kelly, 2017). Since 2017, Japan has joined Australia in participating in the annual U.S.-Philippines Balikatan exercises, transforming this into an increasingly important opportunity for the democratic allies of the United States to exercise and train together (Mogato, 2018a). For Japan, the human rights violations perpetrated by the Duterte administration during its war on drugs are trumped by the need to keep Manila from abandoning its historically warm relationship with Washington in favor of Beijing, and Japan has sought to use its aid and assistance to bolster the cooperative elements of U.S.-Philippines ties.

In summary, although the two sides do hold high-level political, diplomatic, and defense exchanges (albeit no 2 + 2 dialogue), the absence of arms sales or transfers (albeit with substantial MLE capability assistance in the form of gifted boats and leased surveillance aircraft plus training, plus the aforementioned "Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Technology and Equipment") reflects the limited if growing nature of the bilateral defense relationship. The absence of any defense

industrial cooperation is a reflection of the near-nonexistent state of the Philippines' defense industrial sector and so gives Japan nothing to partner with. Similarly, the lack of an ACSA or a GSOMIA further constrains the near-term expansion of Tokyo's bilateral ties with Manila and reflects the relatively low degree of defense integration.

While recent years have seen the exploration of a visiting forces agreement, the latter has not yet been concluded. As noted above, bilateral defense ties have included a growing number of ship visits, and these are augmented by expanding cooperation both within the ASEAN framework as well as through the quadrilateral U.S.-Philippines-Japan-Australia Balikatan exercises held annually. Thus, despite the increased attention that the Philippines has received in Japanese defense cooperation in recent years, Tokyo appears to recognize that Manila's limited military capabilities, small defense budget, tenuous commitment to liberal democracy, and increasingly questionable willingness to stand up to China make it a partner, but one of which not much is to be expected for the time being.

In short, although the geostrategic location of the Philippines as a part of the First Island Chain and a South China Sea claimant, together with its proximity to Japan, make it a focus of Japanese regional defense cooperation efforts, Tokyo's main focus since mid-2016 has been to preserve the forward momentum in bilateral ties over the past decade and to help keep the Philippines on the side of the United States and its allies through diplomacy and economic aid and investment. At the same time, Japan is likely to continue assisting the Philippines in redressing its military capabilities gaps and putting in place the agreements necessary to further expand the bilateral defense relationship in the years ahead.

Vietnam: "Shared Anti-China Sentiment Binds Us Together"

Japan's relationship with Vietnam has traversed a complex path over the past century, with Imperial Japanese troops invading and occupying French Indochina in 1940, proclaiming themselves the liberators of Asians from European Imperialism.[9] In the aftermath of World

[9] The quote in the subhead above ("Shared Anti-China Sentiment Binds Us Together") is from an author interview.

War II, Tokyo sought to invest in Southeast Asia as a form of apology for its aggression across the region, an approach that gradually won it a measure of forgiveness and began to open doors to Tokyo again in the 1960s and 1970s (Jing Sun, 2013). For Vietnam, however, divided from 1954 onward into rival regimes in the north and south, Tokyo was a distant and marginal player except insofar as it served as host to U.S. forces in the Pacific that were involved in prosecuting the war against the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army.

In the wake of the "Nixon shock," when the United States secretly negotiated the opening of relations with China in 1972, Tokyo moved quickly to recognize and establish relations with North Vietnam, concluding an agreement on opening up formal ties just eight months after the conclusion of the Paris Peace accords in 1973 and opening an embassy in Hanoi in October 1975 following the defeat of South Vietnam. For the remainder of the Cold War the two sides retained diplomatic ties and engaged in small-scale trade but did not pursue defense or security cooperation.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the bursting of Japan's economic bubble in the early 1990s, Tokyo began to look increasingly to Southeast Asia as an economic partner. Vietnam, which had begun its *doi moi* economic reforms in 1986, increasingly came to be seen as a potential venue for Japanese production facilities looking to invest overseas. Still, with Vietnam smarting from its confrontation with China from 1979 to 1988, with Japan perceiving little in the way of an external security threat, and with the United States not having normalized ties with Hanoi yet (a move that did not come to pass until 1995), Japan had little ability or interest in pursuing defense ties with Vietnam throughout most of the 1990s.

Matters began to change in the late 1990s through the late 2000s. During this period, China's aggressive investments in power projection capabilities and its increasingly assertive use of its newfound power to intimidate its neighbors gave rise to a sense in both Hanoi and Tokyo of shared threat perception. In October 2010, during a visit to Vietnam, then–Prime Minister Kan Naoto of the DPJ signed a joint statement with his host Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung launching a strategic partnership dialogue later that year to focus on "political, diplomatic, security and defense matters" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan,

2010b). The two sides followed this up by signing a "Memorandum between the Ministry of National Defence of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the Ministry of Defense of Japan on Bilateral Defence Cooperation and Exchanges" in October 2011 that enhanced dialogue and exchanges, and later that month DPJ Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko welcomed Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to Tokyo and the two sides further committed themselves to a program of ship visits, port calls, and defense talks (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2010b).

Following the return of Abe Shinzo to the post of prime minister in late 2012, Japan's internal defense reforms and the worsening regional security environment caused by China's growing assertiveness led to a growing prioritization of Vietnam in Japanese thinking. In 2013, Abe made Vietnam the lead stop on his first overseas trip after winning reelection. During his visit, he reassured Hanoi that he would prioritize the two countries' strategic partnership and "oppose changing the status quo [by] force in the South China Sea" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2013a). Over the next two years, Japan welcomed the Vietnam Communist Party secretary general, as well as the Vietnamese president, prime minister, and National Assembly leader to Tokyo, using such visits to reaffirm Japan's intention to cooperate with Vietnam on reinforcing regional peace and security and building up Hanoi's capabilities for MLE. In March 2014 the two sides also announced their intention to upgrade their ties to an "Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2014b).

Shortly thereafter, in the midst of Vietnam's 2014 standoff with China over Beijing's deployment of the *Haiyang Shiyou 981* deep-sea oil drilling rig in a contested portion of the South China Sea, Tokyo moved to further upgrade its security relationship with Hanoi, agreeing to extend a concessional loan to Vietnam that would enable it to acquire six used coast guard cutters (Reuters, 2014). Shortly thereafter, in November 2015 Vietnam agreed to permit Japan to make a naval ship visit to Cam Ranh Bay; five months later, in April 2016, two JMSDF destroyers visited Cam Ranh Bay for the first time since World War II (Parameswaran, 2016c). Similarly, in September 2015 Hanoi signed an agreement on coast guard cooperation with Tokyo intended

to increase cooperation between the two sides' MLE agencies, with a JCG cutter following up by making a port call in Da Nang in mid-2016 (Parameswaran, 2016e).

In January 2017, after having hosted his Vietnamese counterparts the previous November in Tokyo, Abe returned to Hanoi, bringing with him a pledge to help Vietnam procure six newly constructed coast guard vessels, a promise valued at roughly $340 million (Nguyen and Pham, 2017). Shortly thereafter in February 2017, Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko paid a visit to Vietnam, further reinforcing goodwill on both sides (Tran Van Minh, 2017). In June, Abe welcomed the Vietnamese prime minister to Tokyo where the two leaders released a joint statement on deepening their strategic partnership, including agreeing to "promote cooperation in defense equipment and technology," a step that resulted in an agreement to establish a Defense Industrial Forum in October 2017 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017a).

In early 2018 the chief of staff of Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force visited Hanoi, building on discussions between Minister of Defense Onodera Itsunori and his counterpart on the sidelines of the ASEAN meetings in Manila the previous November (Parameswaran, 2018a). A few months later, in April 2018, Tokyo and Hanoi agreed on a "Joint Vision Statement on Japan-Viet Nam Defense Cooperation towards the Next Decade" outlining ways to further deepen defense cooperation (Thu Trang, 2018a). Continuing the high-level exchanges between the two sides, Emperor Akihito hosted visiting Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang on May 31, 2018, for what was widely described as probably his final state banquet before his planned abdication in early 2019 ("Emperor Akihito Welcomes Vietnamese President in What May Be His Final State Banquet," 2018). And later during that same visit Prime Minister Abe hosted the Vietnamese president, releasing a joint statement that, among other areas of cooperation, vowed to increase service-to-service exchanges, "including visits to Vietnam by Japan Self-Defense Forces' vessels and aircraft," and to "promote cooperation in such areas as human resources training, defense equipment and technology" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2018b). Such frequent visits by top leaders "helped bring the two sides into closer

alignment" on questions of diplomacy, security, and defense affairs, one government official involved in relations with Vietnam relates (author interview).

By late 2018 Japan had elevated their ties to an "extensive strategic partnership" premised on regular high-level political and defense consultations. Japanese prime ministers, as well as foreign and defense and ministers, exchange visits with their Vietnamese counterparts on a roughly annual to biannual basis, while also meeting on the sidelines of multilateral forums. Although the two sides had not established a formal 2 + 2 dialogue mechanism, such an approach should not be ruled out as a future possibility. Japan had not engaged in any arms sales or transfers of defense hardware to Vietnam, though it had bolstered Hanoi's ability to police its waters and supported the civilian MLE capabilities that would serve as an early warning or intelligence-gathering force should any effort by China to employ gray zone coercion against Vietnam occur again. Similarly, no defense industrial joint or co-development had been undertaken, though a forum for discussion on this issue was established in late 2017. Still, it is hard to see such ties moving very far, given the disparate levels of technological sophistication and other factors.

In terms of training and exercises, the two sides had not carried out any joint exercises, but Vietnam had welcomed JMSDF and JCG ship visits, and these appear likely to continue, though how much they might increase is an open question. In late 2016, the chief of staff of the JMSDF ruled out joint U.S.-Japan freedom of navigation operations (FONOPS) after other Japanese officials had appeared to signal an openness to such activities (Li Bao, 2016). Yet just nine months later in June 2017 Japan sent the helicopter destroyer *Izumo*, the largest ship in the JMSDF fleet, through the South China Sea and Indian Ocean on extended defense diplomacy tours intended to further strengthen ties with the region (Peel and Harding, 2017). Making the *Izumo*'s 2017 trip even more interesting was Japan's successful use of the ship to engage with ASEAN; officers from all ten member states came aboard the vessel to participate in exchanges. In the summer of 2018 Tokyo carried out a second such deployment and followed this up in September 2018 with an ASW exercise in the South China Sea that

included another helicopter carrier, two destroyers, and a submarine with the sub continuing on to visit Da Nang, Vietnam, after the exercise (Kubo, 2018; "In First, Japanese Submarine Conducts Drills in Disputed South China Sea," 2018). Additionally, Japan has carried out joint trilateral exercises in the South China Sea with the United States and Australia; it is not unimaginable that Vietnam could be invited to join such exercises at some point in the future.

Finally, Japan has not signed either an ACSA or a GSOMIA agreement with Vietnam. "If the U.S. signs a GSOMIA with Vietnam, Japan will follow close behind," speculated one government official with experience on Vietnam (author interview). Yet to date neither type of agreement has been publicly raised in any of the joint statements, and Vietnam's limited ability to afford foreign defense hardware, together with continued sensitivities over cooperating too directly against China, are likely to mean that the need for an ACSA or GSOMIA arrangement is missing. As one interviewee put it, on Japan-Vietnam relations "no one has a big vision; instead, we just have to go as big, fast, and far as possible" on a more ad hoc basis, with the primary focus being on building up Vietnam's MDA and MLE capabilities (author interview).

Indonesia: Deeper Defense Ties Through Maritime Cooperation

During the 1940s, Japan's invasion of the Dutch East Indies, as Indonesia was then known, was welcomed by some Indonesian nationalists who sought to throw off rule by the Netherlands. Following Tokyo's defeat, Japan's post–World War II relationship with Indonesia formally began in 1958 when the two sides established full diplomatic ties. Although Jakarta turned to hardline anti-Communism from 1965 onward, it remained officially neutral and was not a part of the U.S. alliance network in the region, making the case of Indonesia different from that of many of Japan's other partners in that Jakarta has not traditionally responded to concerns over the U.S. role in the region in the same way as Australia, Japan, the Philippines, or South Korea. Following the founding of ASEAN in 1967, however, Tokyo's ties with Jakarta began to deepen, largely on the strength of Japan's increasingly large aid, trade, and investment relations with non-Communist Southeast

Asia. Throughout the remainder of the Cold War, these aid, trade, and investment links would grow, but they translated into little in the way of security or defense ties.

For much of the post–Cold War era, Jakarta was still too far away, too militarily weak, and too inward-focused to represent much of a partner for Tokyo (which was itself constrained by both legal/constitutional and political/policy restrictions on defense cooperation). Tokyo's level of interest in deeper security ties with Jakarta began to expand in the mid-2000s, starting with a focus on counterpiracy, counterterrorism, nonproliferation and reinforcement of democracy, and the rule of law. In June 2005, the two sides signed a "Partners for New Challenges" joint statement, followed a year later by an agreement between the first Abe Cabinet and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to establish a "Strategic Partnership for [a] Peaceful and Prosperous Future" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2006b). A year later, Japan provided Indonesia with a grant to be used to procure three coastal patrol craft for use in countering piracy, terrorism and weapons-smuggling (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2006a). Nontraditional security cooperation in the form of responding to natural disasters also served as a topic for deepening security ties, with Japan and ASEAN agreeing to closer cooperation on disaster management in April 2011, just a few short weeks after Japan's March 11, 2011, triple disaster (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2011a).

Half a decade later, during Indonesian president Joko Widodo's March 2015 visit to Tokyo, the two sides issued a joint statement that noted shared values and security interests and confirmed plans to establish a 2 + 2 foreign and defense minister's meeting that had been agreed on at an earlier defense ministers' exchange (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015c). In that same month, the Japanese and Indonesian defense ministers signed a "Memorandum on Cooperation and Exchanges in the Field of Defense." Later, in November 2015, meeting on the sidelines of an ASEAN-related summit in Kuala Lumpur, President Joko praised Japan's passage of the legislation for peace and security as "quite a positive development that will contribute to the peace and stability of the region," providing an important external validation both at home and abroad for Tokyo's defense reforms (Ministry of

Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015e). In December 2015 the Japanese foreign and defense ministers welcomed their Indonesian counterparts to Tokyo, releasing a joint statement that committed Japan to "seamlessly support maritime security capabilities of the ASEAN countries," "initiate negotiations on an agreement on the transfer of defense equipment and technology," actively participate in the multilateral joint exercise Komodo (which JSDF troops first joined in 2014), and provide Indonesia with capacity-building assistance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015h). Since that time, a second round has yet to be convened, though in August 2017 Foreign Minister Kono Taro hosted his Indonesian counterpart and vowed to convene another 2 + 2 "within the year" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017b).

During that meeting, Japanese officials reported that their Indonesian counterparts expressed an interest in Japan's ShinMaywa US-2 flying boat (a maritime patrol aircraft) for ISR about the archipelago (Yoshida, 2015). Almost three years on, however, the US-2 sales have not been finalized, and few signals suggest that a sale is imminent. Nor has defense industrial cooperation been bruited as an approach, most likely because Japan's cost structure and firms' sensitivities, as well as its technology levels, are far in advance of where Indonesia's nascent arms industry is capable of producing. The two sides have maintained forward progress on their relationship despite the lack of arms sales or co-development. During his January 2017 trip to Jakarta, Abe and Widodo agreed to make maritime security cooperation their "highest priority" ("Indonesia, Japan Agree to Step Up Maritime Security," 2017).

To date, most of Japan's security cooperation with Indonesia, as with other countries in Southeast Asia, has centered on provision of coast guard vessels, port infrastructure investment useful for transportation and policing, and assistance with MDA. This is in part because of Indonesia's weak military capabilities and in part because the majority of the security challenges facing Indonesia stem from challenges in managing the maritime domain. Still Indonesia has received substantially less Japanese security cooperation assistance than the other Southeast Asian nations surveyed above because the archipelago, for all its challenges, is substantially wealthier than either the Philippines

or Vietnam and in addition has signaled its cautiousness over being perceived as in any way signing up to contain or counter Chinese influence in the region.

One of the growing policy questions facing Indonesia in recent years has been the problem of illegal fishing, a challenge that shares similarities with the issues of piracy, smuggling, and terrorism at sea. This is an area where increasing poaching by China's commercial fishing fleet, together with Beijing's penchant for using its fishermen as a source of gray zone coercion to support its expansive maritime claims, brought together both traditional and nontraditional security challenges that Japan is familiar with in the East China Sea and made them relevant to Indonesia. To date though, Jakarta has been careful to characterize its challenges with illegal Chinese fishing less as part of a broader problem with Beijing and more as a law enforcement issue with specific fishermen, though developments around the Natuna exclusive economic zone (EEZ) dispute since in 2016 suggest this may be changing (Cochrane, 2017). If so, it would increase the overlap in interests between Tokyo and Jakarta.

To strengthen Jakarta's ability to manage these challenges, in June 2018 Tokyo sent the Japan Coast Guard vessel *Tsugaru* to visit Indonesia and the Philippines for a monthlong patrol. During that same month, Japanese Foreign Minister Kono Taro met with his counterpart in Jakarta and agreed to "synergize the Indonesian-initiated Indo-Pacific concept with the concept of Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy from Japan" (Hurst, 2018). Such cooperation fits with Japan's limited comfort zone in terms of military hardware exports, and also with Indonesia's sensitivities about being perceived to join up to any sort of anti-China containment coalition. At the same time, such assistance fits squarely within Japan's new "strategic ODA" as well as Jakarta's desire under the Widodo administration to strengthen control over Indonesia's maritime claims under his "Global Maritime Fulcrum" approach, including the waters around the Natuna Islands where China's invalidated nine-dash line claim overlaps with Indonesia's exclusive economic zone.

Next steps for Japan-Indonesia defense cooperation could include expanded military or coast guard exchanges or the signing of an ACSA

or GSOMIA agreement; at present, Tokyo has neither sort of agreement with Jakarta. The establishment of a 2 + 2 and a strategic partnership constitute elements of a promising foundation for bilateral defense ties, but to date they have not led to actual trade in defense hardware beyond the assistance Japan has extended to Indonesia's MLE efforts. Given Tokyo's own concerns over terrorism with respect to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Indonesia's expertise in this area, it would not be altogether surprising to see an expansion of intelligence sharing start with counterterrorism and then extend later into more traditional realms. In the past, deeper U.S.-Indonesia defense ties during the 2011–2016 time frame have helped fuel the expansion of Japan's own security cooperation with Indonesia; should U.S. defense ties deepen further, such a trend may be observed again. Concerns over China's aggressive behavior in the southernmost reaches of the South China Sea could perhaps most easily trigger an expansion of Jakarta's interest in security ties with Tokyo, giving the two sides additional impetus to cooperate. To date, however, Indonesia continues to represent a case of substantial potential but limited outcomes in Japan's regional defense ties.

Japanese Explanations of Defense Cooperation Patterns

As the sections above have laid out, Japan's reasons for pursuing deeper defense cooperation with select Indo-Pacific partner nations have stemmed from a desire to support the United States presence; as a hedge against U.S. decline or reduction in commitment to the region; as a counterbalance to growing Chinese capabilities and aggressive behavior; to manage cost growth in the defense industrial sector; and to respond to popular and especially elite expectations about how Japan should behave as a major power. This section offers further insight into Japanese thinking about the motivations for pursuing deeper defense ties with Australia, India, South Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

For most Japanese experts, the U.S. alliance is the central pillar of Japan's National Security Strategy; in many cases, Japanese

interlocutors dismiss any notion that Japanese actions may be driven by concerns about U.S. decline or a reduction in commitment to the alliance. Speaking prior to the election of Donald Trump, one interviewee commented that "security cooperation with Australia isn't intended as a hedge against U.S. withdrawal but instead as a way to reinforce the U.S. presence in the region" (author interview). Another expert agreed, arguing "Japan's [cooperation in the defense realm] is not motivated by calculations about [possible] future U.S. decline" (author interview). Rather, a defense official noted, Japan's expanding defense cooperation "represents a shift to support a continued U.S. leadership role in the region" (author interview). Another official reinforced this view, arguing that "Japan is seeking to supplement and complement the U.S.'s regional engagement in the Indo-Pacific" as a way to reinforce U.S. commitment to the region (author interview).

Many Japanese experts note that Japan's expanded defense cooperation is seen as supportive of and spurred by U.S. policy. "In some sense, Japan's activities in these areas respond to the U.S. rebalance to Asia and seek to reinforce the U.S.-Japan alliance," one specialist related (author interview). Another subject matter expert on Southeast Asia agreed with this view, arguing that "the U.S. rebalance has encouraged Japan to expand defense cooperation with ASEAN countries [too]" (author interview).

While noting that there are "many motivations for Japan to pursue these kinds of defense ties," another foreign policy expert with substantial past government experience commented that China's growing assertiveness is "probably the biggest factor" (author interview). Another interlocutor, in a position to know government policy from the inside, confirmed this view, commenting that "China's threat to the liberal, peaceful international order is the primary motivating factor" behind Japan's expansion of defense ties with its Indo-Pacific partner nations (author interview). And a leading foreign policy voice in Japan's elite opinion circles pointed out that "China's activities will affect how much support Japan's contributions to regional security" enjoy, both with the region and with the Japanese people (author interview).

Despite the image of Japan as actively pursuing a "hard hedge" against China's rise, some interviewees pointed out another role that it plays in Japan's defense cooperation with partner nations. "China is not just a driving force," one expert commented, "it's also a shaping force because sometimes concerns over China's reaction serves to limit the extent" of Japan's defense cooperation with regional partners (author interview).

Although the cost factor of maintaining an indigenous defense industry has been noted above, prominent figures in the Japanese government downplay this explanation. "The primary explanation for the expansion of arms sales and transfers abroad is the need to engage with the region so as to improve our security environment," one leading defense official explained, adding that "sustaining our defense industries is only a secondary motivation" (author interview). Another official, with responsibility for international defense cooperation, concurred, stating that "defense export liberalization was not done for the purpose of supporting commercial firms, the economy, or jobs. Japan's defense firms don't make much money from overseas sales but from defense contracts with the government. They are sensitive to their public image and its effect on their brand. And for many of them, they are worried that arms sales to foreign partners could affect their core business lines in China" (author interview). A third interlocutor points to a further reason why Japanese defense firms do not feel much concern for exporting, noting that "there are no business incentives for them to do so. Japan's defense industrial firms supply the Government of Japan on a cost-plus basis. They'll never match that with exports" (author interview). And a fourth interviewee called attention to the difficulty of using Tokyo's existing policymaking process to leverage arms exports for regional strategy, noting that "defense exports are controlled by the Ministry of Economics, Trade and Industry, which doesn't tend to think about exports in a strategic sense" (author interview). Another expert commented that "Japan is not looking to be a major defense exporter the way Korea is," and noting that while "growing production costs are fueling an interest in exporting," the main targets of Japanese thinking about defense

hardware exports and co-development are the United States, Australia, or the United Kingdom, while looking to Vietnam and the Philippines as places to send coast guard equipment (author interview). Looking ahead, an industry representative noted that

> the biggest hurdles are our bureaucratic processes and our firms' lack of experience. Dual-use companies are already closely integrated with the U.S. defense industrial sector, but real co-development with countries other than the United States or Australia is almost impossible. (Author interview)

Values, norms, identity, and a sense of obligation as a major power are also at play in Japan's defense cooperation, as noted above. Many of the steps that Tokyo has taken in the defense space, a leading foreign policy voice argued, represent Japan's

> working through a backlog of things [we] wanted to do for a long time . . . things we should do. . . . These days you cannot expect just one country to be the world's policeman. Now, like-minded countries have to work together. What unites like-minded countries are shared values. We feel comfortable cooperating with those we share values with. Values are like the glue that unites these countries. (Author interview)

"Abe's visits abroad show he is thinking of Japan as a middle power," another interlocutor noted (author interview). Yet another cautions that "Abe is clearly driving the debate over Japan's identity" but also cautions that "for Abe, this is more about defending against China than about defending the liberal international order" (author interview). Another interviewee shed light on a similar angle, arguing that despite all the talk about shared democratic values, "Abe is not really pursuing values-based diplomacy—he is a realist pursuing national interest" (author interview). Another interlocutor echoed this, noting that

> while Abe has been publicly focused on the ideational or normative side [of competition with China], this is because Japan needs to offer a different vision from China. [Abe's approach] differs from [former Prime Minister] Aso [Taro]'s [proposed] Arc of Freedom and Prosperity because that approach was more gen-

> uinely focused on bandwagoning with neo-cons to remake the world in the vein of democracies. (Author interview)

Many Japanese commentators in elite political and policymaking circles (or those in business, the media, academia, or the think-tank sectors) tend to share a vision of Japan as a major power that has certain obligations and a need to manifest a particular identity as a great power. Japan's increasing defense cooperation with the Indo-Pacific "enjoys support across the political spectrum," one government official noted, further commenting that "Japanese public opinion has not turned against defense technology exports to date because these have all been non-lethal hardware," most notably coastal patrol craft and maritime surveillance planes sent to the Philippines, Vietnam, and other Southeast Asian nations (author interview). An expert on public opinion analysis confirmed this view, stating that "there is growing expert support for a higher international security profile, but public opinion on this is somewhat lagging" (author interview).

Indeed, while the prime minister's views and elite opinions matter, popular opinion appears to be a less important factor. "The policy elites and intellectuals will agree that Japan needs to play a big role internationally, but ordinary Japanese people are more inward-looking—they're not major proponents of Japan playing a big role internationally" (author interview). Another respondent agreed, pointing out that "public opinion is not much of a constraint on Japan's defense exports [and security cooperation] today . . . [but at the same time] there are no public pressures to do more in this area either" (author interview). As another expert commented,

> the general public doesn't seem to find language about the importance of supporting the liberal international order all that attractive as a reason to play a bigger international role. Fear of China and/or North Korea is a bigger motivating factor than any sense of obligation or aspiration to play a greater role on the international stage. (Author interview)

This view echoes an argument Schoff has made, pointing out that whereas Japanese elites fear U.S. abandonment, ordinary Japanese are more fearful of U.S. entrapment (Schoff, 2017).

On the question of whether or not norms, ideas, and identity are real factors in shaping Japan's regional defense cooperation, a leading Japanese foreign policy expert warned against underestimating the importance of such admittedly fuzzy concepts. While noting that "Abe's regional engagement has not achieved a consensus level of support among policy elites to date," he argued

> it could yet do so. Whether or not it does so will depend on how he leaves and who succeeds him, but not only on these. [It will also depend on how effectively he employs] ideational frameworks [to explain his foreign and security policies.] If these are ineffective, a leader won't be able to attract supporters. Therefore, it would be wrong to dismiss Abe's use of ideational or normative terms to describe his foreign and security policies. These are not just words. They carry real substance and have the power to attract political support from the populace. (Author interview)

With respect to how Japan's defense cooperation activities may evolve in the future, Japanese interlocutors are generally optimistic. In the future, Japan's defense cooperation with regional partners is "likely to increase—new methods of engagement are being established, including bi- and multilateral exercises and coast guard cooperation" (author interview). "Many of these activities are likely to persist even after Abe Shinzo steps down," another commentator replied, noting that "it's even possible that in the future Japan might pursue joint defense industrial development with Asian countries, though we'll probably do so first with the United States, the United Kingdom, or France" (author interview). Indeed, while Abe has certainly been a strong supporter of expanding Japan's capacity and policy space for defense cooperation, some observers have argued his political baggage, especially his views on history, may constrain Japan's regional profile as much as they enable it (Oros, 2017). To be sure, the expansion of Japan's defense cooperative activities preceded Abe, is not seen as something that he alone cares about or is responsible for, and survived his stepping down the first time in 2007. As one interlocutor noted, "These trends in

defense cooperation pre-date Abe and will persist beyond him" (author interview). Another commented that "without Abe we probably would not have started many of these activities, but now that they have been started they are likely to be carried forward even after Abe steps down due to institutional [i.e., bureaucratic] momentum" (author interview). Another interviewee agreed, arguing that Japan's expanded defense cooperation is

> likely to outlive Abe because of a [growing] self-recognition that Japan is not part of China's Sino-centric order. Of course, around the margins a subsequent leader might tweak such initiatives downwards to tactically improve ties with China, but they are unlikely to be abandoned in toto. (Author interview)

One interlocutor pointed out that there are other reasons besides the desire to counter China that argue for expanding Japan's regional defense cooperation ties.

> People like to justify everything we're doing with reference to China, but that's just what's politically saleable, not necessarily what's most important. These relationships are important in their own right. [The lack of MDA on the part of many local actors] is alarming—piracy, terrorism, and the political vacuum that enable them to thrive are real threats just as much as China is. Giving regional countries technical and security cooperation assistance is a requirement for Japan's regional diplomacy. [After all,] these countries are close to us and we share interests in common. (Author interview)

Nonetheless, it is certainly possible and possibly even likely that a successor prime minister may not focus as intently on boosting Japan's regional security profile, leading to a repeat of the slower growth in such activities between 2007 and 2012 when Abe returned to office. As such, one analyst has warned that Washington (and by extension, any of Japan's partners that have appreciated Abe's more active attitude toward defense and security cooperation) should "enjoy Abe while you have him" (Newsham, 2016).

In terms of how to interpret the importance of Japan's expanding defense cooperation with Indo-Pacific partner nations, one interviewee noted that

> if China decides to attack us, these activities won't matter much [because such linkages will not guarantee that other nations will come to Japan's aid], but prior to [Beijing taking] such a decision they serve to raise the costs and dissuade it from thinking it can accomplish coercion on the cheap. Recognizing that these steps won't necessarily prevent a conflict doesn't mean we should give up on them though—they help to reinforce norms and create a broader base of support for [the U.S.-led liberal international order]. (Author interview)

Another leading Japanese security thinker described Tokyo's defense cooperation with regional partners as valuable for

> diplomatic signaling; for laying the groundwork for further improving relations [with these nations]; for taking cheap shots and gray zone coercion by China off the table, or at least making it harder; for enhancing resilience; and for improving these nations' abilities to engage in humanitarian assistance/disaster relief and counter-piracy. (Author interview)

Yet Japan's efforts at building partner capacity have value in and of themselves, one interviewee noted. "Japan's experience with building partner capacity is very, very limited, but for that reason it is also very, very valuable. The Japan Self-Defense Forces have limited capacity to engage in such activities, and so for them, this is a [good] learning experience" (author interview). Of course, such activities are not driven by a strict either/or logic. As one government official commented, "Japan is focusing on capacity-building in the maritime domain by transferring intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets to Vietnam and the Philippines to help with peace and security in the South China Sea, especially [but not exclusively] the rise of China" (author interview). Another interlocutor points out that Japan is to a great extent forced into nonlethal efforts to build partner capacity in Southeast Asia not only due to domestic concerns over transferring lethal hardware but also by the fact that "our defense sales to Southeast Asia can't be high

end because they [i.e., Southeast Asian nations] can't afford to procure advanced hardware, so we are proceeding with leasing and gifts, [accompanied by offers of] training and support" (author interview). And competition for influence, not merely to balance China, plays a role as well, one interviewee noted, commenting that

> ASEAN has always been important to Japan, and Japan needs to engage more as China and India emerge so as to remain relevant. In fact it's worth pointing out that Japan received a lot of requests from Vietnam and the Philippines for assistance during the Noda administration, but the government couldn't decide to move forward. When Abe took office the government immediately approved these requests. (Author interview)

Another interviewee pointed out that this is true of submarine sales to Australia as well, commenting that "these were on the table even before the Abe-Abbott agreement; these were discussed during the Noda administration" (author interview).

Such demand signals from the region are indicative of the important interaction between Japan and its environment. Contrary to images of Japan as a "reactive state," one interviewee commented that "the nature of Japan is adaptive, not reactive. Japan doesn't decide its strategy and then pursue it; instead, it reads the regional situation and adapts to external inputs, accommodating and responding to the changing balance of power around Japan" (author interview).

Conclusions and Implications of Japan's Defense Cooperation for the United States and the Region

As Japan's *2018 Defense White Paper* notes, Japan is increasing its contributions to regional security through expanded efforts to partner with countries in addition to the United States through such means as "joint exercises and capacity-building assistance, defense equipment and technology cooperation, and establishing institutional frameworks such as the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements (ACSA)" (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2018a). Such efforts are framed by Japan as additive to and in support of the U.S.-Japan alliance and Tokyo's overall efforts

to support a free and open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategy. More recently, in response to concerns that "strategy" sounded to confrontational toward China, while "free" implied a goal of spreading liberal democracy to countries in Southeast Asia that might favor an Indo-Pacific free from Chinese coercion but might balk at the implication that they needed to liberalize domestically, Japan has begun to talk about its policy in new terms, describing it instead as focused on a "vision" of a "free, open and inclusive" Indo-Pacific region (with "inclusive" intended to reduce the impression that the policy aims at the containment of China). Leading U.S. policy analysts also see Tokyo's efforts to coordinate its growing security ties with regional partners as achieving synergies with Washington's own goals, especially since the Trump administration announced its own FOIP strategy (Blair, 2015; Report of the Commission on the Future of the Alliance, 2016; Harold et al., 2016; Friedberg, 2018).

The above review of Japan's specific Indo-Pacific defense cooperation initiatives and its reasons for pursuing expanded security ties makes clear that Tokyo's moves in regional defense diplomacy are grounded in a politically broad-based and enduring commitment to playing a greater role in regional affairs. Under the current Abe administration, and likely under subsequent prime ministers as well, U.S. and regional Indo-Pacific security policy decisionmakers should expect Tokyo to continue to offer opportunities to deepen defense policy contacts and cooperation. Such ties are likely to expand only slowly into more kinetic realms such as arms sales, joint exercises, or firm security commitments but are nonetheless relevant insofar as they provide weaker regional partners with key enabling technologies, hardware, training, and supporting information-sharing and logistical arrangements. Japan's efforts represent an opportunity for synergy with existing U.S. efforts to bolster regional partner capacities and help to raise the costs of coercion that China might direct against weaker states like Vietnam, the Philippines, or Indonesia. Going forward, Japan's efforts provide a strong base for the FOIP initiatives promoted by both Tokyo and Washington, and the quadrilateral grouping that brings the United States, Japan, Australia, and India together.

CHAPTER THREE

The Republic of Korea: Middle Power Diplomacy, "Asia's Paradox" Spur Expanding Defense Cooperation Under Constraints

Since the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century, South Korea (formally the Republic of Korea, or ROK) has expanded its defense cooperation with key partners in the Indo-Pacific. The ROK's own defense white papers speak about the need for closer international cooperation "in order to respond to security threats that are difficult to counter through the efforts of individual countries" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2016). Yet, despite its identity as a democratic, status quo–oriented U.S. ally, South Korea's defense cooperation is often seen as more piecemeal than as part of a consistent, strategic approach to foreign policy aimed at binding the Indo-Pacific together; expanding the ROK's influence; and reinforcing shared norms, values, and interests. What sorts of defense cooperation does South Korea pursue with other regional partners, and what motivates South Korea to engage on defense affairs? Will South Korea's support for regional defense cooperation deepen or diminish over time? And what are the implications of South Korea's approach to defense cooperation for regional security trends and U.S. national interests? This chapter examines these questions.

The ROK is a middle power of more than 50 million people with an approximately $1.4 trillion economy that ranks it in the top 12 members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (The World Bank Group, 2016). In terms of defense cooperation with key Indo-Pacific nations, South Korea has engaged

in high-level political-military dialogues, arms sales and transfers, joint defense industrial development, and training and exercises and has inked agreements on intelligence sharing and logistics support with key regional partners. South Korea's efforts to expand its influence beyond the Korean peninsula in recent years have centered around the "Global Korea" initiative of President Lee Myung-bak (2008–2012) (Kim, 2012), the "Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative" of Park Geun-hye (2013–2016) (Republic of Korea, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015), and the "New Southern Policy" of Moon Jae-in (2017–present) (Kim Bo-hyeop and Jung In-hwan, 2017). Explaining the motivations for and factors shaping Korea's expanding defense cooperation in recent years constitutes an important puzzle.

This chapter describes South Korea's defense cooperation with key Indo-Pacific partners such as Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam. It explores the motivations that have shaped the ROK's regional defense cooperation in recent years as well as the constraints that have served to impose limits on Seoul's activities in these areas. In addition, it analyzes why Seoul appears to favor particular types of defense cooperation and assesses how South Korea's defense engagement patterns are likely to evolve in the future.

We find that four key factors shape Seoul's defense cooperation.

First, South Korea's foremost focus is on the task of deterring and managing the threat posed by North Korea. Official South Korean defense reports point out that "the constant military threats and provocations from North Korea are the primary security threats the ROK faces today" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2016, p. 41). They also note that Pyongyang has employed "a disguised peace offensive which repeats a cycle of 'provocation, dialogue, compensation, and another provocation' in order to continuously develop nuclear weapons and missiles" and secure practical gains from the South under the objective of unifying the Korean Peninsula under communism" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2014, p. 23). The potentially existential threat the North represents absorbs substantial resources and as a consequence keeps

the South's attention and resources focused primarily on the Korean peninsula.

Second, Seoul also expends substantial effort navigating between the interests of its foremost security partner and ally, the United States, and the risk that any security engagements it might involve itself in off-peninsula could be viewed negatively by China, a country that South Korea has often perceived as a partner in economic development and a key force in restraining North Korean aggression. As the ROK's *2014 Defense White Paper* makes clear, the nature and direction of the U.S.-China relationship constitutes "the key variable in the security order in Northeast Asia" for the foreseeable future and "strategic cooperation and competition [between Washington and Beijing will be] the most important factor in determining the stability [and] security [of] the region" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2014, p. 14).[1] South Koreans appear to trust that the United States will remain involved in the Asia-Pacific and at any rate do not see their own country as having a sufficiently large margin of error to contribute substantially to reinforcing regional order when doing so could risk Chinese cooperation on North Korea or take resources away from deterring Pyongyang. This is not to say that South Korea does not fear China. As Kim has argued, "Seoul does fear China's growing power" but "so long as the US-ROK alliance remains secure and the US-centered bilateral security alliances are firmly in place . . . South Korea will feel less pressure to balance against China" (Ming-hyun Kim, 2016, p. 728).

Third, South Korea has faced particular challenges in its relationship with Japan owing to issues of history, territorial disputes, and domestic political pressures, which have combined to complicate Seoul's ability to deepen ties with Tokyo. While official Korean defense documents note that "the ROK and Japan share the basic values of liberal democracy and a market economy, and cooperate for

[1] The *2016 Defense White Paper* continues this interpretation but softens it a bit, arguing that "how U.S. – China relations develop in the near future *may* be the determining factor for the security order and stability in the [Northeast Asian] region" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2016, p. 14).

the peace and prosperity of not only the Northeast Asia region but also the world," such documents also point out that "some Japanese political leaders' regressive perception of history and unjust claim of dominion on Dokdo Island [have] become obstacles to the future-oriented development of the relationship between the two countries" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2014, p. 131). Moreover, South Koreans who feel anger over historical issues or territorial disputes have successfully mobilized and seized the upper hand in domestic policy debates over relations with Japan, undermining the ability of conservative administrations such as Park Chung-hee and Park Geun-hye and even liberal governments such as that of Kim Dae-jung to resolve Seoul's disagreements with Tokyo. The fact that South Korea's security and the operational requirements of U.S. forces are so heavily reliant on UNC rear-area support bases in Japan demonstrates both how poorly understood the linkages between the two countries' security postures are in some circles in Korea and how deeply felt the issues at stake are for some Koreans.

Finally, the structure of South Korea's defense industrial sector does not provide a substantial commercial spur to defense exports or cooperation. Korea's most important defense firms are generally large, diversified, commercially focused conglomerates with relatively little interest in defense production targeted toward the domestic Korean market and even less in defense exports.[2] Instead, the Korean government has tended to push industry to export more, rather than the government responding to demands from industry for policy support for exports. Sales of defense articles abroad were a particular focus of the Lee Myung-bak administration, and as the *2012 Defense White Paper* noted, the ROK government has provided "systematic support to the defense industry," including "developing defense industry export markets and promoting marketing activities" (Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2012, p. 274). Largely as a

[2] Korea's defense industrial concerns usually tend to be part of much larger conglomerates focused primarily on selling industrial or commercial goods and are sensitive to both the low profit margins and reputational costs associated with defense technological development and production.

consequence of the ROK government's support and encouragement to its private sector firms, and those firms' attractive mix of technological sophistication and relatively affordable defense articles, South Korea rose to the world's 11th-leading exporter of military hardware in 2018 (Arirang News, 2019). But in contrast to Japan, which has to date transferred only nonlethal defense articles abroad but nonetheless seeks to coordinate with the United States so as to achieve strategic effects with its transfers of excess defense articles and MLE platforms, Korean arms sales are rarely undertaken in coordination with the United States or with the aim of supporting or reinforcing regional order. This is an area where U.S. policy and regional efforts might benefit from greater dialogue with Seoul, since Korea is emerging as one of the most important suppliers of medium- to advanced-level hardware to countries such as India, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

The remainder of this chapter unfolds in five parts. The next section describes the data and methodology employed in the analysis. Then the chapter turns to a section that provides key background information describing South Korea's overall security situation and thinking in recent decades. Following this, the paper describes the ROK's defense cooperation with Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam, exploring the specific types of security ties that Seoul has with each. It then turns to an analysis of why South Korea appears to favor specific types of security cooperation over others and offers additional assessment of the factors shaping the South's choices. Finally, it concludes with a projection of how the ROK's security cooperation with key Indo-Pacific partners appears likely to evolve in the years ahead and the implications for South Korea, the region, and the United States.

Data and Methodology

While South Korea's security relationship with the United States has been studied extensively, and its diplomatic relations with Japan and China have also received extensive scholarly and policy analytic

treatment, its engagement with partners in South and Southeast Asia as well as Oceania have been the focus of considerably less attention.[3]

To understand South Korea's defense cooperation with these partners, the study draws on key official documents such as the ROK's defense white papers (issued every two years) and official descriptions of the foreign policy frameworks of specific Korean administrations. It also leverages secondary source analyses of Korea's foreign and security policies, including those authored by academic and think-tank experts. Since much of South Korea's defense cooperation has occurred recently and without substantial treatment, the study also takes advantage of extensive open-source English-language media reporting and foreign policy commentary on Seoul's activities with regional countries on security affairs. Finally, it draws on over two dozen in-person interviews conducted with key South Korean respondents. Subject matter experts consulted for this study included current and former defense and foreign policy decisionmakers; military officers; defense-focused academics and think-tank analysts; defense and political reporters; and defense industry officials. These interviews were conducted over a period spanning the conservative administration of Park Geun-hye as well as the liberal/progressive administration of Moon Jae-in.

Given that the subject under consideration is South Korea's defense cooperation with six other countries across five types of defense, the chapter describes how Koreans view each country's role in the ROK's defense cooperation, while also attempting to evaluate why specific categories get more or less policy attention.

The next sections describe South Korea's overall foreign and defense policy relationships with the countries of the study.

Country-by-Country Analysis

While Seoul's main concerns are deterring the threat from North Korea and maintaining close cooperation with the United States while

[3] On U.S.-ROK alliance relations, see Cha, 2016; Snyder, 2008, pp. 93–113; Snyder, 2009b; Shin, 2010; and Manyin et al, 2015. On China and South Korea, see Chung, 2008; Snyder, 2009a; and Chung and Kim, 2016, pp. 123–145. On Korea-Japan relations, see Cha, 1999; Taylor, 2012, pp. 93–100; Kim, 2014; and Glosserman and Snyder, 2015.

Table 3.1
Korea's Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	Australia	India	Indonesia	Japan	Philippines	Vietnam
Partnership Type	None	Special strategic	Special strategic	None	None	Strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Arms Sales and Transfers	Yes[1]	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	No	No	No	No	No	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	Yes[2]	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
GSOMIA	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

SOURCES: RAND interviews; open-source data collection; Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016.

NOTES: [1] While Australia has purchased ammunition from South Korea, no major weapons systems have been exported to date.
[2] In official documents, South Korea and Australia have agreed in principle on defense co-production and co-development, but to date no such activities have occurred.

advancing as far as is possible positive economic and security relations with China, it has nonetheless expended substantial effort in recent years to develop defense cooperation with select Indo-Pacific partner nations.[4] These are described below and in Table 3.1.

Japan: A Necessary but Deeply Troubled Security Partnership

South Korea's relationship with Japan is among its closest, most complex, most important, but most deeply troubled external ties. Interactions

[4] The following sections are informed in part by South Korea's *Defense White Paper* series: Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016.

between Korea and Japan date back over a millennium, but the most relevant recent elements of the relationship for many Koreans remain their nation's annexation at the hands of Imperial Japan in 1910, followed by a brutal colonial reign that included the banning of Korean language and names, forced labor, widespread involuntary sexual servitude, and an attempt to obliterate the very identity of the Korean nation. For other Korean observers, these negative aspects from the first half of the twentieth century are less relevant than the more positive developments that have characterized bilateral ties since their formal establishment in 1965, at which point Japan offered the ROK a large payout as a tacit apology and compensation for damages suffered during the occupation. That $800 million package (approximately $6.3 billion in 2018 dollars)—a combination of grants, low-interest loans, and private sector assistance organized by the government—was used to kick-start Korea's heavy industrial and infrastructure-centered development drive, build its major north-south trunk road network, and establish some of its major state-directed economic concerns. In general terms, these two diverging views reflect the perspectives of the country's liberals/progressives (more concerned with history and more hostile to Japan) and its conservatives (more focused on the threats of North Korea and China, anti-Communism, and shared liberal democratic values).

Japan's own contributions to South Korea's security commenced with its role as a major rear-area support base during the Korean War, a role Japan continues to play to this day, hosting UNC bases and providing facilities that forward-deployed U.S. forces would rely on in the event of a renewed conflict in Korea. Both nations are democratic U.S. allies that share similar forms of East Asian state-directed capitalism, and both are threatened by North Korea and China. Despite these similarities, relations have frequently been beset by tensions over issues of history textbooks, forced sexual servitude, territorial disputes over the island of Dokdo (occupied and administered by Korea but claimed as Takeshima by Japan), and visits by Japanese politicians to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine. Still, at times when the reliability of their U.S. ally has been called into question, or when the external threat environment has worsened rapidly, the two sides have been able to set aside their differences and focus on security cooperation, and at the working-level relations between the ROK Armed Forces and the

JSDF are often far better than the high-level politics between Seoul and Tokyo might suggest.[5]

In terms of concrete dialogue, South Korea and Japan have long had fairly regular—if occasionally interrupted—summitry and senior leadership exchanges. Since 1994, the two sides have held defense ministerial meetings; these are bolstered by occasional summit meetings, foreign minister contacts, the Seoul Defense Dialogue, defense policy talks, and service chief engagements as well as a series of contacts facilitated by the two countries' alliances with the United States.

Relations have been complicated somewhat by Korea's democratization, which has meant that ties with Japan have at times become highly politicized, with conservatives preferring to downplay the past and focus on the future, while liberals and progressives focus more on issues of history, justice, and perceived Japanese slights (Kim, 2014). In the 1993 Kono statement and the 1995 Murayama statement Japan signaled a more fulsome embrace of its past and its regret for harm done to Korea; on the strength of these statements, in 1998 under newly elected Korean President Kim Dae-jung and Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo the sides agreed to put their difficult history behind them and focus on building a future-oriented relationship. Yet these positive steps have repeatedly been undercut by actors in Japan and Korea whose comments or actions have highlighted the negative side of the two countries' interactions, making security cooperation more challenging.

To date, South Korea has neither sold Japan any weapons nor purchased any from Japan. Nor has Seoul agreed with Tokyo on any joint defense industrial development and/or co-production arrangements. One reason for this is that the two sides at somewhat similar places on the technology curve and so are not a natural fit so much as they are potential competitors. Additionally, until recently—the early 1980s for Japan and the early 2000s for Korea—both were heavily reliant on the United States to provide them with defense equipment. For its part, until the early 2010s Japan imposed domestic policy constraints on the export any defense articles; such restrictions also

[5] On the penchant for Seoul and Tokyo to cooperate when their perceptions of the external security environment worsen, see Cha, 1999.

prevented the country from engaging in joint development or co-production with any nation other than the United States. Japan's interpretation of Article 9 of its constitution forbade the JSDF from engaging in a wide variety of military activities that are deemed ordinary or even essential by many foreign militaries, and prior to 1993 these included any overseas deployments; even today, almost all operations that could involve combat remain off-limits to the SDF. South Korea, for its part, remains extremely resistant to any suggestion that Japanese forces might return to the Korean Peninsula, whether for training and exercises; to bolster deterrence against North Korea; or to conduct a noncombatant evacuation operation in the event of a contingency, and routinely express concern when Japan reinterprets aspects of its constitution or passes legislation relaxing the constraints on the SDF (Kim, 2015).

Nonetheless, Seoul and Tokyo have engaged in some limited defense cooperation. In 2014, following pressure from the United States on its allies to cooperate more on intelligence in light of the threat posed by North Korea, South Korea agreed to a trilateral information-sharing agreement where Seoul and Tokyo could pass intelligence to each other through Washington (U.S. Department of Defense, 2014). While this was a step forward, it was an inefficient solution to a rapidly evolving problem, and in December 2016 Seoul recognized that such a pass-through agreement was no substitute for a direct military intelligence-sharing channel and agreed to sign a GSOMIA (Park, Blanchard, and Kajimoto, 2016).

While still a candidate for the presidency, Moon Jae-in criticized the arrangement and suggested he might renegotiate or cancel the deal but ultimately chose not to undo it as the North Korea threat ballistic missile continued to grow, and in August 2017 the deal was automatically renewed for another year ("South Korea, Japan Extend Military Intelligence Pact," 2017). The deal nonetheless remains controversial with certain segments of the Korean left, and Japan has noted that while Seoul is willing to share intelligence on North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, the ROK has made clear it is unwilling to provide Tokyo with other information it collects, such as on Chinese military operations in the South China Sea (Yeo, 2017).

In addition to the 2014 trilateral information-sharing arrangement and the 2016 GSOMIA, Washington has been instrumental in facilitating South Korea-Japan security cooperation through bilateral exercises with the United States where the Koreans or Japanese can attend as observers. The three sides have also engaged in at least six trilateral ballistic missile tracking exercises since 2016 ("S. Korea, U.S., Japan to Hold Anti-Missile Drill," 2017). In addition, together with their U.S. ally, South Korea and Japan have engaged in a number of SAREX and maritime interdiction operations designed to improve coordination and cooperation at sea; the first such joint drills were held in 1999 ("S. Korea, U.S., Japan Conduct Trilateral Maritime Drill," 2016). Other exercises, such as April 2016's *Nimble Titan*, paired the ROK and Japan not only with the United States but also with the United Kingdom, France, Australia, and Canada in an effort to improve information sharing and decisionmaking during a crisis simulating a North Korean ballistic missile attack ("Seoul, Tokyo Exchange Info Directly in Exercise," 2016). Other multilateral exercises, such as the Rim of the Pacific exercise or the West Pacific Counter-Mine Warfare Exercise also provide opportunities for the two sides to engage in contact and gain familiarity with each other (Ministry of Defense of Republic of Korea, 2008). Further, South Korea has from time to time sent its naval vessels to participate in the JMSDF's fleet reviews ("South Korea Military to Join MSDF Fleet Review in October," 2015). What these exchanges highlight is the fact that at the technical or operational level the relationship between the Korean and Japanese armed forces are generally quite professional and collegial; in most cases, the challenges to security cooperation stem more from the political level (though as noted above in the Japan chapter, from late 2018 matters took a turn for the worse, including some negative developments in the contacts between the two countries' militaries associated with Korea's demand that Japan remove a flag from a JMSDF vessel invited to a fleet review, and the December 2018 radar lock-on incident).

In summary, although most South Korean administrations recognize the importance (and in some cases, the desirability) of defense cooperation with Japan, differences over history and territorial claims, similarities in defense industrial structure and legal limitations, diverging

threat priorities and perceptions of China, and political opportunism in both Korea and Japan have limited strategic cooperation and from time to time interrupted or frozen implementation of various cooperation arrangements. Since the 2010s, tensions between Seoul and Tokyo have grown even despite agreements intended to resolve the issue of the "comfort women," and the future of security cooperation does not look promising in the near to medium term, even in spite of Japan's call for building a region defined as an FOIP, the growing threats of North Korea and China, and questions about U.S. reliability. Still, the geographic proximity, shared alliances and values, and similar if not identical threat perceptions suggest that Seoul and Tokyo will continue to develop elements of their defense relations in the years ahead, even if it is substantially less fulsome than might serve both countries' national security interests.

India: A "Special Strategic Partnership" of Growing Importance

The relationship between South Korea and the Republic of India has grown in all dimensions since the establishment and normalization of diplomatic relations in 1973. While not a contributor of combat power to the UN mission that rescued the ROK, India nonetheless did contribute a medical unit that helped treat Koreans at a time when doctors were in short supply. During the remainder of the Cold War and into the early 1990s, ties remained relatively low level as the Indian economy was largely closed off, New Delhi maintained ties with North Korea, and India leaned toward the socialist camp (though it never formally joined the Warsaw Pact). With the Indian military reliant on Soviet military hardware and Pakistan heavily dependent on the United States, South Korea had room to expand or deepen defense ties with New Delhi.

With the end of the Cold War and the opening up of India in the early 1990s, especially in light of South Korea's extraordinary economic development, exchanges began to grow. Still, over the past two and a half decades the defense relationship between Seoul and New Delhi has moved in fits and starts. Korean presidents have tended to view India as a potential strategic partner in confronting North Korea as well as a potential market for the ROK's defense exports and co-development but have been frustrated by the slow movement of the Indian side to

address their concerns over the North. India, for its part, has seemed at times uncertain about how fulsomely it wants to embrace a new and more substantive relationship with Seoul, owing partly to its efforts to promote its own defense industries and partly to its concerns about not appearing to join up to an anti-China containment policy.

In addition to New Delhi's low levels of interoperability with U.S. equipment and past difficult relations with Washington (which, after all, was aligned with India's key rival, Pakistan), India's long-standing economic, diplomatic, and technological cooperation with North Korea had traditionally acted as something of a break on Seoul-Delhi ties, with South Korea cautious about extending any technology assistance to India that might indirectly end up helping the North. India's reforms of the 1990s, the breakthrough in U.S.-India relations in the late 1990s culminating in the year 2000 Clinton visit to India, growing tensions between Washington and Islamabad over the latter's suspected links to al Qaeda and the Taliban, and the 2005 U.S.-India civil nuclear deal helped to clear away many of the obstacles to closer South Korea-India relations.

Much of South Korea's policy toward India since the mid-2000s has been geared toward trying to elevate ties, partly as a way to incentivize Delhi to be more sensitive to Seoul's concerns over its ties to North Korea, partly for more standard reasons derived from economic exchange and South Korea's broadening diplomatic horizons. For many years, India was North Korea's second-largest trading partner, and Pyongyang and Delhi maintained technical exchanges that may have had relevance for the Democratic Republic of Korea's (DPRK's) missile and nuclear programs. As South Korea's ambassador to India told *The Korea Times* in early 2014 on the occasion of President Park Geun-hye's visit to Delhi,

> Even though India adopted the so-called equidistant diplomacy with the two Koreas under the non-alignment policy, the country was closer to North Korea [than to South Korea]. Hence, India . . . [was] a difficult country for us. . . . In line with the rise of South Korea, however, India regards us in a different manner as it strives to cooperate with its rising economy. (Kim, 2014)

Indeed, New Delhi's approach to balancing its relations with the two Koreas began to shift even more dramatically from late 2016 when India turned against Pyongyang over its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missile development and joined the international sanctions regime (Sellak, 2017).

In the course of broadening their ties, Seoul and Delhi reached a 2005 Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Defense, Industry, and Logistics, though this did not represent a full ACSA. Later, in 2009, they signed a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) that led bilateral trade to grow to $16.8 billion by 2017; on the strength of prospective further growth the two sides agreed to upgrade the CEPA and further liberalize in early 2018 ("India, South Korea to Work on Upgrading Free Trade Pact," 2018). The two sides have maintained active pattern of summitry and high-level dialogues as ties have deepened. South Korean Minister of National Defense Kim Jang-soo became the first-ever ROK senior defense leader to visit India in 2007; the first Indian defense ministerial visit to South Korea occurred three years later in 2010 under the Lee Myung-bak administration. President Lee visited New Delhi in January 2010 as the guest of honor during India's Republic Day; at that time, the two sides inked a joint statement entitled "Towards a Strategic Partnership" that committed them to deepening military ties, expanding cooperation on space-launch for Korean satellites, and expanded naval contacts and cooperation among coast guards (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2010). The statement marked India as Korea's thirteenth "strategic partner" (Ser Myo-ja, 2010). Shortly thereafter India posted its first-ever defense attaché to South Korea and Seoul successfully concluded its own civil nuclear deal with India, marking two further important overall advances in the relationship (Jaishankar, 2012). Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reciprocated Lee's visit by traveling to Seoul in 2012 (Bajpaee, 2014).

This high level of exchanges was maintained by the new leaders of South Korea and India in the early to mid-2010s, with President Park Geun-hye visiting Delhi in January 2014. During that visit, to facilitate deeper defense ties, South Korea signed an Agreement on the Protection of Classified Military Information, an arrangement similar to a GSOMIA to facilitate the exchange of sensitive defense intelli-

gence (Embassy of India, Seoul, 2018). Prime Minister Modi visited Seoul in May 2015. During the Modi visit, the two sides signed an agreement announcing a decision to upgrade their ties to a "Special Strategic Partnership" and signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing exchanges between their respective national security councils to supplement their preexisting bilateral defense dialogue (ongoing since 2003) (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2015). Indeed, that document talks about the two countries' "shared commitment to values of democracy, open society, and liberal international economic order" as the "foundation" of their "special strategic partnership." In addition to annual summits and meetings of the two sides' foreign ministers, the agreement committed Seoul and Delhi to strengthening the "partnerships between Indian and Korean institutions of defense education"; establishment of a vice-ministerial level defense and foreign affairs dialogue "in the '2+2' format"; "encourage greater cooperation between their shipyards for defense needs"; expanding naval staff talks and visits; and improving cybersecurity cooperation (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2015). The Special Strategic Partnership agreement built on the 2010 "Strategic Partnership," which was itself developed out of previous bilateral vision statements and plans, including the 2004 "Long-Term Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity" and the 1996 Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation (Bajpaee, 2014).

These policy engagements have been supplemented by fairly frequent set of operational defense exchanges, including ship visits and military exercises. Notable visits have included the Indian navy's visit to Busan in June 2012, the INS Sahyadri's stop in Incheon in 2015, and the participation by the ROK Navy in the International Fleet Review held in the Bay of Bengal in February 2016; more recently, the two navies held a joint exercise in the Indian Ocean in October 2017 focused on antipiracy, logistics, and helicopter landing skills ("Visit of INS Sahyadri to Incheon, Republic of Korea," 2015; Panda, 2016). The two sides have worked on enhancing interoperability in communications and have practiced naval SAREX operations.

South Korea has also reached a number of deals with India on arms sales and co-development or joint production. For example,

in 2015 Hanhwa Techwin (formerly Samsung Techwin prior to late 2014), in partnership with India's Larsen & Tourbo, won a $1 billion tender to develop a localized version of Korea's K-9 155mm self-propelled howitzer for the Indian Army (Raghuvanshi, 2015). Separately, South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries reached a $1.5 billion deal that same year to cooperate with Hindustan Shipyard in building five fleet-support ships as well as a $448 million agreement on two strategic operating vessels (Sun, 2015). The relationship has been beset by some challenges related to Indian defense budgeting woes and the emphasis New Delhi has placed on its "buy and make in India" policy, which ultimately led to the collapse in early 2018 of a $5 billion deal under which South Korea's Kangnam Corporation was slated to help India design and build twelve mine countermeasure vessels (Raghuvanshi, 2018).

At the outset of the Moon Jae-in administration, it was unclear what direction ties with India would take or how it would fit in with Moon's New Southern Policy. As noted above, South Korea declined initially to embrace the FOIP language promoted during the November Asia visit by U.S. President Donald J. Trump, and its relationship to the associated "Quad" grouping of the United States, Japan, India, and Australia remains ambiguous. Nonetheless, ties between the Modi administration and President Moon got off to a strong start when the Indian leader sent a Korean-language Tweet congratulating Moon on his election in May 2017 ("S. Korea's Moon Thanks Indian Leader Modi for Congratulations in Korean Language," 2017). The two leaders later met in Hamburg at the Group of 20 (G-20) conference in July 2017, and Modi invited Moon to visit India at an early date. In early July 2018, Moon made his inaugural trip to India to meet with Prime Minister Modi, riding the Delhi subway, visiting temples, and proclaiming that the New Southern Policy "makes India Korea's key partner for cooperation," including not only economic cooperation but also deepening ties in the realms of "enhanced military exchanges, training and experience-sharing as well as research and development in defense industries" (Lee, 2018). Modi reciprocated Moon's visit, traveling to Seoul in late February 2019 (Lee, 2019). Neither visit, however, appears to have led to any advances in defense cooperation.

In summary, South Korea has seen India move in an extremely promising direction in recent years with respect to the overall relationship between Seoul and Delhi, and a major component of this has been a rapidly expanding security cooperation relationship. The two sides appear to be responding in somewhat similar ways to the same or similar security challenges, including the growth of nuclear threats by their neighbors Pakistan and North Korea, the rise of an aggressive China under Hu Jintao and subsequently Xi Jinping, questions about the sustainability of a leading U.S. role in the region (and a desire to support that) balanced against a desire to maintain or expand autonomy in security policy, and expectations from their respective populations about their nations' roles on the global stage. If Delhi maintains or deepens its commitment to its "Act East" policy, further exerts pressure on North Korea, expands its willingness to import Korean defense articles, or moves to play a more active balancing role in the South China Sea through involvement in the Quad and the FOIP initiative, it is likely that South Korea will welcome these moves and reciprocate them. Seoul, for some of the reasons noted above that are related to its difficult relations with Japan and its proclivity to be cautious toward China, will likely frame such expanded defense ties as more technical or operational and is less likely to situate them in a broader narrative about regional balancing to maintain a rules-based order, but the practical effect could nonetheless be quite consequential.

Indonesia: Growing Defense Ties and Tactical Cooperation

South Korea and Indonesia established formal diplomatic relations in 1973. From the normalization of relations to the mid-1990s, relations proceeded fairly slowly, with ASEAN as a whole being seen primarily through the lens of competition with North Korea for diplomatic recognition (author interview). As Indonesia's economy began its takeoff in the 1980s and 1990s (by which point Korea's economy was reaching developed economy status), however, the two sides began to deepen their economic ties, with trade relations taking on greater importance in the wake of the 1998 Asian financial crisis that damaged both countries deeply. As of 2016, Indonesia ranked as South Korea's tenth-largest export destination, with the ROK sending roughly $6.7 billion

in goods and services south and receiving roughly $8.3 billion worth of imports in the same year, making Indonesia also Korea's tenth-largest source of imports.[6]

Bilateral ties deepened dramatically in 2006 when then-President Roh Moo-hyun signed an agreement on "strategic partnership" with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The relationship was further elevated during the presidency of Lee Myung-bak, who successfully concluded major arms export and co-development agreements with Jakarta despite a spying scandal that emerged during the final negotiations accompanying the visit of President Yudhoyono to Seoul in 2011 (McDonald, 2011). President Park Geun-hye carried this effort forward, with then–Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se arguing in August 2013 that South Korea "as a responsible middle power . . . wishes to give back the help we received in the past . . . [and] make meaningful contributions to maintain the peace and stability of the international community" (as quoted in Teo, Singh, and Tan, 2016, pp. 555–580). This identity-based statement speaks to a sense of accomplishment and obligation that some close observers of South Korean foreign policy see as having first begun to take root in the late 1990s and reaching its peak in the presidency of Lee Myung-bak, with his focus on a "Global Korea." As one interviewee noted, aid and development assistance, including partnership capacity-building with Southeast Asian counterparts like Indonesia, are "seen as a middle power obligation and expectation" for South Korea (author interview).

It is worth noting that the joint membership that Korea and Indonesia share in the informal Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, and Australia (MIKTA) middle powers grouping that was established in 2013 built on the five powers' shared

> core values and similarities . . . [as] democracies that benefit from open economies with robust growth rates and a significant level of economic power . . . [so as] to contribute to protecting public goods and strengthening global governance . . . [and act in support of the] principles of the UN Charter and other universally

[6] Trade data from Simoes, n.d.

> recognized norms governing international relations . . . [as well as] increase mutual understanding, deepen bilateral ties, and find common grounds for cooperation . . . [by, among other things, working to] develop joint projects to enhance information-sharing and exchanges. ("MIKTA Vision Statement," 2015)

As noted above, some of Korea's most prominent arms sales to any country to date have been to Indonesia. Jakarta was the first export customer for the Korean Aerospace Industries KT-1 *Woongbi* basic training jet, buying seven in April 2003 for $60 million and another five in May 2005 (Martin, 2012). In late 2011, Seoul reached a deal to sell Jakarta three Type-214 submarines for $1.1 billion as well as 17 additional KT-1 *Woongbi* basic trainers and 16 Korean Aerospace Industry/Lockheed-Martin co-developed T-50 *Golden Eagle* light fighter/trainers (Jung Sung-ki, 2011; Ser Myo-ja, 2011). Daewoo International has also sold to Indonesia three landing platform docks and a hospital ship, while Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering upgraded two of Jakarta's Type 209 submarines. In terms of ground combat vehicles, South Korea's Doosan DST has sold armored personnel carriers (APCs) as well as 22 K-21 Infantry Fighting Vehicles for $70 million (Grevatt, 2010). Samsung Techwin (with help from Hanwha Trading) also exported the K-9 *Thunder* 155mm self-propelled artillery, and S&T Daewoo has exported machine guns. The scale and diversity of South Korea's arms exports to Indonesia—ranging from small arms, infantry fighting vehicles, and self-propelled artillery to fighter jets and submarines—represents the most consequential aspect of South Korea's push to broaden its defense partnerships in the Indo-Pacific.

Leveraging their 1995 memorandum of understanding on defense industrial cooperation and their agreement on quality assurance, the two sides agreed in 2012 to co-develop a four-and-a-half generation advanced fighter, the *KF-X*, at an estimated cost of $7.1 billion, with Jakarta on the hook to provide an estimated 20 percent of the budget. As one specialist we spoke with noted, "Indonesia has previously developed defense aircraft so the choice of partnering with Indonesia on the KF-X was not altogether surprising" (author interview). The project ran into some turbulence over funding concerns as of late 2017, and by October 2018 Indonesia had missed several rounds of scheduled

payments and announced its plan to slash its overall commitment to the project, likely leading to delays and cost growth to the ROK ("S. Korea, Indonesia in 'Close Consultations' over KF-X Program Cost," 2017; Yu Yong-weon, 2018).[7]

Apart from its arms exchange and co-development relationship with Indonesia, Seoul does not have either an ACSA or GSOMIA agreement with Jakarta, nor does it engage in any substantial bilateral military exercises with the Indonesian military. South Korea has, however, sent ships on port calls and to participate in naval parades in recent years as a way to advance military diplomacy.[8]

In November 2017, in his first state visit abroad, President Moon Jae-in announced his New Southern Policy to redefine relations with the ASEAN countries during his visit to Jakarta (Kim and Jung, 2017). That visit, as the joint vision statement issued in its wake highlighted, reflected the "long-standing, close, and friendly bilateral relations" between the two sides premised on "shared values of democracy, human rights, and an open economy." In that meeting, the South Korean president and his counterpart, Indonesian President Joko Widodo, agreed to elevate the bilateral relationship to a "special strategic relationship," "explore new consultation mechanisms such as a two-plus-two meeting," and continue to pursue cooperation "in the field of defense industry . . . with a stronger emphasis on capacity-building, research and development, and joint production" (Yonhap News Agency, 2017). Korea's Joint Vision Statement with Jakarta is reportedly the first of its kind with a Southeast Asian country (Kim, 2017).

In the course of deepening Korea's ties with Indonesia and ASEAN, President Moon explained that this fit with his vision of contributing to "peace in Asia through security cooperation." On the same trip, two of his leading advisers explained that tensions with the United States over trade and China over the THAAD system had fueled a desire to broaden South Korea's economic and diplomatic ties with

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[7] On the MOU on defense industrial cooperation and quality assurance, see Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Korea, 2008, p. 361.

[8] See, for example, "S. Korea to Send 2,500-ton Warship to Indonesian Naval Parade," 2015.

ASEAN and India under the keywords of "people, peace, and prosperity" (Ser Myo-ja, 2017). Subsequently, in September 2018 South Korea leveraged its hosting of the Seoul Defense Dialogue that it arranges with ASEAN to further develop security ties with Indonesia, as well as with Vietnam and Brunei, among others (Parameswaran, 2018k). In late February 2019 Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering announced that it was in the "final stages" of a negotiation with Jakarta on a $1.2 billion export of three additional submarines, with some final assembly to be done in Surabaya, Indonesia (Lee and Ser, 2019).

In summary, Korea's security cooperation with Indonesia appears to be fueled by a perceived desire to expand the ROK's diplomatic influence beyond the peninsula, reduce dependency on the United States and China, make contributions to reinforcing the liberal rules-based international order (in some Korean analysts' view so as to reinforce the U.S.-led order as a hedge against U.S. decline), play a middle power role, and find markets for the country's defense products so as to sustain the South Korean defense industry.

Australia: "A 'Like-Minded Middle Power' Partner"

South Korea's defense cooperation with Australia is among the most well developed that it has with any foreign partner other than the United States.[9] Canberra's involvement with the ROK's security began with its contribution of 18,000 Australian troops to the 1950–1953 Korean War, where they suffered 340 battle fatalities (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-d). Since that time, Australia has remained an active sending state under the UNC in defense of the ROK, and currently the Commander of UN Forces-Rear in Japan is a Royal Australian Air Force group captain (Yokota Air Base, n.d.).

Formal diplomatic relations were established in 1961. Today, both countries are liberal democracies and allies of the United States; they are also bound by a 2014 Free Trade Agreement (FTA), and in 2016 exchanged roughly $22.6 billion worth of goods and services

[9] The quote in the above subhead ("A 'Like-Minded Middle Power' Partner") is from Chung, 2017.

in addition to their cumulative $21 billion in bilateral investment (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea, 2016). The two sides also share membership in numerous international bodies including the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the ASEAN Plus Six, and the East Asian Summit.

As noted above, Korea and Australia are bound together in the MIKTA middle powers grouping. The two sides also maintain a 2 + 2 foreign and defense ministers' dialogue that has been held every other year since 2013 and is next slated to be held in 2019, as well as an annual deputy minister-level strategic dialogue (Lee, 2017). Australia is Korea's only 2 + 2 dialogue partner other than the United States (though this could change if the joint vision statement South Korea inked with Indonesia in late 2017 is realized).

The 2 + 2 dialogue not only focuses on messages of deterrence to North Korea and nontraditional security cooperation on regional problems such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; they also express solidarity with other democratic partner nations by emphasizing "the importance of exercising self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability" (Shin, 2017). In doing so, they send a soft signal to other regional actors such as China that may aspire to change the regional security environment through coercion or the threat or use of force. Indeed, as former Korean ambassador to Australia Kim Woo-sang noted in an interview with *JoongAng Ilbo* in October 2017, whereas a 2 + 2 dialogue with Japan might "send a wrong message to the great powers in the region," such an engagement format with Australia could "send a very interesting message to the regional powers . . . what the region needs is a kind of 'minilateral' meeting in the Asia-Pacific led by Korea and Australia because we face together the rise of China and issues such as the South China Sea [territorial dispute]" (Chung, 2017).

In addition to the high-level security dialogues that the two sides hold, the 2011 ROK-Australia memorandum of understanding (MOU) on defense cooperation "commits the two sides to increased joint exercises, training and staff exchanges in both directions" (Graham, 2015b). The defense relationship is structured around 2 + 2 meetings

every two years; foreign ministers' meetings at least annually; defense ministers' dialogues at least annually; regular heads of government meetings either bilaterally or on the sidelines of multilateral events; and annual strategic dialogue talks and defense policy talks; as well as regular service-to-service dialogues (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2015).

In terms of exercises, the two sides hold the joint ASW exercise Haedoli/Wallaby every two years, most recently off the coast of Korea in October 2017; the exercise is the only bilateral naval warfare exercise that Australia conducts with any nation other than the United States ("S. Korea, Australia to Hold Joint Naval Exercise," 2017; Carter, 2017). Additionally, in November 2017 the ROK hosted a trilateral military exercise with U.S. and Australian naval forces designed to practice intercepting nuclear materials being smuggled at sea (McKirdy and Han, 2017). South Korea also partners with Australia and five other nations to conduct submarine rescue exercises every two years, and hosted the event in 2004 and 2016 ("S. Korea to Host Six-Nation Submarine Rescue Exercise This Month," 2016).

To date, Korea has not sold arms to Australia. A 2010 Agreement on the Protection of Classified Military Information enables the sharing of some classified information. A 2013 understanding on military logistical cooperation enables the two countries to "share spare parts and tools for equipment [repair]," and also provides for discussions of defense industrial ties, though to date no substantial defense industrial cooperation appears to have occurred ("S. Korea, Australia Agree to Expand Cooperation in Military Logistics," 2015). The 2015 Blueprint for Defence and Security Cooperation also commits the two sides to establish a MOU enabling their respective defense acquisition and industrial bodies to deepen cooperation, in part by holding regular joint defense industry cooperation committee meetings (Government of Australia, Ministry of Defence, 2015).

In short, Australia is seen by Korea as a very friendly country with some niche cooperation opportunities and minimal historical or strategic baggage. It has supported Korea's independence and survival from the start, it is allied with the United States, it is not burdened by Japan's historical legacy, and cooperation with it is unlikely to spark retaliation

from China. In a sign that Canberra's intelligence and diplomatic cooperation in confronting the North Korean regime is valuable, in October 2017 Pyongyang threatened to carry out a nuclear strike on Australia (Greene, 2017). Australia's having so much skin in the game is something Seoul recognizes and appreciates; as many observers have noted, a Korean War contingency is probably the most likely place where Australia's military might fight a war in East Asia, and Australia would be a logical and attractive destination for evacuating civilians and injured military personnel in the event of a conflict (Allport, 2017). In short, for South Korea most of the logic of partnering with Australia on defense derives not from its implications for regional order, balancing China, hedging against U.S. retreat, or offsetting the costs of maintaining the ROK's defense industrial base. Instead, such cooperation is largely about promoting middle power diplomacy in a way that avoids antagonizing China or partnering with Japan and brings additional niche benefits in terms of countering the North Korea threat.

Philippines: Arms Sales Destination and Growing Partner

South Korea's bilateral relationship with the Philippines dates to 1949 when the two sides established and normalized ties, with the Philippines later sending forces to support the UN mission to defend the ROK following the invasion of the South by North Korea, the only Southeast Asian nation to do so. The Filipino contribution represented the fourth-largest contingent among the 16 allied nations that came to South Korea's rescue, and a total of 7,420 Filipino troops fought in the conflict, with 112 of them being killed and a further 299 wounded ("S. Korea, Philippines Agree to Bolster Defense Industry Cooperation," 2013). In addition to the Philippines' status as a UNC Sending State, the two sides are bound by dense people-to-people ties, investment and trading relations, and their shared status as U.S. allies. They jointly participate in the East Asian Summit (EAS), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea) groupings.

Since the signing of the 1953 Korean War armistice, the two sides have enjoyed generally warm relations. In the wake of its development miracle, South Korea has been a major investor in, supporter of, and trading partner with the Philippines, and over the past decade, as the

ROK has sought to expand its regional defense profile, security ties have grown substantially. Part of the motivation for South Korea's enhanced engagement has been the desire to be seen as playing a role in bolstering the regional U.S.-led security architecture; a separate factor has been the need to support its defense industries through exports, and a final factor has been the need to enhance regional ties as a counter to North Korea.[10]

In October 2013 the two sides signed an agreement on deepening defense cooperation, including specifically mentioning the goal of promoting defense industrial cooperation and military exchanges. Prior to the 2016 election of Rodrigo Duterte, as the Chinese threat to Manila's South China Sea territorial claims expanded, Seoul enjoyed such substantial demand signals from the Malacañang Palace that South Korea's defense articles would find markets in the Philippines. Filipino President Benigno Aquino III visited Park Geun-hye in Seoul in September 2015 and proposed signing a "comprehensive strategic partnership." This was followed shortly thereafter by a visit to Manila by South Korean Defense Minister Han Min-koo, who signed a five-year agreement to regulate and protect the exchange of classified military information (Parameswaran, 2015d). The two sides also reportedly agreed to increase exchanges of ranking military officials and enhance joint cooperation on a variety of nontraditional and transnational threats ("S. Korea, Philippines Ink Pact on Protecting Classified Military Info," 2015).

As Manila looked to reconstitute its navy and air force and refurbish its ground forces, it turned to Seoul as a major supplier of hardware and weapons; South Korea was eager to respond inasmuch as this would help advance the Lee administration's goal of turning the country's defense industry into an engine of growth while at the same time supporting a U.S. ally. The ROK's Hyundai Heavy Industry contracted with Manila in December 2016 to provide two 1.4-ton *Incheon*-class frigates to equip the Republic of the Philippines Navy for $331 million (Delrieu, 2016). In the air domain, Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI)/Lockheed-Martin has exported 12 F/A-50PH light attack fighters in a roughly $360 million deal completed in mid-2017,

[10] Pyongyang has diplomatic ties across all ten member countries of ASEAN and is believed to have a large number of hackers based in the Philippines.

with Manila reportedly considering ordering an additional dozen jets as of late 2017 ("Philippines Plans to Buy 12 More FA-50 Fighters from South Korea," 2017). The Philippines Air Force also acquired six close air support aircraft, 13 AW-109 helicopters, and eight Bell-412 combat helicopters from KAI (Dacanay, 2015). And S&T Daewoo has sold 7,000 light machine guns to equip the Philippine Army.

Under the Moon Jae-in administration, it is unclear how much of a priority Seoul will place on ties with Manila specifically. To the extent that defense ties were fueled in part by the desire of the Aquino administration to reconstitute its defense capabilities in response to perceptions of a growing Chinese threat, the rise to power of Rodrigo Duterte could put downward pressure on certain capabilities relevant primarily for South China Sea contingencies. On the other hand, the Duterte administration has apparently signaled a desire to continue strengthening the Philippines Air Force through additional purchases of FA-50s, which could mean further Korea-Philippines defense ties. The Moon administration's relatively cautious response to the FOIP construct suggests that it is likely to be less eager to contribute to any effort to build up Southeast Asia as a counterweight to China, even if it seeks to diversify its economic and political relations so as to reduce its reliance on China's market and the United States for security. Still, in late April 2018 Filipino Defense Minister Delfin Lorenzano was welcomed to Seoul for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of the two frigates Manila had purchased from the ROK, and at that time South Korean Minister of National Defense Song Young-moo vowed to press forward with security and defense industrial cooperative ties with the Philippines ("S. Korea, Philippines Vow Close Military Ties," 2018). While Korea and the Philippines have yet to move forward with military exercises, in April 2019 South Korea's Samyang Comtech and Boo Heung Precision Machinery launched a joint project with the Philippines' Government Arsenal to construct factories aimed at producing bulletproof helmets and vests as well as ammunition for domestic use and export (Grevatt, 2019).

Overall, South Korea's security cooperation ties with the Philippines have presented it with an opportunity to support its defense industrial base, expand its contributions to the maintenance of regional order (under the pro-U.S. Lee and Park administrations), and build out

its defense diplomacy. Training and exercises remain underdeveloped, and the two sides have not moved forward yet with the kinds of supporting agreements on intelligence cooperation or logistics support that would facilitate broader or deeper cooperation. At present, the outlook for expanded defense ties appears to be fairly limited, given the focus of the Korean government under Moon Jae-in on inter-Korean ties and the attention of the Duterte administration on what it describes as a war on drugs.

Vietnam: Overcoming a Difficult Past, but No Substantial Security Ties

South Korea's relations with Vietnam have traversed a winding trajectory over the several decades since the ROK's founding but have been steadily improving since the early 1990s. South Korea was linked to South Vietnam through their shared alliance with United States in the 1950s and 1960s, and the ROK was deeply involved in the Vietnam War, sending slightly more than 300,000 troops and suffering an estimated 5,000 battle deaths and possibly as many as 150,000 casualties. Experts have linked Seoul's contributions to the war to a sense of obligation to the United States and other countries for their help during the Korean War, a desire to fight global communism, an aspiration to leverage participation in the war to spur development akin to Japan's successful recovery on the back of its role as a rear-area support base during the 1950–1953 war in Korea, and the Park Chung-hee regime's desire to consolidate power domestically by leveraging a foreign crisis (Borowiec, 2015). Individual South Korean soldiers and their families may also have played an important part in offering support for the war, since they could receive substantial combat pay that could help them to climb the economic ladder (Kwon, 2017).

This difficult history—recently being reexamined for evidence of long-forgotten massacres of Vietnamese civilians and the sexual exploitation and rape of Vietnamese women—has long served as a stumbling block to closer ties. During his 1998 visit to Hanoi, President Kim Dae-jung stated that he was "sorry that Korea participated in an unfortunate war and inflicted suffering on Vietnamese people," while in 2004 President Roh Moo-hyun expressed his sense that South Koreans owed Vietnam a "debt" for how they had treated them

during the conflict (Ock Hyun-ju, 2017). The growing willingness of Vietnamese and Koreans to talk about these issues could presage a healing process and a deepening of ties, or it could lead to additional challenges in the future, possibly akin to the "comfort women" issue that has plagued South Korea-Japan ties.[11] For example, when President Moon Jae-in praised the contributions of Korea's Vietnam War veterans in June 2017, Vietnam's Foreign Ministry criticized the speech, and some South Korean opinion writers called on the Moon administration to make an explicit apology to Hanoi for its involvement in the war (Oh Young-jin, 2017).

Nonetheless, after the fall of South Vietnam, the two sides gradually began to explore contacts and ties under the Roh Tae-woo administration's *Nordpolitik* policy of attempting to woo Pyongyang's diplomatic partners into acknowledging the ROK; this ultimately led to the full normalization of relations in 1992. Since that time, with the South Korean economy growing rapidly and Vietnam's *doi moi* reforms opening it up to greater trade and investment, South Korea-Vietnam economic and people-to-people ties have deepened substantially. Trade and investment—as well as the continued need to compete with the DPRK for influence and status in Southeast Asia—fueled further efforts to improve relations through the late 1990s and 2000s, and during that time Seoul signed an FTA with ASEAN (which Vietnam joined in 1996), joined the ASEAN Plus Three framework, and began participating in the EAS, among other multilateral forums linking the two nations economically and diplomatically.

Relations took a leap forward in 2009 when, under President Lee Myung-bak's "Global Korea" foreign policy, the two sides signed a strategic partnership agreement promising to deepen military cooperation, expand high-level visits, and establish a strategic dialogue mechanism, though to date, these promises remain largely confined to paper (Clark, 2017). Under President Park Geun-hye, the focus of ties was largely on economic cooperation and people-to-people ties; an esti-

[11] One key difference between the two cases is that in Vietnam there is no space for the political opposition to mobilize around and manipulate the war guilt issue for political gain in the same way that some political entrepreneurs and activists in South Korea have sought to use the "comfort women" issue against Japan.

mated 100,000 Koreans live in Vietnam, with at least 85,000 in Ho Chi Minh City working across more than 1,400 companies. In addition to the sizable expatriate community and the popularity of Korea's cultural exports, the two sides are also linked by nearly 50,000 binational Korean-Vietnamese families, leading President Park to describe the two sides as "in-law countries" during her 2013 visit to Hanoi ("President Park Calls Korea, Vietnam 'In-Law Countries,'" 2016). That visit, described as an example of "sales diplomacy," apparently did not include efforts to export ROK defense articles or to expand strategic dialogue ("Park Arrives in Vietnam for State Visit," 2013). Still, by 2015, South Korea was the largest foreign investor in Vietnam with over 4,000 discrete projects, and the two sides inked an FTA intended to lift bilateral trade from $32 billion in 2014 to $70 billion by 2020 ("South Korea and Vietnam Sign Free-Trade Agreement," 2015). In March 2018, the Moon Jae-in administration announced during a joint press conference with Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang in Hanoi, Vietnam, that the two sides would "upgrade their bilateral strategic relationship into a more comprehensive one" (Rahn, 2018). And in April 2018, Defense Minister Song Young-moo and his Vietnamese counterpart General Ngo Xuan Lich agreed on a Joint Vision Statement on Military Cooperation that called for the expansion of people-to-people exchanges, defense industry cooperation, and a host of other cooperative efforts on subjects including United Nations peacekeeping operations, humanitarian aid, multilateral security and recovery of remains (Yonhap News Agency, 2018).

South Korea's overall security cooperation with Vietnam then has been limited largely to senior-level visits. Seoul has not established an official 2 + 2 dialogue with Hanoi nor has it agreed to any routine military exercises or joint training. No arms sales have been agreed on nor are any co- or joint-defense industrial development agreements in the works. Since defense ties remain at a low level, the two sides have not needed, nor have they signed, any agreements on protecting or sharing military intelligence or engaging in acquisition, logistics, and cross-servicing of military hardware.

On the surface, this absence of substantive defense ties presents something of a mystery. South Korea has substantial military hardware that Vietnam would no doubt like to buy to bolster its deterrent and

defense capabilities, and few countries are more open and welcoming to South Korean investment and relations than Vietnam. Yet, at least four factors appear to help explain the (to date) quite low state of bilateral defense cooperative ties.

First, South Korea was likely constrained from selling Hanoi many of its best defense articles by the U.S. arms embargo on Vietnam. Seoul's concerns for close cooperation with the United States likely trumped its interest in deepening defense ties with Hanoi prior to the lifting of the arms embargo in May 2016. Since that time, although the United States was urging middle powers like South Korea to bolster their commitment to the regional order, Seoul was swept up in a domestic political crisis (until May 2017) and then engaged almost wholly in dealing with the North Korean nuclear threat. Moreover, while President Moon's New Southern Policy may provide some opportunities to deepen defense ties, many key progressive advisers to the Blue House appear to regard enhanced regional defense cooperation as a low priority, and it is not clear that the U.S. administration has sought explicitly to encourage the deepening of South Korean defense ties with Vietnam. As one Korean interviewee for this project pointed out, "the New Southern Policy is mainly focused on economic cooperation, not security affairs," noting that Vietnam is now projected to be South Korea's second-largest export destination by 2020 (author interview; Lee, 2018).

Second, one of the key reasons South Korea has sought to reach out to Vietnam at the strategic level is to elicit cooperation against North Korea, but Vietnam's price for doing so is likely to take the form of collaborating with the ROK to counterbalance China (Clark, 2015). Although many South Korean conservative analysts regard such a policy as sensible, South Korean diplomacy has to date under both Lee and Park avoided most steps that were unambiguously opposed by China. The Park administration was extremely reluctant to weigh in on the South China Sea issue, doing so only late in 2016 and after substantial pressure from the United States; Hanoi's ability to elicit this was very close to zero and surely put Seoul on edge. South Korean progressives have even greater concerns about crossing China and appear disinterested in defense exports or strategic cooperation in support of broader regional architectures such as the "pivot"/"rebalance" of the Obama administration or the FOIP of the Trump administration.

Third, some South Korean defense firms have expressed concerns about the security of the Vietnamese People's Army as an end user and worries about data leakage on technical specifications to North Korea (author interviews). Such considerations are present in all instances of hardware export but are particularly prevalent in Vietnam given its proximity to China, regime type, and past relations with the DPRK. Exporting defense articles to Vietnam generally requires creating an export variant that differs substantially from any system that the ROK's own armed forces might field, a potentially costly and time-intensive process that is unlikely to be profitable and that Vietnam may not have the financial wherewithal to pay for anyhow.

Finally, while the economic, social, and people-to-people ties appear to be increasingly close between Seoul and Hanoi, many South Korean policymakers and South Korean society as a whole still see a low priority for regional diplomatic and security outreach, perceiving the urgency of the North Korean and Chinese (and for some, mostly progressive, South Koreans, Japanese) threats as requiring the full attention of high-level policymakers.

In summary then, South Korea's limited security ties with Vietnam are best explained by their perceived limited value and downside risks, as well as constraints imposed on the ROK up to 2016 by U.S. policy toward Vietnam. Going forward, the Moon administration could conceivably seek to deepen defense ties with Vietnam under its New South Policy, but to date the only indications that security cooperation will be a part of the new administration's approach have come with respect to its ties with Indonesia, not Vietnam.

Korean Explanations for the ROK's Patterns of Defense Cooperation

To better understand Korea's motivations for expanding defense cooperation with regional actors, we also leveraged face-to-face interviews with current and former foreign and defense policy decisionmakers, think-tank–based national security experts, and leading academic specialists on security studies and regional affairs, using these to provide additional Korean perspectives and "voice" to explain the outcomes in the data.

Overall, as one Korean defense expert we spoke with related, Korea's defense cooperation in recent years has been shaped by considerations of power politics, but "not so much about worries about U.S. decline" (author interview). This view was shared by another prominent Korean foreign policy expert, who related that Korea's expanded security cooperation was fueled

> not by concerns about U.S. reliability . . . [instead, our security cooperation with these countries has been driven] by a desire to help the United States rebalance and stay present in Asia, especially in Southeast Asia, which was becoming a part of China. Our focus was partly on Southeast Asia, where we tried to get the regional countries to view the U.S. and its allies more favorably [through security assistance and cooperation]. [In particular], we increased overseas development assistance and designated Vietnam and the Philippines as "special partners for development assistance cooperation." This was partially done to make up for our silence on the South China Sea issue. (Author interview)

"The central challenge Korea faces to its national security, its interests, and its desired regional order comes from the rise of China as a potential hegemon," one former high-ranking government official related, adding that Korea's expanded security cooperation constitutes "counter-balancing behavior . . . designed to encourage China to exercise restraint . . . by shaping the [regional] environment" (author interview). As another expert commented,

> China's rise is one factor driving Korea's defense cooperation with the region, but we don't want to make our response too apparent. We've gone out of our way to avoid doing things with Japan in particular that would set off alarm bells in Beijing. Instead, we've sought to focus on cooperating more with Australia and India as surrogates. (Author interview)

Korea's security cooperation efforts in Southeast Asia, according to another expert, are another part of this strategy, and aim to "offer Southeast Asians an alternative to China. South Korea's strategy has been to aid the rebalance without explicitly antagonizing China"

(author interview). As another interviewee noted, "China always comes into the equation. Korea doesn't join the U.S.-Japan-Australia-India quadrilateral exercises, for example, because of the fear that doing so will be taken by Beijing as a sign that we've agreed to try to contain China" and has to find other ways to contribute to the kind of region it hopes to see (author interview).

Economic considerations clearly also play a major role in the ROK's defense export drive and co-production agreement with Indonesia, with many interviewees we spoke to echoing the words of one long-time defense analyst who commented that "Korea's defense cooperation has been fueled substantially by considerations about economic growth and the costs of maintaining our defense industrial base" (author interview). One interviewee noted that for Lee Myung-bak "the main motivation of selling arms to Southeast Asia was a business calculation, about making money, not developing defense cooperation [or building] strategic partnerships. . . . [I]t was a business calculation, and maintaining [or growing] influence" was only a side benefit (author interview). Another interviewee we spoke with noted that South Korea's defense exports are "[primarily] motivated by the receiving states' concerns over China's rise," stating further that "most of Korea's arms sales are the result of a demand pull by Southeast Asia fueled by economic development in the receiving countries, not a supply 'push' by the ROK" (author interview).

Ideational or identity-based factors as a middle power also shaped South Korea's calculus of defense cooperation, especially during the Lee Myung-bak era. One expert we spoke with noted that

> during the Lee administration South Korea tried to promote a sense of "Global Korea" and talked about the need to give back to the region now that South Korea has developed. . . . Our defense exports started with the transfer of used hardware and platforms relevant for policing and coast guard operations, but we gradually moved up into exporting training jets like the KT-1 *Woongbi* and the T-50 *Golden Eagle.* Still, we are lagging behind Japan in terms of effectively employing official development assistance and security cooperation, and have hidden our intentions out of a concern arousing Chinese pushback. (Author interview)

While such ideational factors are not as important as more traditional national security imperatives, Snyder points out that South Korea's development and democratization over the past five decades have fueled a "gradual shift toward internationalism . . . focused on making contributions to global leadership in international security and development" (Snyder, 2018).

Such security cooperation is "not something that popular opinion demands," one expert noted, while another observed that the "general public would be worried about angering China [if such moves were explicitly characterized as counter-balancing] . . . and don't think about these issues [much] or vote on them" (author interviews). A third interviewee pointed out the controversial nature of South Korea's growing security ties in some Korean policymaking circles where it is seen as "something the U.S. is forcing on Korea" (author interview).

Many conservative Korean observers echoed the words of one expert we spoke with who noted that "the view that South Korea should play a greater role in regional [security] is a minority view," in part because, as another commentator argued, "most Korean security thinkers have a hard time looking beyond the North Korea threat" (author interviews). A left-leaning interviewee echoed this view that a broader defense cooperation profile is not especially popular on the liberal/progressive side of the political spectrum, pointing out that "during the Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun administrations, there was no real interest in security cooperation with regional partners . . . [because to progressives] the 'middle power' concept is nonsense . . . [and] most of these [defense cooperation] initiatives are worthless" (author interview). One conservative South Korean defense and foreign policy expert and former government official we spoke with gave some substantiation to the liberal/progressive critique that security contributions result in part from a desire to placate American demands that South Korea do more, stating that while South Korea's arms sales are "purely economic activities," all of the other defense cooperation it engages in could fairly be seen as reflecting a "tacit U.S.-South Korea understanding that the South should be more active" in supporting a liberal regional order commensurate with the U.S.-led alliance system (author interview). Another subject matter expert consulted for this study argued that there are two ways to think about South Korea's security cooperation

with Southeast Asia: for conservatives, such efforts focus on preserving the U.S.-led order through efforts to enhance MDA with partners such as Indonesia and Vietnam. By contrast, liberals and progressives see security cooperation with Southeast Asia primarily as a useful way to diversify away from reliance on great powers such as the United States and China, serving as a "hedge" if the United States reduces its commitment to Korea or if China once again pursues sanctions such as it imposed on Seoul over its authorization of the THAAD battery for U.S. Forces Korea (author interview).

As the review of the five forms of defense cooperation with the six countries described above makes clear, and as the interviews with Korean experts confirms, to date, South Korea's greatest areas of activity have been in the realms of high-level security dialogues, selling or transferring arms, and establishing agreements to share or protect military intelligence and information. These activities are shaped largely by the ROK's perceived need to help maintain the U.S.-led regional order while avoiding antagonizing China and refraining from activities with Japan that might arouse domestic criticism. They are fueled in part by serious economic imperatives that stem primarily from the ROK government's desire to retain an autonomous defense industrial base as a hedge against abandonment and a spur to domestic economic growth.[12] While the ROK participates in a number of bi-, tri-, and multilateral exercises and has engaged in co-development with one partner (Indonesia), its armed forces' core focus is on deterring and, if necessary, defeating the threat from North Korea, retaining U.S. support, and avoiding alienating China.

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[12] Korea's defense industrial base is structured as part of Korea's *chaebol* (large, family-owned conglomerates), the majority of which focus on catering to consumers. This has sensitized the firms to the risks of being labeled as "merchants of death," for which reason they tend to accord low priority to their defense arms, which keep a relatively low profile. With defense already a small proportion of these large firms' business operations, defense exports are an even smaller and less commercially attractive proposition. Similarly, the Republic of Korea armed forces has reasons to prefer U.S. hardware whenever possible since it is generally cheaper, proven, and readily available by contrast to indigenous Korean hardware that has to be prototyped and fielded over longer periods of time at higher costs and sometimes with lower capabilities. The motivation for Korea's retention of an indigenous defense industrial base comes, then, not from business or from the Korean military but from Korea's senior policymakers.

The final section offers some thoughts on where Korea's regional defense cooperation is likely heading in the coming period.

The Future of South Korea's Regional Defense Cooperation and Implications for the United States

For the foreseeable future, South Korea is likely to continue to engage in defense cooperation with regional partners in a somewhat piecemeal, episodic, and limited fashion largely disconnected from and uncoordinated with overall U.S. policies such as the "rebalance" or the FOIP strategy. Concerns over the security situation with North Korea will likely continue to override all other considerations, and the deep divide between conservatives and progressives is certain to continue to shape the priority accorded to regional security cooperation. Should conservatives return to power, they are likely to pursue more substantial defense ties driven in part by strategic concerns such as the desire to support the regional order centered on the U.S. alliance network, quietly balancing China's rise and perhaps working with Japan where possible. For progressives, or what Hahm has called "left nationalists," Korea's overdependence on the United States has tended to lead Seoul into focusing on areas other than national reunification, initiatives one interlocutor described above as "worthless," which means that such cooperation is likely to be downplayed and driven more by economic considerations than by geopolitics or identity concerns (Hahm, 2005).

Still, left-leaning Korean politicians may see some merit in continuing to expand Korea's regional profile through security cooperation; as Snyder notes, Roh Moo-hyun's own Commission on Policy Planning called for defining South Korea as a "strong middle power," suggesting the concept may have some appeal outside of simply conservative circles (Snyder, 2018, p. 120). For example, in the wake of China's economic sanctions against the ROK for agreeing to permit the United States to deploy a THAAD ballistic missile intercept battery on the peninsula, the left-leaning Moon Jae-in administration has sought to reduce dependency on not just the United States but China

too, pursuing a New South strategy as described above.[13] Indeed, while the Moon administration's overall focus has been on reassuring North Korea and offering Pyongyang incentives to continue diplomatic contacts, China's acts of economic warfare against South Korea could well lay the groundwork for a future administration to once again work, as the Lee Myung-bak government did, more closely with the United States and regional partners to balance against any Chinese coercion.

Early signs are that the Moon administration will continue aspects of security and defense cooperation with Southeast Asian nations—most notably Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines—so as to support the ROK's indigenous defense industrial base, with the goal of enhancing Seoul's overall autonomy in security affairs. If the costs of maintaining an indigenous defense industrial base continues to rise, even progressive administrations will likely need to undertake efforts to export military hardware and engage in co-development, if only so as to reduce reliance on the United States and preserve greater autonomy and employment. Indeed, South Korean defense firms do not appear to be spurring the efforts to cooperate in defense technology exports or co-development; instead, South Korea's defense cooperation appears largely to be a function of the priorities of the administration in the Blue House.

The most consequential bilateral security relationship among any pair of partners in this volume is likely the Korea-Japan relationship, as it is critical to detecting and responding to indicators of military aggression by the DPRK, sensing and defending against ballistic missile attacks, sustaining military operations and/or conducting a noncombatant evacuation operation, and performing other steady-state deterrence and MLE activities (often in tandem with their U.S. allies) that set the space where conflict or contingencies might occur. U.S. policy

[13] This is not to suggest, of course, that all Korean investment in and trade with Southeast Asia is a function of calculations about great power politics; Samsung is a major investor in Vietnam, for example, for reasons unrelated to U.S. and/or Chinese policies and preferences, and other Korean firms are active across much of Southeast Asia. This discussion of the New South strategy is intended not to explain all of that policy's motivations but merely to note that it is unfolding against a backdrop of tensions between Seoul and its ally and neighbor that add an incentive to enhance autonomy and reduce exposure.

has, at times, been highly active in seeking to press Seoul and Tokyo to broaden and deepen security cooperation or to set aside or minimize their areas of disagreement. Since 2017, Seoul has been much less restrained in its pursuit of legal and diplomatic claims for what some in Korea perceive as historical "justice," while many in Japan are ready to write Korea off over its continuing and increasing focus on issues from the past as well as its prioritization on current disputes. This divergence from the past, especially at a time when the threat from North Korea is growing, suggests that the United States may, as some critics have argued, need to do much more than it currently is doing to manage the challenging relationship between Seoul and Tokyo (Kelly, 2019).

Still, for the most part, especially prior to 2017, South Korea's growing regional defense cooperation has been and is commensurate with U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific. While Seoul's on-again/off-again reluctance to work smoothly with Tokyo can present serious challenges for alliance managers, the two sides have managed to sign and maintain an important intelligence-sharing arrangement and carry out a limited set of military exercises in partnership with the United States. South Korea's defense exports are largely helpful for building up capacity among regional actors who may not need or be able to afford or effectively operate high-cost, high-end U.S. military hardware. The United States does not export submarines or advanced light attack fighters or training aircraft such as the ROK has exported to Indonesia and the Philippines, meaning that Seoul's arms sales do not come at the expense of the United States. South Korea's multilateral dialogues and broader regional diplomatic initiatives are generally seen as part and parcel of a region that is growing more interconnected and more inclined to see security cooperation as a part of what developed and developing countries alike should engage with each other to build a regional order that suits all actors. Indeed, as Snyder has argued,

> to the extent that South Korea's middle-power aspirations are focused on preservation of regional stability through enhanced cooperation with other middle powers so as to buffer against the possibility of Sino-U.S. conflict . . . its middle-power diplomacy is unlikely to conflict with U.S. interests. (Snyder, 2018, p. 270)

For South Korea, continued slow expansion of defense cooperation with Indo-Pacific partners such as Japan, India, Indonesia, Australia, the Philippines, and Vietnam is likely to continue so long as it is not seen as a distraction from the need to deter North Korea, avoid angering China, and be welcomed by the United States.

CHAPTER FOUR

India: From Nonalignment to Engagement with Strategic Autonomy

Since the turn of the century, Indian defense cooperation has expanded and deepened with partner nations in the Indo-Pacific. For a country that has historically cherished a nonaligned identity and has focused most of its defense efforts on security threats originating in South Asia, this poses something of a puzzle: What factors explain India's growing defense collaboration with regional partner states? This chapter examines the evolution of India's external security relationships in recent years with respect to six key regional actors across the Indo-Pacific: Australia, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Vietnam. It explores the current state of, and recent trends in, Indian defense and strategic collaboration with these countries. In doing so it focuses on five metrics: high-level security dialogues, training and exercises, arms sales and transfers, defense co-production and co-development, and ACSA.

There are several potential motivations driving nation-states to diversify and expand their external security partnerships. For India, the decision to expand and deepen its regional security partnerships appears to be driven by a confluence of factors, including an evolution in threat perceptions vis-à-vis China, shifting priorities among the leadership of India's defense establishment, and a broader evolution in India's strategic paradigm and defense doctrine. The central finding of this chapter is that India's growing web of security partnerships in the region are largely the product of broader evolutionary trends in Indian foreign policy and strategic thought since the end of the Cold

War. While there are multiple, often complementary motivations driving the phenomena in question, security concerns related to China's growing power and assertiveness are the most influential factor, with additional impetus provided by India's quest to develop a domestic defense industry and to atone for decades of diplomatic neglect in East and Southeast Asia. In New Delhi, doubts about America's reliability as a defense partner have risen since the election of President Donald Trump but do not play a decisive role in India's engagement with East and Southeast Asia.

The chapter begins with a brief review of India's geopolitical journey from nonalignment to deepening regional engagement before moving to six country-specific sections focusing on the five key defense cooperation metrics noted above. The penultimate section examines the role of other key actors that India partners with on security so as to offer further context before the concluding section analyzes the drivers of security cooperation and summarizes the findings.

Research for this trip was conducted via to two trips to Delhi in August 2016 and January 2017 to conduct interviews with Indian experts in the defense and strategic studies community as well as serving and retired civilian and military officials. In addition to drawing on open-source media reports, official Indian government documents, and secondary sources, it also draws on roughly a dozen in-person interviews with Indian experts and an equal number of interviews with Western scholars of Indian foreign and security policy, including current and former government officials from the Indian Ministries of Defense and External Affairs, those holding ambassador rank, and experts from the Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation, the Vivekenanda International Foundation, and the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, among others.

Background

China has been viewed by Indian strategists as a, if not *the*, principal external security threat facing India since the two countries fought a short but traumatic war over their disputed border in 1962 (Smith,

2015). In the decades that followed that struggle, India's strategic focus was drawn westward toward its more emotional and conflict-prone rivalry with Pakistan—with which it fought three wars in 1965, 1971, and 1999—and inward toward the massive challenges of promoting economic development, social stability, and democratic consolidation.

For several decades after achieving independence from the British empire in 1947, India's foreign policy paradigm was largely defined by its insularity, a product of India's philosophical aversion to "alignment," its preoccupation with geopolitical developments in its immediate neighborhood, and no shortage of internal economic and security challenges. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century India grappled with myriad ethnic and separatist insurgencies of varying potency and a persistent Maoist insurgency that began to fade only in the mid-2010s. Meanwhile, recurring bouts of political instability among India's South Asian and Indian Ocean neighbors precipitated sporadic foreign interventions by Delhi, both political and military in nature.

Equally important, successive Indian governments made a conscious decision not to enmesh India in the bipolar competition of the Cold War, preferring instead to focus on internal development while endeavoring to become a leader of the nonaligned movement (NAM). Partly as a result, India's strategic and economic engagement with East and Southeast Asia, which was more actively involved in the U.S.-Soviet competition, was quite limited during the latter half of the twentieth century. As David Brewster has argued,

> India showed relatively little strategic interest in maritime Southeast Asia during most of the Cold War. Nehruvian strategic doctrine eschewed the development of regional security relationships and, as a result, India saw its interests as largely limited to rhetorical efforts to minimize the intrusion of other major powers into Southeast Asia. (Brewster, 2011)

Yet, despite its efforts to remain aloof from great power competition, India's decision to sign a defense treaty with the Soviet Union in 1971 soured relations with the United States and further constrained its diplomatic room for maneuver in a region flush with U.S. treaty

allies and security partners, including South Korea, Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, Taiwan, Australia, and for a period, South Vietnam.

Meanwhile, India's almost exclusive dependence on the USSR for defense hardware and its immature and highly bureaucratized defense industrial complex created obstacles to forming meaningful defense relationships with many of its Asian peers.

When the collapse of the USSR in 1991 abruptly deprived India of its principal superpower patron, Delhi found itself sandwiched by hostile powers Pakistan and China; estranged from the United States, the lone remaining superpower; and largely bypassed by the economic miracle that was transforming East Asia. Worse still, the Indian government was confronted with a balance-of-payments crisis the same year the Soviet Union disintegrated, prompting a sharp devaluation of the rupee.

Though the evolution was gradual at first, the end of the Cold War and the 1991 financial crisis ultimately had a profound impact on Indian strategic thought. Specifically, it prompted several paradigmatic shifts that eventually and fundamentally altered the course of India's geopolitical trajectory and are largely responsible for shaping the contours of Indian foreign policy today.

First, the economic crisis and the onset of globalization prompted a wave of economic reforms shepherded by then–Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, eventually producing a more open, liberal, and internationalist economic and diplomatic profile.

Second, India began to adopt a more conciliatory approach to its immediate neighborhood, embodied in the "Gujral Doctrine" unveiled in 1996 by then–External Affairs Minister IK Gujral.

Third, India began the long process of transforming relations with the United States, starting with their first joint naval exercise, dubbed Malabar, in 1992. India's 1998 nuclear test prompted a bout of high-level dialogue with the Clinton administration followed by a series of landmark steps, including President Clinton's trip to India in 2000 and the signing of a civil nuclear deal and ten-year defense partnership agreement with the George W. Bush administration in 2005.

Fourth, deprived of Soviet military hardware at "friendship prices," India began to promote the development of its domestic defense industry in a more determined fashion, focusing heavily on "indigenization" as well as diversification of its external security relationships and sources of arms imports.

Fifth, and most relevant to this chapter, in 1991 India launched a Look East Policy in part not only to engage the dynamic economies of the "Asian Tigers" but also to redress decades of diplomatic neglect of East and Southeast Asia during the Cold War. With the help and invitation of regional partners like Singapore and Vietnam, since the 1990s India has grown increasingly active in the region's multilateral institutions and security architecture, including the EAS, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus, as well as other prominent global forums like the G-20, the BRICS grouping, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

While China was still viewed as a security threat by Indian strategists, with a few notable exceptions, including a large military buildup at their disputed border in 1987, China-India relations witnessed a period of relative calm and growing diplomatic economic and cooperation beginning in the late 1970s, when the two capitals restored diplomatic relations. The inauguration of formal negotiations on their disputed border followed in the early 1980s, and the gradual thaw was capped by a historic visit to China in 1988 by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

The two countries signed a series of meaningful border pacts in the 1990s and early 2000s creating a framework to peacefully manage the Line of Actual Control (LAC). As Delhi and Beijing found themselves aligned on issues of multilateral significance like climate change, trade, and reform of international institutions, tensions appeared to ease. By the 1990s China even began taking a less partisan approach to the Kashmir dispute, amending its position on the disputed territory to align more with India's and remaining relatively neutral during the short Indo-Pakistan conflict at Kargil in 1999 (Garver, 2011).

Since the mid-to-late 2000s, however, elements of rivalry have again returned to the forefront of Sino-Indian relations. As momentum

in long-running border negotiations stalled, legacy disputes over the unresolved border and India's hosting of the Tibetan exile community re-emerged and combined with new sources of friction and a more assertive Chinese foreign policy post-2008 (Smith, 2015). Specifically, China's growing activities and presence in India's immediate neighborhood and a deepening of its strategic partnership with Pakistan contributed to a sense of encirclement in Delhi and a general sharpening of bilateral tensions. The intensification of the China-India rivalry provided new impetus to trends set in motion in 1991, setting the stage for a recasting of India's security ties in East and Southeast Asia.

In 2000 five Indian warships deployed on an extended tour of the South China Sea. Three more naval deployments followed in 2004, marking the beginning of annual multi-ship deployments to the Western Pacific (Brewster, 2009). The following year an Indian aircraft carrier made port calls to Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia. Beginning in 2000 the pace of Indian high-level exchanges with key East and Southeast Asian partners began to quicken, and by the mid-2000s India was forming new strategic partnerships across the region, complemented by new military exercises, joint training programs, and high-level defense dialogues.

In short, since the turn of the century Delhi has been reorienting its national security identity away from its legacy of nonalignment, with the consequence that it has seen a growing need to engage more deeply with the nations of East and Southeast Asia as it has adjusted to new great power alignments. The next sections explore how, against this backdrop, India has been both broadening and deepening its security and defense partnerships with six key actors: Australia, Vietnam, South Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Japan.

India's Growing Indo-Pacific Defense Cooperation

As noted above, since approximately the turn of the century, India has been expanding its defense cooperation with key partner nations in the Indo-Pacific. Delhi's patterns of defense cooperation are captured below (see Table 4.1), and described in greater detail in the subsections that follow.

Table 4.1
Indian Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	Australia	Indonesia	Japan	Philippines	South Korea	Vietnam
Partnership Type	Strategic	Comprehensive strategic	Special strategic and global	None	Special strategic	Comprehensive strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Arms Sales and Transfers	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	No	No	No	No	No	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GSOMIA	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

SOURCE: RAND interviews and data compilation from open sources.

NOTE: India has lower-level 2 + 2 defense and foreign policy dialogues with several regional partners, including a vice minister-level 2+2 with South Korea, a joint secretary-level 2 + 2 with the Philippines, and foreign and defense secretary-level 2 + 2 dialogues with Australia and Japan.

Japan: Indo-Pacific Democracies Unite

"No nation has contributed so much to India's modernization and progress [as] Japan . . . And, no partner is likely to play as big a role in India's transformation as Japan," Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared in 2015 (Abe, 2015). While Japan has been one of the largest providers of economic aid and development assistance to India for decades, the development of an unusually robust defense and strategic partnership is a much more recent phenomenon. Aside from India's historic rapprochement with the United States, in recent years arguably no major power relationship in the world has undergone a more consequential transformation.

In a relatively short period of time, Tokyo and Delhi have forged one of the most wide-ranging, robust security partnerships in Asia, a partnership nurtured in no small part by the United States. Currently, Japan is the only country with which India enjoys annual summits, a 2 + 2 dialogue, and, since 2015, a "Special Strategic and Global Partnership." The latter designation was particularly significant, at least symbolically surpassing India's "Special Strategic Partnership" with South Korea and its "Global Strategic Partnership" with the United States.

The strength of bilateral ties is evident in the frequency of high-level exchanges between the senior leadership of the two countries. The two began the new century with a January 2000 visit to Japan by Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes where they agreed to establish a regular security and defense dialogue and expand training, education, and exchanges between their defense establishments. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori visited Delhi in August of the same year, establishing a "Global Partnership" with the government of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Annual prime-minister-level summits were formalized during a trip to India by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in April 2005. Exchanges between defense and foreign ministers have been nearly as frequent, with the two now committed to annual meetings of their defense ministers.[1] Meanwhile, Japan welcomed a visit by India's Chief of Naval Staff in 2016, and Delhi hosted the chiefs of Japan's Air Self-Defense Force and Ground Self-Defense Force in 2016 and 2017. In March and August 2018, India hosted Japan's Chief of Staff of the Joint Staff and the Japanese defense minister, respectively. India's chief of air staff visited Japan in December 2018.

Amid this flurry of diplomatic activity the two sides have created a diverse web of senior-level defense and strategic dialogues, MOUs, and security declarations. These have included a Joint Declaration on

[1] Japanese defense ministers visited India in 2007, 2010, 2014, and 2016 while Indian defense ministers traveled to Japan in 2000, 2002, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2015, and 2017. Japanese Foreign Ministers were in New Delhi in 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2015 while Indian external affairs ministers reciprocated in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

Security Cooperation in 2008, an Action Plan to Advance Security Cooperation in 2009, a 2 + 2 Defense and Foreign Secretaries Dialogue as well as an Africa Dialogue in 2010, a Cyber Dialogue in 2012, a Memorandum on Defense Cooperation and Exchanges in 2014, a National Security Council Dialogue in 2014, an Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and a Joint Working Group on Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation in 2015, an agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy in 2016, and an Act East Forum in 2017. The two countries also have regular meetings of a vice-minister-level defense policy dialogue.

Even before Prime Minister Abe oversaw a reinterpretation of the Japanese constitution and a relaxation on arms exports in 2014, India and Japan had begun discussions on the export of roughly one dozen Japanese ShinMaywa US-2 maritime surveillance aircraft. Initial interest was expressed in 2010, and the two established a joint working group covering the prospective deal in December 2013. India is reportedly interested in 12–15 planes valued at $110 million per plane, with potential interest in a follow-up deal to construct an additional 18 domestically.

Delhi apparently intends to deploy the aircraft to its military outposts in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to conduct surveillance in the Indian Ocean and near the Strait of Malacca. Despite the expressed support of both prime ministers on numerous occasions, the two sides have yet to come to terms. Tokyo has reportedly already adjusted the terms of the deal several times to make it more attractive, yet it has failed to secure final approval from India's Defense Acquisitions Council.

Beyond the US-2 deal, India has expressed interest in Japan's *Sōryū*-class submarines. In January 2015 India invited Japan to bid for a prospective $8.1 billion deal for six diesel-electric submarines (Mizokami, 2015). Officials in Delhi do not sound optimistic about the deal's prospects, however, and it received no mention during the Modi-Abe summit in the summer of 2017. A year earlier, in 2016, the two sides held their first-ever meeting on defense industry cooperation hosted in Tokyo by Japan's ATLA Department of Defense Production (Government of India, Ministry of Defence, 2017). Delhi and Tokyo have also begun discussions on collaborating in the fields of Unmanned Ground

Vehicles and robotics (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017c), and the two defense ministries have established a "project arrangement" to guide cooperation. Notably, the first-ever Japan-India Defense Industry Forum was inaugurated in September 2017.

The pace of joint military exercises and training began to accelerate after the JMSDF joined a special multilateral edition of the Indo-U.S. Malabar exercises in 2007. In 2009 India and the United States began rotating Malabar exercises between the Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific, including Japan in the latter scenarios in 2009 and 2014. In 2015 Japan was included in the Malabar exercises as a permanent member and participated in the 2015, 2016, and 2017 editions. In 2017 Japan included a helicopter carrier, the first time Malabar witnessed the participation of carriers from the three separate countries. Tokyo has suggested it wants state-of-the-art assets to participate in Malabar 2018, including its P-1 maritime patrol craft, and has been an advocate of expanding the Malabar exercises to include Australia.

India and Japan inaugurated their first joint bilateral naval exercise, the Japan-India Maritime Exercise (JIMEX), in June 2012, with destroyers and patrol aircraft from both countries participating in a PASSEX drill as well as humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HA/DR) operations and visit, board, search, and seizure drills (IDR News Network, 2012). A second JIMEX exercise was conducted in December 2013 and a third in October 2018, when a Japanese helicopter carrier and guided-missile destroyer visited India's naval base at Visakhapatnam. During the 2017 India-Japan annual defense minister's dialogue the two sides explicitly endorsed greater cooperation in the field of ASW. The Malabar exercises of 2017 carried an explicit focus on ASW and in October 2017 India and Japan held an "air-based anti-submarine warfare exercise" in the Indian Ocean with Indian P-8I and Japanese P-3C surveillance aircraft. Separately, army-to-army staff talks began in November 2016 with a focus on cooperation in HA/DR. The second round of air staff talks were held in June 2018 and the seventh round of naval staff talks were held in Delhi in January 2018 (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2017).

The Indian and Japanese coast guards jointly participated in the multilateral Sahyog-Kaijin exercise in the Bay of Bengal in 2015

(Jesudesan, 2015). A joint exercise among the Japan Coast Guard, the Indian Coast Guard, and Indonesian maritime authorities the following October was conducted off the coast of Jakarta (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2016). The two have also participated in each other's international fleet reviews, including one hosted by Japan in October 2015 and another by India in February 2016. November 2018 saw the first India-Japan land-based joint military exercises, a counterinsurgency and counterterrorism training exercise conducted in Mizoram, India. Finally, under an updated counterterrorism partnership framework, Japanese officers in a newly created intelligence unit are training in Delhi, complementing regular exchanges between the National Defense College of India and the National Institute of Defense Studies in Japan (Chaudhary, 2015).

As analyst Shashank Joshi argues, the "extraordinary improvement in [India-Japan] relations, sustained across three Indian premierships and ten Japanese [prime ministers], has been driven, above all, by what both sides view as China's aggressive, 'expansionist' behavior in Asia over the past decade" (Joshi, 2017). Tokyo and Delhi are widely perceived to be strengthening their security bonds as a direct product of shared concerns about China's rise, and indeed several elements of their budding strategic partnership have been either implicitly or explicitly tied to China in some form (Hornung, 2014). For example, in December 2012, Prime Minister Abe famously called for the formation of a Democratic Security Diamond, "whereby Australia, India, Japan, and the U.S. state of Hawaii form a diamond to safeguard the maritime commons stretching from the Indian Ocean region to the western Pacific" (Abe, 2012). Earlier that year, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reportedly told the Japanese press that India and Japan "have to work with China to ensure that the peaceful rise of China takes place in a manner which will be conducive to Asian security, Asian prosperity" (Sinha, 2015).

Notably, Prime Minister Modi chose Tokyo as the platform to launch his first thinly veiled criticism of China as prime minister. At a speech there in September 2014 he declared: "Everywhere around us, we see an 18th century expansionist mind-set: encroaching in other countries, intruding in others' waters, invading other countries and

capturing territory" (PTI, 2015). Tokyo and Delhi have repeatedly voiced concerns about Chinese behavior and the need to defend and promote a "rules-based order" and a "resilient, rules-based architecture" that they see as increasingly under threat. In joint statements and policy documents they have focused on the importance of "the security and stability of the Seas connecting the Indian and Pacific Oceans," the "importance of respecting international law, as reflected notably in UNCLOS [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea], of the peaceful settlement of disputes without any threat or use of force, and of ensuring freedom and safety of navigation and overflight" (Government of India, Ministry of Defence, 2016b).

The 2015 Japan and India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership committed both sides to "hold regular close consultations on the issues related to maritime safety and security of sea lanes of communication" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015g). As Narushige Michishita, a senior defense expert and former Japanese official, argued in 2015: "Japanese and Indian forces might not be operating together, but they share the same goal: to maintain the balance of power in the region" ("Bullet Train, Nuclear Deal Top Japan's Abe Agenda in India," 2015). Shared concerns about China are even pushing Japan and India toward more niche areas of strategic collaboration. That includes the formation of a partnership on producing rare earth elements (REE), after China, which was then responsible for 95 percent of global REE production, halted supplies to Japan in 2010 following the detention of a Chinese fishing boat captain in an incident near the Japanese Senkaku Islands (which China also claims). In 2016, India's first REE exports arrived in Japan (Tsukimori, 2014). In another sign of India's growing comfort with Tokyo, Japan has been cleared to invest in sensitive regions like the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Chinese-claimed state of Arunachal Pradesh, where foreign companies have largely been barred from operating.

Australia: Turning the Page

India-Australia relations were quite limited prior to the turn of the century, largely owing to discord over nuclear-related issues and

Australia's perception of India as a de facto ally of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The gradual post–Cold War diversification of India's external relations eventually extended to Australia, which has emerged since 2010 as one of India's more robust security partners in the region. The two have witnessed improving defense and strategic collaboration at both the bilateral and multilateral levels via several complementary trilateral diplomatic and security mechanisms linking Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.

In 2000, India and Australia reached a milestone when India hosted the Australian prime minister and defense minister in Delhi. The following year saw the first-ever visit by an Indian External Affairs Minister to Australia where the two reportedly discussed missile defense cooperation (Baruah, 2001). In August 2001 Delhi and Canberra held a strategic dialogue covering four broad themes: global security issues, regional security issues, national security and defense policies, and arms control and disarmament (Australian High Commission, New Delhi, 2001).

In 2004 India and Australia joined with Japan and the United States to form a "regional core group" to act as first responders following a cataclysmic tsunami that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives across the Indo-Pacific. In the years to follow, Canberra, Delhi, Tokyo, and Washington began thickening overlapping avenues of strategic collaboration, resulting in the meeting of a new, assistant-secretary-level Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or "Quad" in May 2007 on the sidelines of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) meeting. Six months later, Singapore joined the navies of the four democracies in an unusually robust multilateral demonstration of naval power. Three aircraft carriers (two U.S., one Indian) led a special edition of the Indo-U.S. Malabar exercises that year, joined by a nuclear-powered submarine and one dozen cruisers, frigates, and destroyers.

By early 2008 the Quad initiative had dissolved. The election of a Labor government in Australia precipitated a more conciliatory approach to China and Canberra's public withdrawal from the Quad. While there was domestic political opposition to the Quad and general anxiety about antagonizing China in Delhi and Tokyo as well, many Indian strategists continue to blame Australia for the Quad's failure.

Nevertheless, bilateral defense ties continued to advance in the years to follow, albeit at a more modest pace. In 2009 Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd visited Delhi and the two countries elevated their ties to the level of a strategic partnership. Later that year Canberra and Delhi signed a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation that recognized the two had "a mutual stake in each other's progress and prosperity" while India hosted its first-ever delegation of Australia's Marine Defense mission with nine Australian defense firms traveling to Delhi and Kochi seeking joint ventures in the defense arena ("Australia Vies for Indian Defence Pie," 2009).

The declaration signaled strategic convergence on their "shared desire to promote regional and global security, as well as their common commitment to democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law" (Australian High Commission, New Delhi, 2009). It recognized their complementary interests in the fields of maritime security, counterterrorism, and nonproliferation and outlined their shared desire to collaborate on "information exchange and policy coordination on regional affairs in the Asia region and on long-term strategic and global issues" and promoted more high-level exchanges in the defense and foreign policy arenas.

By the early 2010s, however, there was a widely held sentiment in both capitals that bilateral ties were failing to meet their full potential. For India, "Australia doesn't matter that much," noted an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in August 2012. "Diplomats on both sides of the fence say that Australia is, at best, a third-tier partner in Indian eyes, a member of a more-distant circle of friends." It observed that "Australian opprobrium over nuclear testing set Indian minds against Australia, and institutional memories take time to forget" (Doherty, 2012).

Nevertheless, the same month that article was published, India and Australia began discussions on the sale of Australian uranium during a visit to Delhi by Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard. One year prior, the Australian parliament had voted to amend its policy on nuclear exports, overturning a ban on nuclear trade with nonmembers of the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in a move explicitly aimed at opening nuclear trade with India ("Labor Ends Ban on Uranium

Exports to India," 2011). The beginning of discussions on uranium sales in 2012 set the stage for the first-ever official visit by an Indian defense minister to Australia in 2013. More important, it laid the groundwork for a highly consequential civil nuclear deal signed during a visit to Delhi by Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott in September 2014 (Prusty, 2014). (In July 2017 the first shipment of Australian uranium departed for India [Bennett, 2017].)

In a sign of the nuclear deal's significance, two months after it was signed Prime Minister Modi became the first Indian prime minister to visit Australia in 28 years, using the opportunity to deliver an address to the Australian parliament. Since then, the pace of Indo-Australian security cooperation at both the bilateral and trilateral levels has accelerated. In 2014 the two sides inked a new Framework for Security Cooperation (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014d). The wide-ranging agreement committed both sides to an annual meeting of Indian and Australian prime ministers; a Foreign Ministers Framework Dialogue; a regular Track 1.5 dialogue involving nongovernment officials; regular discussions on security developments in East Asia and regular meetings of defense ministers; an annual Track 1.5 Defense Strategic Dialogue; annual staff talks and joint training and military exercises; collaborative efforts in defense research and development; and Australian support for India's bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. In November 2018, Ram Nath Kovind became the first Indian president to visit Australia, and two months later Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne delivered a keynote address at the annual Raisina Dialogue in Delhi.

In September 2015 India and Australia inaugurated their first bilateral naval exercises, AUSINDEX. The weeklong training exercise off India's coast near Vishakapatnam involved three Royal Australian Navy ships and three Indian Navy frigates and corvettes, as well as Indian P-8I maritime patrol aircraft and Australian AP-3C aircraft. Months prior, the Indian and Australian navies conducted a routine PASSEX focused on communications and navigation off the Western coast of Australia when a pair of Indian frigates conducted a port visit in Perth headed by the commanding officer of India's Eastern Fleet (Elliott,

2015). The third edition of AUSINDEX was held in April 2019, where ASW exercises were practiced in the Bay of Bengal. It marked Australia's largest military deployment in Indian waters.

In 2014 India and Australia also participated in a multilateral HA/DR exercise, Komodo, to which India sent a patrol vessel (Indian Navy, 2014). Both participated again in 2016, when India sent a P-8I maritime surveillance aircraft. The militaries of the two countries also jointly participate in the multilateral air defense exercises dubbed Pitch Black. In 2015 India, Australia, and Japan inaugurated a new trilateral dialogue (Lang, 2015). The arrangement complements existing U.S.-Japan-Australia and India-Japan-U.S. trilaterals "to achieve, through three overlapping security triangles, a quadrilateral security arrangement by other means," according to one Australian expert (author interview). Delhi, however, has "been less enthusiastic about proposals for an Australia-India-U.S. trilateral dialogue," the last potential leg in the quadrilateral-by-trilaterals network (Brewster, 2016a).

Australia's 2017 foreign policy "white paper" recognized India as a country of "first order" importance (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017). During a visit to Delhi in April 2017, Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull reaffirmed Canberra's support for Indian membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group, an international regulatory body, and advanced several defense and strategic cooperative initiatives. While the two failed to conclude a CEPA or a logistics support agreement comparable with the one signed by Washington and Delhi in 2016, they agreed to hold their first joint army exercises in 2018, to establish a new 2 + 2 defense and foreign policy dialogue, and to enhance intelligence cooperation.

Later that year India seemed to overcome some of its strategic reservations about strengthening multilateral strategic cooperation with Australia. After years of lobbying by the United States and Japan to reconstitute their Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, in the fall of 2017 Delhi signaled that it was amenable to the group's revival. That November, one decade after the first iteration of the Quad collapsed, assistant-secretary-level representatives from Australia, India, Japan, and the United States met in Manila for a new meeting of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, in the same venue where they first gathered

in 2007. The group met for a second time in April 2018 on the sidelines of an ASEAN senior officials meeting in Singapore and for a third time in Singapore in November 2018. U.S. officials suggest a fourth meeting will be held the spring of 2019.

The revival of the Quad was of great symbolic and strategic significance for India, as it recognized not only India's growing concerns about China but also its growing comfort with Australia. To be sure, some strategists in Delhi continue to harbor reservations about Canberra's commitment to the Quad and its strategic disposition more broadly. For example, since 2015, when Japan became a permanent member of the Indo-U.S. annual Malabar naval exercises, Australia has been lobbying in public and private to participate in the joint drills, at least as an "observer." Despite support from Washington and Tokyo, Delhi denied Canberra's request without formal explanation in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 (Smith, 2017a).

It is clear from discussions in Delhi some Indian officials remain jaded by Australia's withdrawal from the initial iteration of the Quad in 2007. Perhaps more important, they remain concerned about China's considerable political and economic influence in Canberra and worry that it has weakened Australia's willingness to take steps that may be perceived by Beijing as provocative. Privately, one prominent Indian expert explained that Delhi was confident the current government of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull was cognizant of the threat from China and could be viewed as a reliable security partner. However, he was not as convinced of Australia's commitment should another Labor government come to power. "Let's see a Labor government get elected and ask to rejoin the Malabar exercises. When that happens, we can talk," he commented. Another serving senior Indian diplomat confided: "We're willing to give Australia a second chance but another repeat of 2007 [when Canberra promptly withdrew from the Quad] would doom prospects for deeper strategic collaboration" (author interview).

At the time of this writing, however, practical cooperation between Australia and India is greater than at any point in time since Indian independence. India still does not view Australia as among its first-tier strategic partners like Japan and the United States or as a great power

deserving of attention and resources commensurate with China, the European Union, or Russia. In fact, Indian attitudes toward Australia continue to be somewhat skeptical about the level of Chinese influence over the Australian economy and body politic, while the mistreatment of Indian citizens in Australia has become a recurring bilateral irritant. Still, the signing of a nuclear deal in 2014 has substantially removed one long-standing obstacle to further expanding bilateral defense and strategic cooperation. Similarly, the revival of the Quad 2017 marked a milestone in India's willingness to elevate collaboration with Australia at a multilateral level.

Vietnam: Building on Strong Foundations

Vietnam arguably represents India's strongest geopolitical partnership in ASEAN and is the one country in this study that enjoyed warm, if not particularly close, ties to Delhi dating back to the Cold War. The two capitals were bound by an ideological commitment to pan-Asian nationalism, shared a superpower patron in the USSR, and were equally distrustful of China (and suspicious of the United States). The last conventional conflicts fought by China, after all, were border conflicts with India and Vietnam in 1962 and 1979, respectively, as well as a series of naval clashes with Vietnam in the 1980s. Coincidentally, the Chinese military offensive into Vietnam in 1979 paralleled a visit to Beijing by the then–Indian Foreign Minister Atal Behar Vajpayee, who was dispatched to lay the groundwork for a full normalization of diplomatic relations with China. The Chinese invasion delayed the normalization of bilateral Sino-Indian ties by several years as Delhi regarded the Chinese offensive as a threat to Indian interests (Brewster, 2009).

Elevated tensions between China and Vietnam in the 1970s and 1980s further strengthened the geopolitical logic for deeper strategic cooperation between Delhi and Hanoi. India and Vietnam, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi declared during a 1985 trip to Hanoi, "share a determination never to bend our knee before insolent might" (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 1985). Nevertheless, despite this mutual affinity and both countries' dependence on the Soviet Union for military hardware, practical defense cooperation with

Vietnam—as with all Southeast Asian nations—remained extremely limited throughout the Cold War era.

Momentum began to build after the collapse of the USSR and the launch of India's "Look East" policy in the 1990s. Defense ties were formalized during a 2000 visit to India by Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai, where the sale of advanced weapons was discussed, and Delhi renewed a request for military access to Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay. An agreement signed during the visit promoted intelligence sharing as well as joint coast guard, air force, and counterinsurgency training programs. India further offered to sell Vietnam warships and missiles while agreeing to provide spare parts for the Vietnamese military, assist with small and medium arms production, and repair and overhaul Russian MiG-21s (Brewster, 2009).

In 2003 Vietnam signaled interest in India's Prithvi short-range ballistic missiles and its supersonic Brahmos cruise missiles (jointly developed with Russia), though 15 years later no deal has come to fruition. More consequentially, Hanoi and Delhi signed a Joint Declaration on a Comprehensive Cooperation Framework that year, describing each other as "strategic partners." Another landmark was reached in 2007 when the two sides formally upgraded their ties to a "strategic partnership" and expanded joint military training programs.

In September 2011 Vietnam welcomed India's external affairs minister to Hanoi, and one month later India welcomed Vietnam's president to Delhi. During the trip President Truong Sang requested Indian assistance in training Vietnamese submarine crews and fighter pilots, modernizing the Nha Trang port, transferring warships, and inquired again about purchasing the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile. He further offered support for India's Look East policy and its candidature for permanent membership on the UN Security Council. Finally, the two sides reiterated their mutual support for freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, the sanctity of UNCLOS, and the 2002 ASEAN-China Declaration of Conduct (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2011).

The same month as President Sangh's visit, PetroVietnam and the energy firm Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) of India signed a three-year oil and gas cooperation deal governing joint exploration

in the South China Sea, sparking a sharp rebuke from China's foreign ministry. The source of Beijing's ire was Indian exploration rights in block 128, which fell within Vietnam's 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone but also within China's nine-dash line claim over nearly the entire South China Sea.

ONGC had been exploring for energy off Vietnam's coast for decades and had actually secured the rights to block 128 and nearby block 127 five years earlier, in 2006. Ultimately ONGC's exploration activities in block 127 were unsuccessful, and it abandoned operations there in 2011. However, the announcement of an expanded oil cooperation agreement the same year seized the attention of Chinese nationalists. A Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson opposed "any country engaging in oil and gas exploration and development activities in waters under China's jurisdiction," (Krishnan, 2011) while China's *Global Times* warned India's actions would "push China to the limit" ("Not as Close as Lips and Teeth," 2011). In May 2012 India's junior oil minister told Parliament that ONGC would be vacating block 128 because it was not commercially viable. Perhaps not coincidentally, a month later ONCG signed a wide-ranging energy cooperation agreement with the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, 2012). Under apparent pressure from India's political establishment, ONGC then did an about-face and recommitted to oil block 128. Vietnam has been granting one- and two-year extensions to ONGC to remain there ever since.

In June 2013 India and Vietnam conducted joint naval exercises in the South China Sea (Mishra, 2014). That September Vietnam's Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen Do Ba Ty held defense cooperation talks in Delhi and was given tours of India's Eastern and Western Naval Commands. A trip to Delhi by Vietnamese Communist Party Secretary General Nguyen Phu Trong two months later saw India extend a $100 million credit line to Vietnam to purchase military equipment, "usually a privilege reserved for [India's] immediate neighbors" (Pant, 2013). During the visit the two sides signed an MOU on training Vietnamese naval and air force officers (Voice of Vietnam, 2013). The same month India began training 500 Vietnamese sailors at its submarine training school INS Satavahana at Visakhapatnam, and at a Decem-

ber 2016 meeting between the two countries' defense ministers India agreed to train Vietnamese Sukhoi 30 fighter pilots beginning in 2017 (Parameswaran, 2016f).

Defense and strategic cooperation has been accelerating since the election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014. Months after assuming office, he welcomed the Vietnamese prime minister to Delhi in October 2014. During the trip Modi declared:

> Our defense cooperation with Vietnam is among our most important ones. India remains committed to the modernization of Vietnam's defense and security forces. This will include expansion of our training program, which is already very substantial, joint exercises and cooperation in defense equipment. We will quickly operationalize the 100 million dollars Line of Credit that will enable Vietnam to acquire new naval vessels from India. We have also agreed to enhance our security cooperation, including counter-terrorism. (Modi, 2014)

Vietnamese Defense Minister Gen. Phung Quang Thanh followed with trips to Delhi in 2014 and 2015, welcoming a pledge by the Modi government to supply four patrol vessels during the first visit. On the latter visit he signed an MOU on coast guard cooperation and a five-year joint vision statement governing defense collaboration from 2015 to 2020 (Panda, 2015).

A visit to Vietnam by Prime Minister Modi in 2016 saw the two countries upgrade ties to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership," with Modi describing Vietnam as an "important pillar of India's Act East Policy." Also in 2016, Vietnam received a commitment from India to provide a $500 million line of credit to purchase Indian weapons, of which roughly $100 million will be allocated to procure patrol boats and obtain licenses to produce them locally. In late 2016 Vietnam commissioned the Indian firm Larsen & Toubro to design and construct 14 high-speed patrol vessels for $100 million (PTI, 2016a). The Indian firm will reportedly construct the boats at a shipyard near Chennai. In early 2017 reports suggested Vietnam was seeking to purchase Akash short-range surface-to-air missiles from India (Miglani, 2017) while India had offered to sell Hanoi Varunastra anti-submarine torpedoes (Pandit, 2017a).

Currently, India trains Vietnamese military personnel in English, supplies spare parts for its OSA-II class missile boats and its Russian-origin Petya-class warships, and is reportedly upgrading the latter with ASW capabilities including new sonar, torpedoes, and fire control systems. India is reportedly a front-runner in a bid to upgrade the pair of Petya-class frigates operated by the Vietnamese navy.

Vietnam has participated in the India-hosted MILAN multilateral naval exercises in the Bay of Bengal, and the two have jointly participated in the Komodo multilateral exercises. In February 2016 Vietnam sent a warship to participate in the International Fleet Review at Vishakhapatnam, India, for the first time. Meanwhile, the Indian Navy enjoys berthing rights at the Nha Trang ports, "perhaps the only foreign navy in recent times to have been given this privilege by the Vietnamese at a port other than Halong Bay, near Hanoi" (Ghoshal, 2016).

Finally, in January 2018 India hosted Vietnamese Prime Minister Ngyuen Xuan Phuc for the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in Delhi. President Tran Dai Quang followed him to Delhi in March 2018 on a state visit to mark the 45th year of diplomatic ties. Between the two visits the Indian and Vietnamese armies carried out their first-ever joint army exercise in Madhya Pradesh, and in May 2018 they conducted their first bilateral naval exercises. In June, August, and November 2018, Vietnam welcomed India's defense minister, external affairs minister, and the president of India, respectively. July 2018 also saw the inauguration of the two countries' first security dialogue and an agreement to hold a maritime security dialogue in the future.

Ultimately, India continues to view Vietnam as its most important partner in Southeast Asia, with perhaps the greatest scope for geopolitical alignment. These views are driven by perceptions of Vietnam as China's sharpest critic within ASEAN and as one of the few Chinese neighbors willing and able to stand up to China (especially after the election of Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines). Many in Delhi openly discuss their partnership with Vietnam and their energy exploration activities in Vietnam's EEZ as a strategic parallel to China's robust security partnership with Pakistan. Vietnam, meanwhile, has wel-

comed India's growing profile in the South China Sea as a means to balance China's growing power and influence there.

On the other hand, views of India in Vietnam, as elsewhere in ASEAN, continue to be that of an underperformer. As Indian analyst Abhijit Singh notes, "Vietnam, like some other ASEAN states, find India's Act East Policy strategically underwhelming. . . . [Hanoi] believes India hasn't contributed enough to the maintenance of the balance of power in nautical Asia" (Singh, 2018).

South Korea: Untapped Potential

India has traditionally enjoyed cordial, if not particularly close, relations with South Korea, though the relationship has undeniably strengthened since the turn of the century. As with other U.S. treaty allies in the region, Cold War ties between the two countries were limited in part by India's perceived alignment with the Soviet Union. Bilateral ties began to develop in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the launch of India's Look East policy. An India-South Korea Joint Commission for bilateral cooperation was established in February 1996, chaired by the countries' respective foreign and external affairs ministers, and an MOU covering coast guard cooperation followed in 2004, with another agreement, this one covering defense cooperation, signed in 2005.

A state visit to South Korea by Indian President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in 2006 marked the beginning of talks on a CEPA; this was followed by the first-ever high-level consultations between defense ministers in May 2007, at which meeting the two sides agreed to further improve coast guard cooperation and military training. At the time India proposed holding joint maritime rescue and counterterrorism exercises on an annual basis and received a positive reply from Seoul (PTI, 2007).

India and South Korea reached a milestone in January 2010 when South Korean President Lee Myung-bak was invited as India's Republic Day guest of honor, a badge of prestige in Delhi and a sign of South Korea's growing importance to India. In Delhi, President Lee agreed to upgrade relations to a "Strategic Partnership." In September 2010 A.K. Antony became the first Indian defense minister to visit South

Korea, acknowledging the two countries' shared commitment to regional peace and security as well as the importance of securing the region's sea lines of communication. An MOU signed during Antony's visit covered information sharing on defense issues, promoted the mutual exchange of defense officials and military personnel, and discussed cooperation in military education and training as well as visits of ships and aircraft. A second MOU covered cooperation in "futuristic defense technology" and promoted stronger co-development and co-production of defense products via India's Defense Research and Development Organization.

India and South Korea also established a new annual foreign policy and security dialogue at the vice-minister level in 2010, and during a state visit to South Korea by President Pratibha Patil the following July, the two sides finalized a civil nuclear cooperation deal. Notably, South Korea has supported India's bid to join the international nuclear regulatory watchdog the Nuclear Suppliers Group, though China has repeatedly blocked the proposal. In March 2012 Prime Minister Singh paid a state visit to Seoul, and later that year India, Japan, and South Korea began holding a Track 1.5 trilateral dialogue that covers "security issues like maritime politics in East Asia and the Indian Ocean, non-traditional security threats, regional politics covering China, North Korea, and Afghanistan" (Panneerselvam, 2016).

In 2013 the two sides began a defense policy dialogue that was later upgraded to the level of defense minister. The following January India welcomed then-President Park Geun-hye to Delhi where the two sides agreed to hold a regular strategic dialogue at the deputy defense minister level (Embassy of India, Seoul, 2014). President Park also inked an agreement on the protection of classified military information (GSOMIA) and agreed to bolster cooperation on cyber, space, counterterrorism, and UN Security Council reform.

The early 2010s also saw the gradual development of naval and coast guard cooperation. South Korea's Busan hosted port calls by Indian warships in June 2012 and June 2016. In November 2014, the two sides held naval exercises in the Indian Ocean following the Korean Navy's first-ever port call to Chennai ("India, Korea Naval

Ships to Conduct Joint Military Exercises," 2014). Meanwhile the two countries' coast guards have begun hosting regular exercises; the fifth edition was held in June 2016 off the coast of Chennai and involved anti-piracy operations (Adusumilli, 2016).

During a May 2015 trip to South Korea by Prime Minister Modi, relations were upgraded to a "Special Strategic Partnership," and the two sides established a new annual 2 + 2 defense and foreign policy dialogue at the vice-minister level. Apart from South Korea, Japan is the only other state in Asia that claims both distinctions with India.

The trip also saw a pledge for regular cooperation between the national security councils of the two nations and an agreement to establish a joint working group on shipbuilding. Korean firms, the joint statement noted, were already "participating in India's plans to acquire and manufacture LNG tankers" ("India, South Korea to Expand Defence, Security Cooperation: PM Narendra Modi," 2015). One month later South Korea offered $9 billion in concessional export credits and $1 billion in official development assistance to finance infrastructure projects in India (IANS, 2017). In April 2017 the two sides signed another MOU on cooperation in defense shipbuilding. At that time, India nominated Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) to be paired with an unnamed South Korean shipyard under a new cooperative arrangement. The Indian official present at the ceremony said the agreement would "enable HSL to upgrade and modernize its facilities so as to enable it to execute naval projects in a timely manner" (PTI, 2017). In September 2017 reports suggested HSL was in negotiations with South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries to build five fleet-support ships for the Indian Navy estimated at roughly $1.4 billion. The first will apparently be built in Korea and the remaining five at the HSL shipyard in Vizag ("India, South Korea to Jointly Build Five Warships in Next Five Years," 2017).

In July 2018 Prime Minister Modi welcomed South Korean President Moon Jae-in to Delhi for a four-day visit, and Prime Minister Modi paid a state visit to South Korea in February 2019 where the two leaders promised to more than double bilateral trade to $50 billion by 2030 (Lee, 2019). Between the visits South Korea's defense minister was hosted in Delhi in August 2018.

Despite these advances over the past decade, India and South Korea have struggled to finalize major defense sales, with one notable exception. In 2011 India's Larson and Toubro successfully bid to purchase 100 K9 Vajra self-propelled howitzers. By late 2018 the first ten K9 guns were imported and assembled by the Indian firm, and the remaining 90 will reportedly be manufactured in India ("Indian Army Gets New Teeth, K9 Vajra, M777 Howitzers Inducted," 2018).

Otherwise, defense deals have proven elusive. In 2011 India's decision to contract with a Swiss company to provide trainer aircraft sparked objections from Korean Aerospace Industries and a formal complaint from the South Korean defense ministry about the unfair bidding process ("S. Korean Company Objects to India's Basic Trainer Bidding Process," 2012). Meanwhile, a 2008 agreement for India to purchase one dozen mine countermeasure vessels from a South Korean defense firm faced numerous delays. The Korean firm was charged with using "defense agents" or "middlemen" to facilitate the contract—a practice then banned in India. The deal was formally canceled by the Modi government in 2014. In 2015 India reopened and revised the $5 billion bid for mine countermeasure vessels, insisting the vessels would have to be constructed in India with full technology transfer under Prime Minister Modi's "Buy and Make in India" program. The same South Korean defense firm, Kangnam Corporation, emerged as the sole bidder and winner of the contract. However, India terminated the deal in early 2018 "on the grounds of high costs and compliance issues" when Kangnam Corporation reportedly "refused to accept the requisite norms including intellectual property rights and production support guarantees" (Raghuvanshi, 2018).

Despite these hiccups, it is ultimately South Korea's advanced economy and defense technology that remain most attractive to India. Unlike most other countries covered in this study, China does not play as significant a role in driving defense and strategic cooperation between the two Indo-Pacific democracies. That is perhaps in part due to perceptions of South Korea as enjoying fairly close ties to Beijing while being geopolitically constrained by its rivalry with North Korea and the complex trilateral dynamic between Beijing, Pyongyang, and Seoul.

Indonesia: Maritime Neighbors, Indo-Pacific Partners

As maritime neighbors and fellow democracies with fast-growing economies and considerable shared interests, India and Indonesia would appear natural strategic partners. After a troubled Cold War history, the two countries have considerably expanded defense and strategic cooperation since the turn of the century. However, as is the case with most countries in this chapter, practical cooperation has failed to meet its full potential, particularly in the field of arms sales and co-production/co-development. Since the turn of the century Indonesia has expressed interest in several Indian military platforms and systems, including the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile and radar systems, yet as of mid-2019 none of these prospective deals have materialized.

Following Indian independence in 1947, relations with Indonesia began on a high note amid an era of intra-Asian solidarity. The militaries of the two countries signed several cooperation agreements between 1956 and 1960, the year they conducted their first joint naval exercises. Relations took a turn for the worse in the mid-1960s, however. Indonesia, the largest Muslim-majority country in the world, openly sided with Pakistan during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan conflict, even supplying Pakistan with submarines, missile boats, and MiG fighters. Indonesian President Sukarno reportedly "even briefly considered seizing the Andaman and Nicobar Islands from India as a way of showing support for Pakistan" (Brewster, 2011).

Relations improved after President Suharto, a staunch anti-Communist, assumed power in 1966 and recognized India's claims over Kashmir. The two countries were also aligned on the need to limit the influence of "extraregional" powers in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. As David Brewster notes, "During the second half of the 1960s, India viewed Indonesia and Vietnam as the preeminent regional powers in the archipelagic and mainland Southeast Asia, seeing them as cornerstones of any strategy aimed at preventing the expansion of Chinese influence in the region" (Brewster, 2011). By the 1970s, however, Indonesia grew suspicious of India's close ties to the USSR and opposed proposals to grant India membership in ASEAN.

Further breakthroughs in bilateral ties would have to wait until the 1990s and the collapse of the USSR, the initiation of India's Look

East policy, and later the downfall of the Suharto regime and Indonesia's democratization in 1998. The Indian and Indonesian navies began practicing joint SAR operations in the 1990s and jointly participated in the MILAN multilateral naval exercises in 1995. Indonesia endorsed India's bid to join ARF in 1996 and later the ASEAN Plus Three group and the creation of an annual ASEAN-India Summit.

In 2000 Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid visited India, and a bilateral defense cooperation agreement followed in 2001 during a visit by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Jakarta (though it took six years for the Indonesian parliament to ratify the pact) (Shekhar, 2007). The first in a series of annual coordinated naval patrols began in 2002, and in 2003 an India-Indonesia Joint Commission co-chaired by both countries' foreign ministers was established. A joint working group on counterterrorism followed a year later.

In November 2005 India and Indonesia upgraded relations to a "strategic partnership" and agreed to begin holding an annual strategic dialogue during a trip to India by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (Shekhar, 2007). The first meeting of a new Joint Defense Cooperation Committee was held the following June. A biennial defense ministers dialogue was initiated following a trip to Delhi by Indonesian President Yudhoyono in January 2011, where he was the chief guest of honor for India's Republic Day celebrations. The two sides began joint army exercises shortly thereafter in March 2012. Dubbed *Garuda Shakti*, the exercises are held at India's counterinsurgency training school (Supriyanto, 2013).

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Indonesia in October 2013, at which time the two sides agreed to regular staff talks between their armies and pledged to increase defense cooperation and military exercises while exploring synergy in defense co-production and arms transfers (Government of India, Prime Minister's Office, 2013). India's external affairs minister traveled to Indonesia in April 2015, and Indonesian President Joko Widodo (known colloquially as "Jokowi") was invited to Delhi in December 2016. During his trip President Jokowi concluded a "substantive bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreement," pledging to explore joint development and technology transfer in defense (Pant, 2017). A Statement on Maritime Cooperation issued

during the visit stressed the importance of maintaining a "a maritime legal order" in the South China Sea as well as upholding freedom of navigation and "resolving disputes by peaceful means, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law including the UNCLOS" (Basu, 2016). December 2016 also saw an agreement for India to train Indonesian pilots on Russian-origin Sukhoi-30 fighter aircraft. During a visit to Indonesia by India's Defense Secretary in January 2017, India offered to train Indonesian sailors in submarine operations, and the two reportedly discussed expanding military exercises, deepening defense ties, and improving cooperation on maritime security.

In January 2018 the two countries held their first security dialogue, and in May 2018 Prime Minister Modi paid his first trip to Indonesia. There, the two sides elevated relations to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership," signed a new defense cooperation agreement, voiced support for the rules-based order, and urged greater collaboration between their defense industries, "including for joint production of equipment" (PTI, 2018). They also issued a "Shared Vision for the Indo-Pacific" statement that underscored the importance of deepening maritime security cooperation. Shortly before Modi's visit, Indonesian officials confirmed talks were underway and a tentative agreement had been reached to grant India military and civilian access to the Sabang port in Indonesia (Panda, 2018). (An Indian warship made a port call to Sabang in July 2018, and an Indian Coast Guard Vessel followed in March 2019).

During Modi's Jakarta trip the two sides reviewed the various mechanisms for defense cooperation, including a security dialogue, a biennial defense ministerial dialogue, a joint defense cooperation committee, Air Force to Air Force staff talks, and an expert-level meeting to explore enhancing technical cooperation on maritime security (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2018). In 2018 the two countries hosted visits from each other's defense ministers, and Indonesia's coordinating minister for maritime affairs Luhut Pandjaitan declared: "India and Indonesia relations are important to the balance of power in Asia" (Lal, 2018).

Finally, it is worth noting that India and Indonesia share a maritime boundary where the Pacific and Indian Oceans meet and that

India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands, positioned near the mouth of the Strait of Malacca, are just 80 nautical miles from the northern tip of the Indonesian island of Sumatra. As Chietigj Bajpaee has argued, maritime cooperation has historically been quite limited, owing to both countries being "highly protective of their maritime sovereignty, with India regarding the Indian Ocean as its natural 'sphere of influence' while Indonesia has opposed the presence of non-littoral states in addressing maritime security near its territorial waters" (Bajpaee, 2016). In 2005, for example, Jakarta "publicly rebuffed Indian requests for a security role" in the Malacca Strait.

Nevertheless, beginning in 2002 India and Indonesia began holding "coordinated patrols" along their respective sides of the maritime boundary line twice per year, generally in April and October. Unlike "joint patrols," the Indonesian and Indian navies remain on their respective sides of the maritime boundary, patrolling in parallel. The two-to-three-week patrols generally include a warship and surveillance aircraft from each side and include an opening and closing ceremony at either Port Blair in India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands or else in Belawan in Indonesia. The 29th edition was conducted in May 2017. In October 2015 the two sides expanded their "Coordinated Patrol" (CORPAT) activities into their first legitimate bilateral maritime exercise (Parameswaran, 2016d). A second was held in October 2016, and in 2017 the two agreed to hold their first-ever joint air combat exercises (Pandit, 2017b). The two countries also hold regular passage exercises, the last of which was held in June 2018. In November 2018 India and Indonesia held their first-ever bilateral naval exercise dubbed Samudra Shaktri in the Java Sea. This complements ongoing Garuda Shakti army exercises while negotiations are underway to hold a bilateral air force exercise in 2019.

In conclusion, India continues to place importance on further developing ties with Indonesia, though expectations remain modest. Unlike Vietnam, Japan, or Australia, Delhi does not view Indonesia as a strong candidate for China-focused balancing initiatives due to Indonesian concerns over angering Beijing as well as the overall weakness and inward-looking nature of Indonesia's political system. While strategic cooperation is likely to continue to incrementally advance,

Indonesia's reluctance to accept a greater security role for India in and around the Malacca Straits, the failure of the two countries to advance any meaningful arms sales, and Jakarta's reluctance to adopt policies and diplomatic positions at odds with China appear are likely to limit the space for greater strategic convergence.

Philippines: Baby Steps

Despite establishing diplomatic relations in November 1949 and signing a Treaty of Friendship in July 1952, relations between India and the Philippines were neither broad nor deep during the latter half of the twentieth century. While the relationship has witnessed impressive growth in recent years, defense-related cooperation continues to lag behind other Indian partnerships in the region. As one former Indian military officer explains it, the Philippines "has never really figured on New Delhi's geopolitical radar. It has always been politically remote from South Asia, even from a trade and connectivity standpoint as the country is distant from the region's key shipping sea-lanes" (author interview).

As was the case elsewhere, the pace of high-level political and defense exchanges began to increase in the 1990s following the launch of India's Look East policy. The Philippines hosted visits by Indian presidents in 1991 and 2006, and Filipino presidents traveled to Delhi in 1997 and 2007. Leaders from both countries also periodically meet on the sidelines of major regional gatherings. The 2007 EAS, for example, witnessed a bilateral meeting between Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Filipino President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In November 2012 Singh met President Benigno Aquino on the sidelines of an ASEAN summit in Cambodia, and in November 2014 Prime Minister Modi met President Aquino on the sidelines of an EAS summit in Myanmar.

In November 2017 the two countries saw a major breakthrough when Prime Minister Modi became the first Indian leader to visit the Philippines in 36 years. In Manila, he attended the ASEAN and East Asian Summits and met with President Rodrigo Duterte where the two signed an agreement to boost cooperation in defense and logistics. Two months later, President Duterte was welcomed in Delhi for Republic Day celebrations along with the leaders of other ASEAN member

states. The Filipino defense secretary traveled to Delhi in March 2018, and the Philippines participated in India's annual Defense Expo the following month.

Prior to that, a 2006 meeting between Indian President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam and President Macapagal-Arroyo proved to be the most substantive and consequential in advancing defense cooperation. The two sides signed an MOU on Defense and Security Cooperation and established or advanced several high-level commissions and dialogues. Subsequently a Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation was established in March 2011, and a Joint Committee on Defense Cooperation followed in January 2012. In February 2013, the two sides inaugurated a new foreign policy consultations and security dialogue while the first meeting of a joint working group on counterterrorism was held in April 2016.

At the second meeting of the Joint Defense Cooperation Committee in March 2017 the two discussed "significant regional security concerns," including tensions in South China Sea and Indian Ocean piracy. They further examined their respective defense acquisition processes as well as the prospects for enhancing maritime security and promoting exchanges between intelligence analysts from both countries (Republic of the Philippines, Department of National Defense, 2017). Notably, India and the Philippines already hold regular intelligence exchange (INTELLEX) meetings on "a range of sensitive issues" (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2014).

India also trains Filipino foreign service officers at its Foreign Service Institute, and the two have begun conducting military training exchanges. The first such exchange among their respective National Defense Colleges was conducted in India in 2013 and a delegation from the Indian College of Defense Management visited the Philippines the same year (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2013b). Finally, India hosted a 34-member Filipino military delegation for a weeklong training course held in India in September 2016.

Joint statements following key leadership meetings have signaled convergence on a range of regional issues, including the importance of defending freedom of navigation and the rule of law in the South China Sea as well as the need to conclude a China-ASEAN Code of Conduct. The Philippines has also supported India's bid for a per-

manent seat on the UN Security Council. Notably, joint statements following the October 2013 and October 2015 meetings of the Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation both included references to supporting a "peaceful resolution of the West Philippine Sea/South China Sea dispute." The unusual official use of the "West Philippine Sea" formulation raised eyebrows and was reportedly done intentionally and at Manila's behest (Parashar, 2015).

Indian warships have also become frequent visitors to the Philippines on their regular deployments to the South China Sea, including port calls in 2016 and 2017 by Indian naval and coast guard vessels. On the other hand, despite expressed interest from both sides, there has been little progress on boosting cooperation in defense sales and co-production. This is at least in part the product of broader problems afflicting India's ability to forge meaningful security partnerships in the region and in part a product of the Philippines' underdeveloped domestic defense industry, host to one of the region's weakest military forces. For example, in 2015 an Indian firm bid on a $400 million contract to provide two light frigates for the Philippine Navy. India's state-owned, Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) reportedly submitted the most competitive bid but "failed to meet financial requirements in post-qualification assessments by the Philippine Navy." Specifically, the Philippine Navy insisted on paying in full on delivery of the warships and assessed GRSE "did not have adequate funds available" to construct the vessels without supporting payments. India's defense ministry requested diplomatic intervention, but the deal failed to materialize (Pabby, 2016). Finally, in October 2017 two Indian warships paid a goodwill visit to the Philippines, and the following month Prime Minister Modi became the first Indian leader to visit the Philippines in nearly four decades. In Manila, Modi signed an MOU on basic defense cooperation and logistics among other economic partnership agreements.

The Philippines is arguably among the most underdeveloped of India's relationships in East and Southeast Asia. Again, this is likely the product of the Philippines' relatively underdeveloped military capabilities and domestic defense industry, limiting the appeal of defense cooperation, arms sales, and co-production agreements. Moreover, since the election of President Rodrigo Duterte in 2016, the Philippines'

high-profile charm offensive toward Beijing has limited the room for strategic convergence on broader geopolitical questions like the South China Sea and freedom of navigation.

Other Key Actors: The United States, Russia, and the European Union

To better understand the role and context of the foregoing analyses of India's security cooperation with the six partners at the heart of this study, it is valuable to examine India's key defense and security relationships with other partners as well so as to establish a benchmark against which to gauge the overall importance of the developments noted above. While a comprehensive review of India's expansive defense and strategic collaboration with the United States is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is nonetheless important to note that bilateral ties have witnessed a dramatic transformation since the turn of the century punctuated by a ten-year defense partnership and civilian nuclear deal signed in 2005. From estranged Cold War democracies the relationship between the two sides has evolved to become, in the words of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one of "natural allies" (Mufson and Demirjian, 2016).

India now conducts more military exercises with the United States than with any other country in the world. Bilateral defense trade, negligible prior to 2008, has swelled to over $15 billion, mostly consisting of U.S. arms sales to India. Additionally, the United States has carved out regulatory exemptions that permit it to treat India as a "Major Defense Partner" with access and privileges comparable with some of America's closest security partners. Since the election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India and the United States have signed their first logistics exchange memorandum of agreement, inked their first Joint Vision Statement for the Indo-Pacific, established a 2 + 2 defense and foreign ministers dialogue, and commenced technical cooperation on aircraft carriers and jet engine technology.

America's budding strategic partnership with India has also impacted the evolution of India's security partnerships in East and Southeast Asia in both direct and indirect ways. Not least, Washington has been active in encouraging India to take a more prominent role in regional affairs. Indeed, it was Secretary of State Hillary Clinton who

first encouraged India "not just to look east, but to engage East and act east as well" during a speech in Chennai in 2011 (Clinton, 2011). Just as important, the United States has encouraged regional security partners and treaty allies to embrace a larger geopolitical role for India in regional affairs and has shepherded India toward embracing multilateral security cooperation with East and Southeast Asian partners.

Washington was a strong proponent of adding Japan to the annual Malabar naval exercises it conducts with India, first as a rotating member and, since 2015, as a permanent member. The United States was also instrumental binding India with Japan and Australia in overlapping trilateral security dialogues, including one joining the Australia, India, and the United States and another joining India, Japan, and the United States. Finally, the growing share of U.S. hardware in use by the Indian military has offered some shared platforms with regional militaries, greater familiarity, and greater opportunities for joint training exercises and information exchanges.

A second key point of comparison for the relationships described above is India's relationship with the Russian Federation. Russia's geopolitical influence in Delhi has waned since the end of the Cold War and the geopolitical warmth once enjoyed between India and the USSR, though often overstated, has not endured into the twenty-first century. Indeed, the two are increasingly diverging on issues of strategic significance. As India has been drawn toward the United States, Russia has formed a robust partnership with China and in recent years has been expanding low-level ties with Pakistan. Whereas the USSR once played a role in fostering cooperative security relations between India and Vietnam, today Russia exerts little influence on India's evolving security profile in East and Southeast Asia.

To be sure, Russia continues to play an outsized role in Indian defense purchases, including for maintenance and repair of India's numerous legacy Soviet military platforms. Yet, Russia no longer enjoys a virtual monopoly on Indian defense imports. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Arms Transfers Database, from 2008 to 2012 Russia provided 79 percent of India's arms imports while the United States accounted for only 2.7 percent. From 2013 to 2017, however, Russia's share plunged to 62 percent,

while America's share grew over fivefold to 15 percent (SIPRI, n.d.). Nevertheless, India continues to pursue high-profile defense systems from Russia, including a pending multibillion-dollar deal for Russian S-400 air and missile defense systems.

As a final point of comparison, India enjoys strong defense relations with several members of the European Union (EU), which as a bloc remains one of India's largest sources of investment and trading partners (over $100 billion in goods and services annually). India has enjoyed a "strategic partnership" with the EU since 2004 and established an annual security dialogue in 2006 covering counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and counterpiracy. The two sides have been coordinating antipiracy patrols off the Horn of Africa since 2008, and a nonproliferation and disarmament working group dialogue was added in 2013. India also holds regular summits with the presidents of the European Commission and European Council.

Democratic values remain an important binding agent in the partnership, and at the 14th EU-India Summit in October 2017 Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared, "As the world's largest democracies, we are natural partners. Our close relations are founded on the shared values of democracy, rule of law, respect for fundamental freedoms and multiculturalism. We also share the vision of a multipolar, rules-based international order" (Modi, 2017).

While cooperation with the EU as a whole remains relatively robust, in general India has preferred to advance strategic and defense collaboration with key EU members at a bilateral level. The UK and France comprise its two closest defense partners and the Indian military exercises regularly with both countries. Joint military exercises include the Indradhanush air force exercises and Ajeya Warrior Army exercises with the UK, as well as the Varuna naval exercises and Shakti army exercises with France.

In contrast with India's defense and strategic partnerships in East and Southeast Asia, India-EU defense ties tend to be anchored by arms sales—specifically Indian arms purchases. India has traditionally valued high-quality European defense hardware and in the early 1980s "began to acquire arms from West European countries, including Mirage aircraft from France, submarines from Germany,

and the Anglo-French attack aircraft, SEPECAT Jaguar" (EU-India Think Tank Twinning Initiative, 2016). Since the turn of the century additional purchases have included submarine rescue systems, air-to-air refueling equipment, jet engines, and trainer aircraft from the UK; turboprop planes, light utility helicopters, surface-to-air missiles, and advanced Rafale jet fighters from France; and turboprop utility aircraft, towed array sonar systems, submarines, and tactical communications equipment from Germany. Additionally, India has purchased light aircraft from Slovenia, towed cannons from Spain, fleet tankers from Italy, and armored vehicles from Poland.

Ultimately, while India still views the EU and specific European countries as important defense partners and sources of advanced defense technology, the geopolitical logic and benefit of promoting greater defense and strategic collaboration with Europe is less compelling than it is with East and Southeast Asia. That is at least partly attributable to the fact that many Indian strategists view the EU as a group of declining powers whose influence and presence in the Indo-Pacific is shrinking and whose benefit to India in coping with the expansion of China's power and influence is limited. Nevertheless, India should be expected continue to leverage the experienced defense industries of the EU to both purchase advanced military hardware and attract investments and technology transfer to continue developing its own defense industrial base.

Conclusion: Drivers of India's Defense Relationship Diversification

To return to the central question posed in the introduction: Have India's external security partnerships among the East and Southeast Asian countries identified in this study been expanding, and if so why? The chapter offers evidence of a clear trend of broadening and deepening defense and strategic collaboration between India and key East and Southeast Asian security partners since the turn of the century, albeit from an admittedly low base. Among the countries examined in this study, both the pace and scope of India's cooperative external security

activities have increased, beginning slowly and progressing unevenly but accelerating in recent years. The growth has been more pronounced and consequential with some countries like Japan and Vietnam than with others like the Philippines and South Korea. More importantly, it has been disproportionately weighted toward some categories like high-level dialogues or joint training and exercises than with ACSAs or arms sales and co-development of defense platforms.

The pace of high-level diplomatic exchanges (presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers, defense ministers, military service chiefs) has substantially expanded with each capital, as have the quantity and quality of avenues for strategic collaboration. India has formed "Strategic Partnerships" of varying character with all capitals in this study, save the Philippines. It has also expanded joint military exercises, joint training programs, and port calls by the Indian Navy.

Since the turn of the century India has established new 2 + 2 foreign and defense policy dialogues with Japan, Australia, and South Korea (as well as the United States). It is now training Vietnamese submariners, Indonesian pilots, and Filipino foreign service officers as well as intelligence analysts from a Japanese counterterrorism unit. It is participating in new multilateral security dialogues like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, the India-Japan-U.S. and Australia-India-U.S. trilateral dialogues, as well as new multilateral military exercises like Sahyog-Kaijin, MILAN, and Komodo. It has signed new joint vision statements and declarations on security cooperation with regional partners and is engaging in new forms of intelligence cooperation and officer exchanges with multiple regional parties.

Progress has been less impressive in the fields of defense trade, co-production, and co-development, and ACSA agreements. It took over a decade of negotiations before India and the United States reached terms on a logistics exchange memorandum of agreement in 2016, and it seems unlikely to expect India to sign a similar agreement with any East or Southeast Asian capitals in the near term. While Delhi has inked a wide range of MOUs promoting defense co-production and co-development with regional partners, to date practical cooperation has been limited, with India registering far more failures than successes.

Similarly, India has made little progress promoting defense exports or imports with regional partners, despite repeated expressions of inter-

est and numerous joint working groups, commissions, and defense dialogues dedicated to promoting defense trade. Most notably, deals with South Korea for trainer aircraft and mine countermeasure vessels, with Vietnam and Indonesia for BrahMos missiles, and with Japan for US-2 aircraft and diesel-electric submarines either failed to materialize or remain under discussion.

Drivers

For India the collapse of the Soviet Union, previously the country's principal provider of military hardware, produced a new determination to develop its underperforming domestic defense industry and diversify its external security partnerships. Indian defense policy has since come to be identified with multiple, sometimes contradictory, policy objectives that explain both the drive for new defense partnerships in the East and Southeast Asian regions and also the limitations India confronts in doing so.

First, India wants to field world-class military capabilities and fill large and widening capacity shortfalls as soon as possible. By one estimate, India's military is "short of some 300 fighter jets, at least a dozen submarines, over 1,000 combat helicopters, seven frigates and perhaps 3,000 artillery guns" ("India's Defense Industries: Opportunity Strikes," 2014). Yet, India lacks the defense industrial base to produce these platforms indigenously in a timely manner. While it has witnessed progress in developing some platforms, like advanced cruise and ballistic missiles, with foreign assistance "a 40-year effort by [Delhi] to develop a battlefield tank has yet to produce anything the army can use" (Marlow and Bipindra, 2016). India's effort to build an indigenous fighter aircraft, the Tejas, has by one account produced "one of the single worst fighter projects that has ever been conceived of in the history of aviation. Even as it enters service, the aircraft is obsolete" (Majumdar, 2015).

As a result, India has assumed the crown as the world's largest importer of arms in recent years, increasing its share of global defense hardware imports from 9.7 percent between 2007 and 2011 to 12.8 percent between 2012 and 2016 (Blanchfield, Wezeman, and Wezeman, 2017). While this has helped fill critical capabilities gaps and offered India advanced weapons platforms such as the U.S.-made P-8 surveillance aircraft, C-17 transport aircraft, and Apache attack helicopters,

it has also undermined another primary objective of Indian defense policy: indigenization.

Delhi has long articulated a desire to have 70 percent of the country's defense needs met through domestic production with only 30 percent derived from foreign imports. Yet, the ratio has been frozen at nearly the exact opposite for over a decade. This is partly the product of the web of onerous regulations and offset requirements established by the Indian bureaucracy that have discouraged foreign direct investment (FDI) in India's defense sector. Any arms sale to India valued at more than $44 million requires the seller to include "offsets of at least 30 percent [and as high as 50 percent] of the total value of the contract" in one of several pre-approved categories. From April 2000 to March 2016, India attracted a meager $5.12 million in FDI equity inflows in the defense sector, which ranked 61 out of 62 Indian industries in attracting FDI (Government of India, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, 2016).

Since 2008, Delhi has been gradually easing some of these restrictions: foreign firms can now direct offsets to "services" like research and development, or maintenance, repair, and overhaul. In 2014 Delhi raised the cap on FDI in defense to 49 percent from 26 percent. Exceptions for investments of up to 100 percent will now be granted when access to "modern" technology is involved, a slight amendment to the previous exception for "state-of-the-art" technology. Delhi has also eliminated a provision requiring a single Indian investor to have at least a 51 percent stake in any joint venture ("Tatas to Reliance," 2015).

One year after the revised guidelines, however, foreign firms had submitted just six proposals valued at $15 million with only two seeking a 49 percent stake (Pandit, 2015). Notably, any joint venture with an Indian defense firm still must be headed by an Indian chief executive. Given this, it is perhaps unsurprising India remains a marginal player in the $64 billion global arms export industry. Though the value of its defense exports has been growing, they are now valued at a very modest $150 million per year, and Indian defense exports to the countries covered in this chapter are almost negligible (Kabir, 2017). In 2015 India transferred four patrol craft to Vietnam but only after Delhi

extended Hanoi a $100 million line of credit for the purchase. Vietnam is one of nearly a dozen countries that have expressed interest in the advanced BrahMos cruise missile, jointly developed and produced by India and Russia, but years of negotiations have yet to produce an agreement. Indeed, Vietnam is reportedly "now contemplating a direct and cheaper purchase from Russia, with the promise of greater technology transfers" (Singh, 2018).

Notably, even arms *imports* from the countries involved in this study have been extremely limited, despite India's title as the world's largest arms importer. The vast majority of Indian defense imports derive from four sources: Russia and the United States account for over 75 percent of Indian arms imports, with Israel and the EU comprising an additional 15–20 percent. Remarkably, there was not a single Asian country in the ten largest suppliers of arms to India from 2004 to 2014 (Pandit, 2014).

The only two Indian defense import deals of note with the countries covered in this study include India's purchase of 11 Thornycraft patrol boats from Australia in 2004 (delivered between 2006 and 2011), and its order of 100 K-9 thunder 155mm self-propelled guns from South Korea in 2016 for $600 million. When Japan lifted a constitutional ban on defense exports in 2014 Tokyo and Delhi almost immediately entered talks on a $1.5 billion sale of one dozen Japanese US-2 amphibious aircraft. Despite being India's closest partner in the region and having three years of negotiations and a pledge by Tokyo to discount the price, by the summer of 2018 negotiations remained deadlocked. This state of affairs helps to explain why some arenas of defense collaboration, like military exercises, high-level defense dialogues, and joint training programs have advanced much quicker than arms sales and co-development agreements: the former are not subject to the limitations, restrictions, and vagaries of India's labyrinthine defense bureaucracy.

Other Factors

There are several additional factors of varying degrees of significance driving India's Act East policy and the growth in strategic and defense collaboration with key East and Southeast Asian states.

First, nearly half of India's seaborne trade passes through the Strait of Malacca as ASEAN has gradually become one of India's largest trading partners. Trade with the bloc as a whole reached $71 billion in 2016. Partly as a result, India has become more invested in securing its sea lines of communication to the Western Pacific and has a greater vested interest in maintaining a naval presence in the Western Pacific and preserving freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. The Indian government's 2009 Maritime Doctrine and 2015 Maritime Security Strategy identify the South China Sea as an area of "secondary interest" for India and the Strait of Malacca (as well as the Straits of Singapore, Sunda, Lombok, Ombai, and Wetar) as important naval chokepoints. Notably, the latter document for the first time adds the "East China Sea, Western Pacific Ocean and their littoral regions" to India's "secondary areas of maritime interest" (Ministry of Defence [Navy], 2015).

More broadly, India has growing aspirations to become, and be perceived as, as a global power with interests and a presence beyond its traditional sphere of influence in the subcontinent and Indian Ocean. Abhijit Singh, a former officer in the Indian Navy and the head of the Maritime Policy Initiative at the Observer Research Foundation, says that in addition to China's "encroachment on India's strategic turf," Delhi's strategic engagements in East and Southeast Asia are driven by the "need to be recognized as a consequential strategic actor in Asia, as a reflection of its aspiration for regional (and global) power status" (author interview).

Another way to view why India's strategic engagement with the region has been increasing is to ask: Why not? As noted, India's engagement with the region was quite limited in the twentieth century, due more to the geopolitical machinations of the Cold War than any fundamental conflict of interest or ideological incongruence. Today, India harbors no major territorial disputes and no major geopolitical differences with the countries in question. With the exception of Vietnam, India shares democratic values with all the countries covered in the study.

In fact, India and most regional capitals covered in this study find broad geopolitical alignment on many of the most salient geopolitical questions of the day, including the importance of freedom of navigation, peaceful dispute settlement, and the rule of law. India,

like most East and Southeast Asian capitals, prefers to see a regional order free from Chinese hegemony with multiple power centers including ASEAN, India, Japan, and the United States serving as a counterweight to China's growing power and influence. Unsurprisingly, regional capitals have been solicitous of greater Indian engagement with the region precisely for this reason, and the impetus to preserve the liberal and open regional order amid new challenges from China can be expected to grow stronger in the years ahead. "We believe India makes a major contribution to regional affairs, helping to keep the regional architecture open, balanced, and inclusive," Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong declared in January 2018, echoing a widely held sentiment in the region. "India shares ASEAN's vision for peace and prosperity through a rules-based order for the oceans and seas, [and] respect for international law," Lee explained ("India Plays a Key Role in Keeping Regional Architecture 'Open, Balanced and Inclusive': PM Lee," 2018).

Anecdotal evidence, drawn from dozens of interviews with Indian officials and experts in Washington and Delhi, suggests that perceptions of U.S. decline are not a principal motivating factor behind the growth in India's strategic collaboration with East and Southeast Asia. Regional polling data consistently demonstrates that Indians tend not only to view America more favorably than their counterparts in Asia but are also more confident in the national strength and resilience of the United States. A June 2017 Pew Poll, for example, found 42 percent of Indians surveyed viewed the United States as the world's leading economic power versus just 11 percent that assigned the crown to China (Wike et al., 2017).

Having said that, existing uncertainty over America's reliability as a defense partner has risen further since the 2016 election of President Donald Trump, and in recent years some prominent Indian experts have argued for strengthening intra-Asian defense collaboration as a means of both complementing U.S.-led regional security efforts and hedging against the risks of American indifference or withdrawal (as opposed to American decline).

For example, in a paper co-authored with Australian analyst Rory Medcalf, prominent Indian analyst C. Raja Mohan argues "China's

rising assertiveness and uncertainties about America's response to it are causing middle powers in Indo-Pacific Asia to look beyond traditional approaches to security." They advocate for the creation of "middle power coalitions" or "informal arrangements where regional players cooperate with one another on strategic issues, working in self-selecting groups that do not include China or the United States," arguing that

> this would build regional resilience against the vagaries of US-China relations, including against the extremes either of conflict or collusion. It would also reinforce the multipolar quality of the emerging Indo-Pacific order. . . . For India, building Indo-Pacific coalitions of middle powers could well become a critical element of a strategy to cope with the power shift in Asia and the uncertain evolution of US-China relations. This would help Delhi relieve the tension in its policy between seeking to balance a rising China while avoiding an entangling alliance with the United States. (Medcalf and Mohan, 2014)

Foreign Policy and China

While several trends in Indian foreign policy help explain the expansion of its defense ties and activity in East and Southeast Asia, arguably none has been more influential than its deteriorating relationship with, and growing security concerns about, China. As noted above, Sino-Indian ties entered the twenty-first century on something of a high note. The period from 1980 to 2005 saw the formal establishment of diplomatic relations, the "decoupling" of the border dispute from the broader development of bilateral relations, a series of substantive agreements to manage affairs at the LAC, and a handful of groundbreaking visits by the senior leadership of both countries. By the late 2000s, however, this momentum began to fade, gradually giving way to a more contentious relationship, which by 2007 saw progress on border negotiations come to a virtual standstill, where it has remained for the past decade (Smith, 2015). At the same time Chinese officials and China's nationalist media have grown more critical of India and its budding strategic partnerships with the United States and Japan. In

2009 Beijing protested visits to the Chinese-claimed state of Arunachal Pradesh by the Indian prime minister and the Dharamsala-based Dalai Lama. More consequentially, in 2010 China denied a visa to an Indian military commander serving in Kashmir, an indirect challenge to Indian sovereignty there. Delhi temporarily suspended all bilateral defense ties and military exercises in response. More importantly, India ended its explicit recognition of Beijing's One China Policy in official declarations—a policy that remains in place today.

Despite some stabilization in bilateral relations from 2011 to 2013, the rivalry again intensified between 2014 and 2017 under new leadership in both capitals. Beginning in 2013 and 2014 Chinese nuclear and conventional submarines, respectively, began regular patrols of the Indian Ocean. In 2014 Chinese conventional submarines surfaced twice in Colombo, catching Indian strategists by surprise and sparking discord in Indo-Sri Lankan relations. This paralleled an expansion of China's influence and investments in Sri Lanka, culminating in major stakes not only in the Colombo and Hambantota ports but also among Indian neighbors Nepal and the Maldives.

Such developments revived anxiety about Chinese encirclement and Beijing's "String of Pearls" strategy in the Indian Ocean. Those concerns were further stoked in 2015 when a Chinese firm agreed to assume managing control of Pakistan's Gwadar Port and Beijing pledged over $46 billion dollars (later revised to over $65 billion) to finance an ambitious new China-Pakistan Economic Corridor linking China's remote western province of Xinjiang to Gwadar, a previously dormant port on the Indian Ocean. That same year Pakistan approved its largest-ever defense deal with China for the provision of eight Chinese diesel-electric submarines.

Despite hosting a number of China skeptics in senior positions in his government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi initially sought to recalibrate relations with Beijing and test President Xi Jinping's willingness to begin a new chapter in bilateral ties. The endeavor seemed poisoned almost from the outset when President Xi's inaugural trip to Delhi in 2014 was overshadowed by a border crisis that erupted when the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) launched a two-week

intrusion across the LAC in Ladakh. A similar incident the year prior also spoiled the atmospherics of the Xi government's first high-profile diplomatic exchange with India. The Modi government's frustration with China appeared to cross an important threshold in 2016 following China's decision to oppose India's entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group, an international body that regulates the trade of nuclear materials, and a successful effort by Beijing to shield Pakistani-based terrorists from UN sanctions (PTI, 2016b). The gradual slide toward rivalry was punctuated by a prolonged standoff between Chinese and Indian military forces on the Doklam plateau in the summer of 2017, arguably the second-worst border crisis between Chinese and Indian forces since the 1962 China-India war (Smith, 2017b).

The United Progressive Alliance government (2004–2014) that preceded Modi began regular calls for freedom of navigation in the South China Sea; under Modi these have grown stronger and more specific. At an Indian Ocean conference in Singapore in September 2016, Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar explicitly endorsed the legitimacy of an UNCLOS Tribunal that repudiated China's nine-dash line claim over the South China Sea in July 2016. A similar phenomenon was on display in 2015 when Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj referred to the South China Sea as the "West Philippine Sea" in a joint statement with her Filipino counterpart. This growth in India's strategic engagement in the region should be viewed as one manifestation of India's growing concerns about China and the growing confidence it has in its own China policy. Indian analysts now speak openly about "playing the Vietnam card" to "pay China back" for its patronage toward Pakistan. They describe India's growing forays into the South China Sea and its growing engagement with regional navies as tied implicitly to the growing activities of the PLA Navy in the Indian Ocean.

These developments have collectively led to greater candor on the part of Indian strategists about the need to "balance" China's rise both through improvements to indigenous defense capabilities and through external balancing by forging stronger security partnerships with foreign partners. Indeed, during a trip to Delhi in 2016, one of India's leading foreign policy thinkers, former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran,

spoke openly about the need to balance China's rise and create "countervailing coalitions," arguing that

> when we look at the Asia-Pacific, we see the U.S. as the key and the centerpiece of any countervailing coalition. It will be a loose coalition, with the U.S., Japan, Australia and India as participating partners, but reinforced by the expanding security relations that both India and the U.S. have with Vietnam, the Philippines, Singapore and Indonesia. The coalition will grow tighter or loosen depending upon the evolving security landscape and Chinese behavior. If the threat level goes up the coalition could well become tighter. It will evolve based on constant assessments to changes in the security situation. (Author interview)

Finally, it is worth noting the impetus behind this balancing activity isn't coming from Delhi alone. Many East and Southeast Asian capitals have become increasingly vocal advocates of India assuming a more prominent role in the region's affairs, explicitly promoting India as a benevolent counterweight to China's growing power and influence. As one noted Indian defense analyst explained in an interview conducted for this study, "China's shadow looms large in the regions where India is making fresh inroads. These countries want India to act as a counter balance to China, and New Delhi is not shy about playing the game anymore" (author interview).

CHAPTER FIVE

Australia: Expanding Defense Cooperation amid Alliance Dependency

Historically, Australia's approach to its security has meant maintaining a close relationship with a powerful ally that underwrites regional stability—first the United Kingdom from federation in 1901 until the late 1960s, and then the United States thereafter down to the present.[1] The rationale is that Australia is too small and limited in its capacities to perform this task alone. Since the end of the Cold War, however, Australia's defense engagements have expanded. Initially, these engagements were focused on its immediate region, leading to deeper defense ties with Southeast Asian nations, particularly Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia. Ties with the Philippines and Vietnam developed as well, but at much slower and less significant levels. Over time, Australia expanded its defense ties to include cooperation with U.S. allies Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK). Most recently, as Canberra has shifted to a broader conception of its security and strategic focus, defense cooperation efforts have further expanded to encompass relations with India.

This chapter proceeds with a brief background on Australia's core strategic defense interests. This helps establish a foundation to understand what drives Canberra to develop security relationships with countries other than the United States. It is followed by an examination of Australia's security cooperation with key states in the Indo-Pacific

[1] Federation refers to the process by which the six separate British colonies on the continent agreed to unite into a federation known as the Commonwealth of Australia.

region: India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, the ROK, and Vietnam. The chapter focuses on five types of security cooperation: defense dialogues, military training and exercises, defense sales/transfers, joint or co-development, and agreements on logistics support and/or intelligence sharing. The case studies provide little evidence to support the argument that the motivation behind these growing relationships is driven by Australian voters' expectations of Australia as a middle power; nor do rising defense industrial costs appear to be spurring Australia to seek arms exports or co-development as a strategy to lower per-unit costs and sustain its defense industrial base. Instead, the overriding rationale behind Australia's regional defense engagements appears to be a desire to uphold the stability of the regional order on which Australia's security depends. While the Australian government does not fear a reduction in U.S. commitment to the region or reliability as an ally, there is a recognition the United States alone cannot sustain the regional order against a rising China without regional partners doing more to assist.

Data and Methodology

To understand Australia's defense cooperation with regional partners, the study draws on key official documents such as Australian defense white papers and speeches/statements by Australian officials. It also leverages secondary source analyses of Australian foreign and security policies, including those authored by academic and think-tank experts. The study also takes advantage of extensive open-source media reporting (both Australian and foreign) and foreign policy commentary on Canberra's activities with regional countries. Finally, it draws on 33 in-person interviews conducted with key Australian respondents. These interviews were conducted in Australia in the summer of 2017 with extensive follow-up correspondence conducted via email up until the summer of 2018. Subject matter experts consulted for this study included current and former defense and foreign policy officials, military officers, defense-focused academics and think-tank analysts, and journalists who cover Australian defense and foreign policy issues.

The chapter describes how Australia views each country's role in Australia's defense cooperation and attempts to assess what specific cat-

egories get more policy attention than others in these disparate bilateral relationships. Methodologically, this chapter leverages both quantitative data and qualitative, interview-based data. While the chapter has been updated accordingly for events into 2019, the data concerning diplomatic meetings/exchanges as well as military exercises and training conducted by Australian forces with the other countries is only current as of June 2018.

Historical Background

Australian historian Peter Edwards has argued that Australian strategic thinking can be characterized according to five major cycles since federation (Edwards, 2015, p. 6). These periods began as follows: (1) following the South African War (or Boer War) of 1899–1902; (2) the period after World War I; (3) the period following World War II; (4) the era of the Vietnam War and after; and (5) the period following the 1999 East Timor crisis. Seen as such, each cycle started after a major war or period of military activity, initiated as Canberra reassessed Australia's place in the world. In each of these cycles, Australian decisionmakers have had to balance two diametrically opposed approaches (Edwards, 2015, pp. 6–7). One approach is premised on the belief that Australian national security requires a close relationship with at least one major ally strong enough to defend shared interests and an international order in which Australia can survive and flourish; the other viewpoint argues that Australia should prioritize its autonomy and independence. As shown below, echoes of these debates can still be heard to this day.

World War II had a profound effect on Australian strategic thinkers, as the attacks by Imperial Japan demonstrated that distant powers could threaten Australia from its northern approaches and that Australia was ill equipped to defend itself without assistance. For the postwar Robert Menzies government, an independent or self-reliant defense was "simply beyond Australia's resources" (Edwards, 2015, p. 8) Therefore, under the strategy termed "forward defense," Australia tied itself strongly to the United States and the United Kingdom (UK) and assumed its security was based on fighting enemies to Australia's north within multilateral coalitions (but alongside the United States

and UK) to ensure great power commitment to Australia's security. Accordingly, after World War II, all four of Australia's military commitments were in the Asia-Pacific region, with three in Southeast Asia.[2]

The experience of the Vietnam War brought the "forward defense" strategy to a halt. What followed was a "Defense of Australia" strategy that prioritized "self-reliance" in which Australia's strategic focus was limited to its immediate region, stretching only as far as its immediate north. This strategy worked in the relatively benign security environment of the latter twentieth century, but after the Cold War ended, Australian decisionmakers woke up to strategic realities they were not accustomed to facing. China's rise, combined with political instability in Australia's neighborhood and the ability of nonstate actors to launch deadly attacks, spurred a renewed debate over Australia's strategic approach to securing itself, leading to a new strategy that remains in place to this day.

This new strategy, often referred to as the "concentric rings" approach to Australia's defense, sorted Australia's defense priorities along three core strategic defense interests. The first is the goal of ensuring a "secure, resilient Australia" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 17). This includes securing the northern approaches and sea lines of communication around Australia. The second is "a secure nearer region, encompassing maritime Southeast Asia and the South Pacific" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 17). The third is "a stable Indo-Pacific region and rules-based global order" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 17). Australia sees the pursuit of interests one and two as largely its own responsibility, while interest three requires close cooperation with other actors.

The *2016 Defence White Paper* took a new approach in that the government agreed to three "equally-weighted high-level Strategic Defense Objectives" that flowed from these three strategic interests (see Table 5.1) (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b,

[2] This included the Malayan Emergency in the 1950s and the Indonesian Confrontation (*Konfrontasi*) and Vietnam War in the 1960s. Only the Korean War was outside of Southeast Asia.

Table 5.1
Strategic Defense Objectives

Deter, deny, and defeat attacks on or threats to Australia and its national interests, and northern approaches	Make effective military contributions to support the maritime security of Southeast Asia and support the governments of Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Pacific Island countries to build and strengthen their security	Contribute military capabilities to coalition operations that support Australia's interests in a rules-based global order

SOURCE: Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 68.

p. 71). In pursuit these security interests, Australia has had to contend with how to balance its security alliance with the United States and its independent economic relations with China.

There is no question what role the U.S. alliance plays in Australia's strategic thinking. The *2016 Defence White Paper* states that "a strong and deep alliance is at the core of Australia's security and defence planning" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 15) Australia's security and prosperity rest on the stability of the rules-based global order that the United States ensures. Australian policymakers believe that regional security and stability would not be achievable without the United States (Davies and Schreer, 2011). As such, Australia looks to the "active presence of the United States" to "underpin" regional stability (Davies and Schreer, 2011, p. 41). It is the "bedrock" of Australia's strategic policy (Varghese, 2015).

But Canberra believes that due to power shifts in the region, most notably the rise of China, the regional order that the United States underwrites needs additional support if it is to be maintained (author interview). Contrary to scholarship by a growing list of Australian researchers and analysts that question U.S. commitment and resolve in the region—particularly defending traditional allies and rules/norms—Australian officials interviewed for this research indicated that Canberra is not worried about U.S. commitment (author interview). Nor is Canberra fearful of U.S. withdrawal from the Indo-Pacific; rather, it recognizes that U.S. presence in the region needs to be supported (author interview). This is because U.S. primacy in the

region is being challenged by China (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017). Today, the drive to support the United States proceeds on a dual track of directly strengthening the Australia-U.S. alliance by Australia doing more for its own defense (developments not reviewed here) as well as expanding defense engagement with regional partners to support the U.S.-led regional order. Australia sees itself as "a regional power with global interests" that has "to work harder to maximise our international influence and secure our interests" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017, p. v). Deepening security ties helps build resilience and robustness to key relationships and supports U.S. regional engagement (author interview). While the election of Donald Trump brought unexpected challenges to Australia's relationship with the United States, the overall strategy of supporting the United States and its regional engagement remains unchanged. Indeed, in an early 2018 speech, then–Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, explaining the strategic reasons the alliance serves Australia's interests, said the alliance "is a means for maximizing our maneuverability and independence, not constraining it" (Turnbull, 2018). In a period of uncertainty over regional security, Turnbull argued that the U.S. alliance "is not only Australia's strategic Plan A but also Plans B, C and D" (Jennings, 2018). Turnbull's successor, Scott Morrison, maintains this thinking. At his first major foreign policy speech after becoming premier, Morrison stated that "a strong America—centrally engaged in the affairs of our region—is critical to Australia's national interests" (Morrison, 2018). That said, as touched on below, the Trump administration poses challenges for this strategy of maintaining U.S. centrality.

It was not until the early 2000s that China began to emerge as a significant factor in Australian strategic thinking. Its expanding role has stemmed from concerns that China poses a strategic challenge to the U.S.-led order on which Australian security depends (author interview). China's rise is eroding America's military preeminence in the region, which hurts Australia's security (Davies and Schreer, 2011). The ensuing debate that emerged was, according to Australian National University's Brendan Taylor, whether Canberra needs to think in terms of the alliance-first or Asia-first (Taylor, 2016, pp. 258–259). For those

in the alliance-first school, Canberra should be doing everything to preserve the U.S.-led security order in the region, which benefits Australia. This includes developing a stronger domestic defense capability, strengthening the Australian alliance with the United States, and forging deeper strategic ties with other U.S. allies/partners and like-minded countries in the region. The Asia-first school calls for greater distance from Washington. On the extreme is former Australian prime minister Malcom Fraser who has argued for the abandonment of the alliance, characterizing it as "dangerous" and asserting that it hurts Australia's ability to deepen relations with other regional countries (Fraser, 2014). Others, like former Foreign Minister Bob Carr, feel that Australia should adopt a neutral position between China and the United States (Wu, 2017). This aligns more with the views of Hugh White, who has called for distancing Australia from the United States, fearful that the worse U.S.-China relations become, the starker the choice Australia will face between these two (White, 2012a). Looking at polls conducted by Australia's Lowy Institute, the alliance-first school appears to be the dominant thinking among Australians (Oliver, 2018). In addition to more than three-fourths of Australians believing the alliance relationship with the United States is either "very" or "fairly" important, more Australians trust the United States—and its allies like Japan, the United Kingdom, or France—than express such sentiment toward China.

The Australian government's overall approach mirrors the public preference, as it most closely resembles the alliance-first school. Canberra does not view the nature of its relationships with China and the United States as constituting a binary choice (author interview). Prime Minister Morrison has maintained that "Australia doesn't have to choose and we won't choose" between the two countries (McCullogh, 2018).

Canberra's overarching concern is the maintenance of regional peace and stability (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 14). According to the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, Australia believes that U.S. "engagement to support a rules-based order is in its own interests and in the interests of wider international stability and prosperity. Without sustained U.S. support, the effectiveness

and liberal character of the rules-based order will decline" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017, p. 7). As such, Australia's alliance with the United States is central to its approach to the region, since "without strong U.S. political, economic and security engagement, power is likely to shift more quickly in the region and it will be more difficult for Australia to achieve the levels of security and stability [it] seek[s]" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017, p. 4). At the same time, Canberra is committed to strong and constructive ties with China.

In practice, maintaining good ties with both Washington and Beijing has been growing increasingly difficult, especially as relations with China have become strained in recent years over concerns about Chinese influence over operations in Australia. These include allegations of Chinese meddling in Australian universities, Chinese community groups lobbying politicians not to criticize Chinese policies, stories about ethnically Chinese businessmen with connections to Beijing giving money to election campaigns in Australia, and a cyberattack on Australia's parliament and political parties in February 2019 that is believed to have been carried out by Chinese state actors. China's more assertive foreign policy over the past decade has also fueled concern, and consecutive Australian governments have taken an increasingly harder stance against China. For example, following China's November 2013 ADIZ declaration in the East China Sea, former Foreign Minister Julie Bishop declared Australia's "opposition to any coercive or unilateral actions to change the status quo in the East China Sea" (Australian Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). And at the 2017 Shangri-La Dialogue, former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull offered a sharp criticism of China's "unilateral actions to seize or create territory or militarize disputed areas" and "winning through corruption, interference or coercion" (Turnbull, 2017). Turnbull's successor, Scott Morrison, has also pushed back at China. When he was a member of the Turnbull government, he was a key official responsible for introducing new foreign interference laws spurred by suspected Chinese activities aimed at influencing Australian politics from within in a direction favorable to Beijing (Power, 2018). As premier, Morrison has called China the country that "is most changing the balance

of power, sometimes in ways that challenge important U.S. interests" (Morrison, 2018). In addition to promising that Australia would "step-up to the Pacific"—against what many see as rising Chinese influence—by promising Pacific nations closer economic, military, and diplomatic ties, his government barred Chinese telecom firm Huawei Technologies from supplying equipment to Australia's broadband network (Edwards, 2018).

Security Engagements

Beijing's actions have further fueled an interest in Canberra in ensuring that the region supports a strong, continuing role for the United States as a counterweight to a rising China. It is against this backdrop that Australia's growing defense relationships with regional countries have unfolded. Despite close economic ties with Beijing, Australia depends heavily on its security alliance with the United States and seeks to support a balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region that will be favorable to Australian interests; will limit the exercise of coercive power; and will promote an open, inclusive and rules-based region. To that end, Australia is seeking to work more closely with both democracies and other like-minded partners across the region (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017, pp. 4, 7). Historically, determining which countries with which to engage was a function of Australia's "concentric rings." Over the past two decades, the list of countries has expanded, with Canberra now seeing the entire Indo-Pacific region as its priority strategic focus, forming an "arc from India through Southeast Asia to Northeast Asia" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2013, p. 7). These defense engagements help contribute "to a more stable and secure international environment" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 118). India, Indonesia, Japan, and the ROK are seen as being "of first order importance to Australia" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017, p. 40). These, as well as bilateral relationships with the Philippines and Vietnam, are described in Table 5.2 and in the text below.

Table 5.2
Australian Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	India	Indonesia	Japan	Philippines	South Korea	Vietnam
Partnership Type	Strategic	Strategic	Special strategic	Comprehensive	None	Strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Arms Sales and Transfers	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes[1]	No
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	No	No	No	No	Yes[2]	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
GSOMIA	No	No	No	No	No	No

SOURCE: Australian defense white papers, RAND interviews with Australian officials, open-source media reporting.

NOTES: [1] Australia has purchased some ammunition from South Korea but no major platform or weapons system sales have been realized.
[2] The two sides have agreed to pursue defense industrial cooperation, but this has not yet been realized in practice.

India: A Relationship Rich with Potential but Relatively Underdeveloped

In the words of one of Australia's leading strategic thinkers, Rory Medcalf, Australia and India are "rapidly becoming more important to one another" (Medcalf, 2014a). Like Australia's ties with U.S. allies, Canberra-New Delhi ties are rooted in commonalities such as democracy and support for the rule of law and good governance. Uniquely among the countries studied here, they share a historical colonial connection to the United Kingdom, Commonwealth membership, and a passion for cricket (Gopal and Ahlawat, 2015, pp. 206–207). While these

commonalities have helped the relationship grow, the overall defense relationship was underdeveloped until recently. Their current defense cooperation is a recent development that is "quite distinct from old habits of alliance or non-alignment" (Medcalf, 2014b). Although Canberra identifies its ties with New Delhi as having "the greatest potential to grow and develop" of all its relationships in Asia (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013, p. 2), continuing challenges constrain the depth and speed of this growing relationship.

Until recently, bilateral relations were best characterized by "long periods of indifference interspersed with occasional political irritations" (Brewster, 2014, p. 66). During the Cold War, Australia aligned itself with the United States and multilateral institutions while India led the nonaligned movement and pursued autarkic policies. This meant the two sides rarely figured in each other's security calculations. After the Cold War, despite efforts to expand ties under the John Howard government, a number of irritants disrupted progress. By far the biggest was Australia's position on uranium exports following India's nuclear tests in 1998. Because India was not a signatory to the NPT, Australia imposed an export ban on uranium.[3] In August 2007, the Howard government reversed its previous position but after a change in government, the Kevin Rudd administration restored the ban on uranium exports in January 2008 because India had still not signed the NPT. Then, in November 2011, the Julia Gillard administration lifted the ban yet again. In 2014, the Tony Abbott administration concluded the Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement with India, putting the matter to rest. The repeated policy reversals stoked mistrust in India as these were "taken by New Delhi as indicating a lack of commitment to the relationship and a refusal to acknowledge India's great power status" (Rumley, 2013, p. 86).

India grew similarly frustrated with Australia's about-face on the first iteration of the Quadrilateral Security Initiative, or the Quad. Formed in May 2007, along with the United States and Japan, the

[3] Australia also strongly condemned the nuclear test, suspended all defense contacts, withdrew all Australian officers training in India and Indian officers training in Australia, and canceled all proposed defense-related visits (Gopal and Ahlawat, 2015, pp. 211–212).

Quad grew out of the four nations' joint response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. The grouping was formally proposed by Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo and was finally established in 2007 and seen as an unspoken way for the region's four largest democracies to respond to China's growing power. In response to continued Chinese protests over the grouping, however, Australian Foreign Minister Steven Smith announced Australia's withdrawal from the grouping in February 2008 during a joint press conference with Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi (Smith, 2008).

When the Quad members discussed reviving the grouping in 2017, the media reported that the discussions "prompted fierce criticism in Australia over concerns that the move will unnecessarily antagonise China" (Pearlman, 2017). Importantly, the negative memory of the 2007 attempt survives in India, with some remembering Australia's withdrawal as "Canberra's hasty capitulation a decade ago" (Allen-Ebrahimiam, 2017). This has led India to approach the grouping—and Australia's seriousness—with more caution. As one scholar notes, "Australia's withdrawal from the Quad in 2007 has left an impression in New Delhi that Canberra could do so again, as its security concerns regarding China are not potent enough" (Sundaramurthy, 2018). This legacy has real-world implications. For example, many believe that part of New Delhi's decision to refuse to allow Canberra to join (as an observer) the Malabar naval exercise it hosts with Japan and the United States is directly tied to its memory of Australia's withdrawal in 2008 (Allen-Ebrahimiam, 2017).

A key challenge for Australia in thinking about how to engage India is conceiving of where it fits in Canberra's concept of Asia, which had traditionally focused on the U.S, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific (Varghese, 2015). In the *2000 Defence White Paper*, India was included as a country that was "important to Australia's security" because it is one of the major powers that have the potential to influence regional events (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2000). Despite the problem of uranium exports, Canberra was determined to advance India to the front line of Australia's strategic relationships (Medcalf, 2009, p. 3). This resulted in an MOU on Defense Cooperation in 2006 and a defense Information Shar-

ing Arrangement (ISA) in 2007.[4] The MOU acted as an expression of their joint commitment to closer ties, providing guidance for the development of these ties. This included cooperation in the areas of military training, maritime security, counterterrorism, and cooperation in defense industries and defense research and development. The ISA facilitated the sharing of classified information, "giving effect to the intent of the MOU," especially in the areas of maritime security, counter-terrorism and peacekeeping" (Nelson, 2007). The real breakthrough came when they signed a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2009 that established a framework to address shared strategic and security interests.

Although the Joint Declaration is nonbinding, it identified eight areas for cooperation that included information exchange and policy coordination in regional affairs and long-term strategic and global issues, bilateral cooperation in multilateral forums, defense dialogue and cooperation, counterterrorism (CT), countering transnational organized crime, disaster management, maritime and aviation security, and police and law enforcement cooperation (Australian High Commission, New Delhi, 2009). This cooperation was to be achieved through a variety of mechanisms, many of which already existed but which the Joint Declaration formalized into regular policy discussion venues. These include exchanges between foreign ministers; policy talks between senior defense officials; service staff talks and exchanges; exercises; consultations between their National Security Advisers; bilateral consultation on CT (via a Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism that was established via a 2003 MOU on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism); and knowledge sharing in disaster prevention and preparedness. Importantly, the Declaration defined the relationship as one between "strategic partners," signaling their desire for closer security ties.

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[4] An ISA is similar to a general security of information agreement (GSOIA) but different from a general security of military information agreement (GSOMIA) in that an ISA/GSOIA are more expansive. While both ISA/GSOIAs and GSOMIAs provide for reciprocal protection of classified information, the scope of classified information is different between the two. A GSOMIA tends to be an agreement for the protection of classified *military* information whereas an ISA/GSOIA are agreements for the protection of classified information, which could include classified military information but is not limited to it.

In subsequent years, Australia's opinion of India as a security partner grew, particularly as Canberra came to a decision on where India fit in Australia's broader National Security Strategy. In the 2012 foreign policy white paper *Australia in the Asian Century*, Canberra articulated a view of India as playing an important role in regional balance of power due to its "growing economic and strategic weight," thereby necessitating the need for expanded bilateral ties (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2012, p. 232). The following year, in the government's *India Country Strategy*, Canberra stated that its defense objectives for the enhanced relationship included more comprehensive ties that would involve "a broad program of bilateral exercises, training activities, exchanges and dialogue" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013a). This new vision of India was helped by Australia unveiling its use of the Indo-Pacific concept in the *2013 Defence White Paper* and declaring its interest in the Indian Ocean and its shared interest with India in maintaining the Indian Ocean region's security (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2013, p. 65). With Australia's economic growth resting on regional freedom of navigation and trade through regional sea lines of communication, Australian governments have grown to see Australia and India as "natural security partners in the Indo-Pacific region," a framework that brings the two sides closer together (Smith, 2011).

Both are interested in regional security and stability (Rumley, 2013). On a macrolevel, this involves China. Australia is concerned over the future of increasing Chinese presence in the Indo-Pacific region (author interview). When Australia began to pursue security ties with India in the early 2000s, China was not a primary factor in their bilateral ties, but over time it has become a factor (author interview). Despite different threat perceptions of China, and divergent approaches to managing these concerns, they are united in wanting to prevent the emergence of a China-dominated regional order (Grare, 2014, p. 4; Rajendram, 2014). For Australia, India represents a vital actor for maintaining the current regional balance. There is a hope in Australia that India will become a more strategic power in the region and more closely align with Australia to help support and preserve the U.S.-led order (author interview). Canberra wants a relationship with

India that allows it to help shape New Delhi's decisions with regard to China (author interview).

On a microlevel, this involves combating terrorism in their countries. Since Mumbai and Bali, the two have had a shared interest in countering terrorism. This pushed them to sign an MOU on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism in 2003 to forge closer cooperation between their respective security, intelligence, and law enforcement agencies. This was followed in 2008 with agreements on intelligence dialogue, extradition, and terrorism; the Agreement on Intelligence Dialogue, Extradition, and Terrorism allowed them to cooperate in intelligence during the 2010 Commonwealth Games. They have also established a joint working group on counterterrorism and have generally looked for opportunities to boost CT ties.

Defense minister talks have helped the two sides move toward closer ties and more shared understandings of the regional security picture. From 2013 onward, the two sides agreed to continue regular bilateral defense minister meetings, defense policy talks, service-to-service staff talks, and exchanges as well as to work toward a bilateral maritime exercise in 2015 (Minister for Defence and India's Minister of Defence—Joint Statement, 2013). This resulted in the November 2014 Framework for Security Cooperation to provide guidance to their growing defense ties. Not only did the two sides commit to annual summits and a continuation of bilateral dialogues, they also set out an action plan for a more comprehensive security relationship that included an annual summit and foreign policy exchanges. Also included were commitments on defense policy planning; cooperation in border patrols, transnational crime, disarmament, and nonproliferation efforts; and future cooperation on search and rescue, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping operations (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014d). Importantly, the action plan also gave considerable focus to exchanges on counter-radicalization, cooperation in CT training, cooperation on extradition, and sharing of intelligence (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014c).

Associated with this gradual growth in ties since the early 2000s has been a growing number of dialogues. The oldest, held since 2001,

is the India-Australia Strategic Dialogue. Serving as a venue to share perceptions on regional and global security issues, it proved critical in widening bilateral cooperation across a range of issues and is responsible for setting the foundations to achieve the agreements mentioned above. Another important meeting is the annual Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue. Held 11 times since its inaugural meeting in 2001, it provides the two countries' top diplomats one of the most important mechanisms to coordinate and advance their diplomatic agendas. Similarly, since 2011 they have also enjoyed a defense ministers' dialogue that provides a regular means to discuss strategic-level security issues between their top defense officials. To date, these meetings have been held three times. Both these meetings are now supported by 2 + 2 meetings among their foreign and defense secretaries, their highest-ranking public servants, and head of their departments.[5] Agreed to in 2015 to enhance foreign policy and security cooperation, the secretary-level 2 + 2 held its inaugural meeting in December 2017. Lower-level talks have included annual defense policy talks that focus on strategic dialogue, held at the senior official level since December 2010 (held only four times since, with the last being in 2016) and annual service-to-service staff dialogues between their armed forces. And unofficially, the bilateral relationship has benefited from a Track 1.5 Defense Strategic Dialogue with government representation at a senior-officials level. First held in 2012, and held three times subsequently (with the last in 2017), the Track 1.5 Strategic Dialogue provides a venue for academics on both sides to interact with officials, with discussions often pushing the bounds on the bilateral relationship, regional security developments, and issues of mutual interest beyond what might usually be discussed between officials only.

These venues are supported by additional channels of formal contact on defense and security affairs between officials from Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The annual senior official talks at the secretary-level, held first in 1994, focuses on the full suite of issues

[5] This is not to be confused with the minister. The secretary reports directly to the minister, who is an elected official.

across the bilateral agenda. Because of the nature of the participants, the Department of Defence (DOD) has limited input into this dialogue. To date, it has been held 18 times. Similarly, the dialogue on East Asia, also undertaken at the senior official level and held six times since the inaugural meeting in November 2011, provides an opportunity for senior officials in DFAT and MEA to discuss East Asia developments. The two also hold functional talks. The annual maritime dialogue, first held in November 2015 (and convened two other times since in October 2016 and November 2017), provides an opportunity to discuss various strands of their bilateral maritime engagement, from the strategic environment to ocean science collaboration. Like the senior official talks, because DFAT is the lead agency, DOD is not tasked, although it does participate. Similarly, the cyber policy talks, held for the first time in August 2015, provide an important venue for DFAT and MEA to hold strategic-level discussions on cyberspace issues, including cooperation. Finally, the senior-officials-level joint working group on counterterrorism that was established by the 2003 MOU on Cooperation in Combatting International Terrorism has met a total of ten times, with the most recent being June 2018. This venue continues to be an important vehicle for DFAT and MEA to discuss cooperation on CT security problems.

Unlike Australia's relationships with Japan, Indonesia, and the Philippines where dialogues accompany a broad array of exercises and operational cooperation, Australia and India conduct few exercises and engage in little operational cooperation. Aside from irregularly held PASSEX, the first time their navies held a structured operational engagement was the 2007 iteration of the Malabar exercise. Despite Canberra's vocal desire to do so again, New Delhi rejected Australia's inclusion in both the 2017 and 2018 iterations (Smith, 2017a). Only three bilateral exercises have been held since the 2007 exercise. This includes the AUSINDEX bilateral naval exercises in 2015 and 2017 and the inaugural AUSTRA HIND exercise in 2016 where their armies' special forces focused on counterterrorism and counterinsurgency. Interactions between other services are even less active, continuing to be modest or embryonic at best (Kenny, 2015, p. 11). Even in CT, there is little evidence to suggest they have conducted any engagement

beyond senior officer visits and low-level bilateral dialogue (Kenny, 2015, p. 16). This may be changing, however, as India participated in Australia's 2018 iteration of Pitch Black, a biennial warfare exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in northern Australia to practice offensive counter air and defensive counter air combat with countries from around the world.

Finally, while Australia does conduct foreign military sales with India, and exports materiel to India on a case-by-case basis, no examples beyond some limited sales of sonar equipment were found in the public record. It is known, however, that Australia is seeking to increase its defense industrial relationship with India. Because India is currently the world's largest defense importer, its investment in modernizing its military and developing a stronger defense industrial base presents an opportunity for Australian defense companies (McMahon, 2018a). It is for this reason that Australia has reached out to India to explore ways to share Australia's experiences and explore possible opportunities for cooperation. Canberra hopes that this will pay dividends in the future and already has a venue established to discuss defense transfers or co-development. A joint working group on defense research and materiel cooperation began meeting in 2015 to discuss these issues. A second meeting is planned for later in 2018. India's difficulty of protecting classified information, however, continues to make it difficult to jointly cooperate in defense endeavors (author interview).

The lack of exercises, operational cooperation, and defense industrial cooperation is indicative of the limits to the relationship. Despite the wide array of dialogues, there are few concrete results and the two engage in very little substantive contact (Brewster, 2015). This has led to the view in Australia that the defense relationship with India is "relatively underdeveloped" (Brewster, 2016b). Without a doubt, Australia-India defense ties have grown over the past decade. Similarly, their strategic interests have begun to converge, particularly since Narenda Modi came to power in India (author interview). And as a March 2019 report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute argues, Australia has interests in the Indian Ocean area that require it to take a more active role in the region in the years ahead, which will mean more coordina-

tion with India will be necessary (Brewster, 2019). But because of different strategic traditions (e.g., alignment versus nonalignment) and different perspectives on the role of defense relationships as part of foreign policy (e.g., important versus not important) (Brewster, 2015, pp. 7–8), defense cooperation remains limited. There are also questions about whether or not India really supports the U.S.-led order that Australia is working to maintain (author interview). Evidence of this is that much of their bilateral engagement has been one-sided, coming from Australia (Grare, 2014, p. 6; Brewster, 2015, p. 41; Dobell, 2016, pp. 6–11). Regardless of the reason, strategic ties remain far short of expectations (Medcalf, 2009, p. 1). This leads to the conclusion that while the Australia-India relationship will likely remain rich with potential, short of actual cooperation, India will remain a "long term project" for Australia (author interview).

Indonesia: A Mutually Beneficial but Sensitive Partnership

Southeast Asia remains Australia's primary security concern due to its proximity, and within that region, Indonesia matters the most to Australia (Varghese, 2015). The two countries share one of the world's longest maritime boundaries and thus maritime security interests that include counterterrorism, counterpiracy, law enforcement, border protection, and combating illegal fishing. As a result, Canberra has long made its relationship with Jakarta one of its top foreign policy priorities. This is reflected in Australia's defense white papers, always giving priority to discussions of relations with Indonesia. For example, the *2013 Defence White Paper* described the relationship with Indonesia as Australia's "most important regional strategic relationship" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2013, p. 11) and the *2016 Defence White Paper* characterized the relationship as "vital" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 59).

Indonesia is strategically important to Australia for three reasons. First, Indonesia can directly affect Australia's homeland security. While Indonesia itself does not pose a threat, the maritime approaches "through which any hostile forces would have to operate" do (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2009, p. 42). This was the lesson learned from World War II. Australian policymakers worry

about Indonesia becoming "a series of weakly-defended lily-pads that an aggressor from the Asian mainland might exploit to attack Australia" (Huxley, 2012, p. 3). It is therefore imperative that Indonesia has the capacity and capability to control its maritime domain so as to prevent hostile powers as well as nonstate challengers from using Indonesian territory or maritime space to threaten Australia's security. This includes preventing human trafficking and smuggling, piracy, illegal fishing, and asylum seekers (Supriyanto, 2014).

Second, Canberra is concerned about the threat of terrorism to Australians "at home and abroad" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 15). While few Australian analysts believe terrorists will launch an attack against Australia from Indonesia, there is a fear of attacks on Australians vacationing in Indonesia or foreign fighters returning from conflicts in the Middle East back to Indonesia who may destabilize Indonesia (author interview). Security engagement by Australia helps Indonesia manage its borders and enhances its internal stability. An Indonesia that can handle its internal security makes Australia more secure (author interview).

Finally, Indonesia is a big country that is Australia's closest neighbor. Its size alone forces Australia to prioritize Indonesia over other Southeast Asian nations (author interview). As Indonesia's relative military and economic power grows, Australia wants to ensure it remains a "democratic [and] militarily more outward-looking" (Schreer, 2013, p. 11) A hostile Indonesia could use its geographical position and size to threaten or harm Australia (Dibb and Brabin-Smith, 2007, p. 68). If Australia lets the bilateral relationship deteriorate, its entire strategic situation changes (author interview). Thus, more engagement helps ensure good neighborly relations and reduces the possibility of any future misunderstanding leading to friction or armed conflict.

These three Australia's strategic interests with Indonesia are evident, given its focus on defending itself and its northern approaches. But while both countries share interests in maritime security, maintaining regional stability and seeing regional disputes resolved peacefully in line with international law, the two differ in their willingness to explicitly name China as a security challenge to the region (Karp, 2017). Australia has been willing to publicly challenge Chinese activities.

The same is not true for Indonesia. Even though China is the only potential adversary to Indonesia, Jakarta wants to keep out of any possible conflict with Beijing (author interview). This makes Indonesia hesitant to publicly name China as a potential security challenger. Indonesia even backed away from reports of Indonesia and Australia potentially conducting joint patrols in the South China Sea, "probably because Indonesia was concerned about the message partnering with a U.S. ally would send to China" (Long, 2017). Although China angered Indonesia when it said they had overlapping claims to waters close to Indonesia's Natuna Islands, Indonesia traditionally has taken a neutral position on the South China Sea, acting instead as a buffer between China and fellow ASEAN members that find themselves at odds with China, such as the Philippines and Vietnam (Weir and Silviana, 2017). Importantly, like India, Indonesia has a strong tradition of nonalignment. But where India has security concerns regarding China that enable limited defense cooperation with Australia, any regional cooperation that appears to be geared against China or strongly supporting the United States in some sort of proto-alliance is difficult for Indonesia to pursue. This means that while defense planners in both capitals may take into account a Chinese threat to the regional order, they cannot use this as a basis for practical bilateral military cooperation (Huxley, 2012, p. 3).

In addition to this difference in how they view China, the shared interests and values common to Australia and Indonesia are overlaid on a relationship that has seen periods of substantial turbulence (author interview). Some of the reasons for this include different political histories, traditional strategic outlooks, religions, and cultures. The gulf that results "guarantees that relations between [Canberra and Jakarta] are likely to be difficult and fraught with the danger of misunderstanding" (Brown, Frost, and Sherlock, 1996, p. 25). For Australia, the problematic aspects of bilateral ties loom large, ensuring that Canberra is "always focus[ed] on keeping the relationship on the rails because there is so much potential to go off the rails" (author interview). Even though Australia enjoys closer security ties with several other Southeast Asian nations, Canberra always puts substantial effort into its ties with Indonesia to keep the relationship on track (author interview).

For example, while not the first time for an Australian prime minister, soon after Scott Morrison became premier, his first overseas trip was to Indonesia to emphasize the importance his government places on bilateral ties (Shoebridge, 2018a).

The complicated history of relations between the two sides demonstrates why robust security ties have been slow to develop. Moments of tension in the bilateral relationship include Australia's involvement in the Indonesian-Malaysian conflict called *Konfrontasi* (1963–1966), Indonesia's takeover of East Timor in 1975, the Australian media's exposure of corruption among Soeharto's children in 1986, allegations by Wikileaks in 2013 that Australia spied on Indonesia,[6] and the 2016–2017 discovery of teaching materials on Australian bases deemed offensive to Indonesians. Most recently, in October 2018, bilateral ties suffered when Australia's new Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced his intention to relocate Australia's embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to West Jerusalem, jeopardizing the final negotiations of the Indonesia-Australia CEPA that took almost a decade to negotiate. To defuse the issue, the Morrison government announced in December that while it recognized Jerusalem as the capital, the embassy would remain until a peace treaty is signed that determines the status of the city (Loomes, 2018; Davey, 2018). The most damaging event was Australia's support for the independence of East Timor in 1999. While Australia was angered at Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, Indonesia blamed Australia for the territory's secession and was further angered when it led the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) to stem militia violence. From Indonesia's perspective, Australia played a role in breaking apart Indonesia's territorial integrity. While these incidents damaged mutual trust, the East Timor crisis was so bad it resulted in Indonesia tearing up a nonbinding security agreement the two had signed in 1995 and the cancellation of their bilateral exercises (reviewed below).[7]

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[6] The author did not access any Wikileaks document for this research. The reference to Wikileaks came from an interview.

[7] For a good background of the short-lived Security Agreement, see Brown, Frost, and Sherlock, 1996.

Cognizant of these difficulties, Australian leaders have tried to build defense cooperation around common interests, such as their shared maritime border, combating terrorism, and promoting regional stability (author interview). Their oldest venue for discussion is the defense strategic dialogue. Begun in 2002, the dialogue is conducted between Australia's first assistant secretary of international policy in the DOD and director general defense strategy of the Indonesian MOD with the focus of their meeting on policy planning and strategic engagement between the DOD and MOD.[8] It also provides them an opportunity to assess where they are on key issues in their defense ties. To date, it has been held a total of 15 times, most recently in November 2017. Australia's extensive involvement in the relief efforts following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami also shone a positive light on cooperation between the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) and the Indonesian national armed forces, called Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI) (Blaxland, 2014, p. 113). The need to respond to terrorist bombings in Bali (2002) and Jakarta (2005) also drew the two sides together (Dean, Fruhling, and Taylor, 2014). Collectively, these helped pave the way for the Lombok Treaty on Security Cooperation, signed in 2006, which became the foundational document for Australia's defense cooperation with Indonesia.

The Lombok Treaty had two main objectives (Commonwealth of Australia and Republic of Indonesia, 2006). One was to provide a framework for bilateral security cooperation and exchanges in areas of mutual interest. The other was to establish a bilateral consultative mechanism to encourage intensive dialogue, exchanges, and implementation of cooperative activities. Toward this end, the treaty identified areas of cooperation and consultation to include defense, law enforcement, counterterrorism cooperation, intelligence sharing, and maritime and aviation security cooperation. Soon afterward, in 2010, they established an annual leaders' meeting to serve as the main forum for both leaders to discuss pertinent issues or, if agreeable, to also discuss any pending bilateral issues. It also has been used to discuss

[8] On occasion, representatives from other departments may participate and brief on specific activities that are of interest to either Australia's DOD or Indonesia's MOD.

challenges and developments in the region and commitments from both sides to address these challenges. To date, it has been held six times. To create a formal framework of practical defense engagement activities contained in the Lombok Treaty, they signed the defense cooperation arrangement (DCA) in September 2012. The DCA is a nonlegally binding arrangement that represents a mutual commitment to conduct a broad range of defense cooperation activities, such as CT, maritime issues, joint exercises, and intelligence cooperation. It also facilitates operational-level arrangements between the two defense organizations. Then, they reaffirmed their commitment to stronger bilateral ties in 2014 by signing a Joint Understanding on the Implementation of the Lombok Treaty that committed them not to use intelligence to harm the other, to promote intelligence cooperation, and to hold regular intelligence agency meetings (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014).

These, in turn, helped set up a series of dialogues and exchanges. In March 2012, they held an inaugural defense and foreign ministers' meeting, or 2 + 2 meeting. Meant to be a venue to exchange views on issues of common concern, it has been held five times, with the most recent being in March 2018. In September 2012, their first formal defense ministers' meeting was held, which is meant to be an annual venue to focus on the bilateral defense relationship and provide direction to stakeholders on priorities to progress. Key areas of discussion include areas for cooperation in their defense relationship, which includes maritime security, CT, HA/DR, peacekeeping, and intelligence. That too has been held four times. Importantly, a formal mechanism by which their military commands can share information was established, with an inaugural committee meeting between the chiefs of the two militaries held in April 2013 (Bateman, Bergin, and Channer, 2013, p. 26). The militaries also enjoy ongoing Navy, Army, and Air Force talks as well as a chief of the defense force–led high-level committee meeting that began in 2013. Professional training and military education remain a mainstay in their relationship, with staff college exchanges, mobile training teams, and English-language courses (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 125). Finally, the two established the Lombok Track 1.5

Dialogue in 2013 to further increase cooperation on the defense and security between them. Driven by a majority of nongovernment participants, the dialogue brings together emerging and experienced Australian and Indonesian policymakers, practitioners, and academics to discuss and share views on defense and security issues of common concern to better inform policymaking. To date, it has convened three times, with the most recent meeting in 2016.The two countries also enjoy multifaceted military exercises and operations, though Australian-Indonesian defense cooperation ceased between 1999 and 2005 due to bilateral tensions resulting from the INTERFET campaign in East Timor. Even after their resumption, annual defense exercises have occasionally been suspended due to capacity limitations and short-term disruptions in bilateral ties. Bilateral exercises are usually one service from each country and not constructed against a near-peer adversary. Part of this is TNI's discomfort with the idea of calling out a state-based military threat as well as the idea of a war-fighting scenario in concert with others (author interview). Nevertheless, the two do exercise frequently, and two areas are worth highlighting.

The first area is maritime security. Cassowary, begun in 1997, is an annual maritime security exercise involving minor fleet units. Focusing on maritime surveillance, security, and interdiction operations scenarios, its aim is to strengthen relationships and enhance mutual cooperation, interoperability, and understanding between the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and the Indonesian Navy in patrol boat operations. It has been held 12 times, with the most recent held in 2018. New Horizon, a biennial, high-end war-fighting exercise involving major fleet units focuses on the areas of antiair warfare, ASW, tactical maneuvering, replenishments at sea, and communications (Daly, 2016; Parameswaran, 2015e). It is the largest bilateral naval exercise between the two countries, aimed at strengthening relationships and enhancing mutual cooperation, interoperability, and understanding. While it is unclear how many iterations have been held, it began in 1972 but was canceled in 1985 only to resume in 1991 and then be canceled again due to INTERFET. It has been held as recently as 2015, though it is unclear if this is the most recent.

The second area is counterterrorism. There are numerous exercises involving various sections of each military. This includes a series of exercises under the name Crocodile and Magpie. The annual Dusk/Dawn Crocodile field-training exercise focuses on maritime CT between the Australian Army's 2nd Commando Regiment, a special operation forces (SOF) unit, and the Indonesian Navy's Denjaka, an elite SOF unit specializing in CT. The Dusk/Dawn Magpie field-training exercise focuses on aircraft hijacking and CT between Australia's 2nd Commando Regiment and the Indonesian Air Force's Den Bravo, an elite SOF unit specializing in CT. Both series of exercises appear to have begun in 2016, and it is unclear whether they have been held since. The two also conduct a series of exercises under the name Kookaburra and Komodo. Dawn Kookaburra/Komodo is a troop level SOF training that focuses on CT skill sets between the Australian Army's Special Air Service Regiment and the Indonesian Army's Kopassus. It began in 1993, was curtailed in 1999 following the INTERFET campaign, and was only reinstated in 2005. It appears that they most recently held this series of exercises in 2016. Griffin Kookaburra/Komodo is a section-level SOF training that focuses on explosive detection and disposal skill sets between the Australian Army's Special Operations Engineer Regiment and the CT and explosive ordinance disposal elements in the Indonesian Army's Kopassus. The two also conduct Pegasus Kookaburra/Komodo, a series of section-level free-fall parachute training between Australia's Parachute Training School and Indonesian SOF. Both of these exercises began only in the past few years, and it is unclear when the most recent iterations were held.

Indonesia also participates in Australia's Pitch Black. Although Pitch Black began in 1990, Indonesia first participated in 2012 and again in 2016. Similarly, Indonesia participates in the biennial exercise Kakadu that began in 1993 by the RAN and is supported by the RAAF. This is considered the RAN's premier maritime exercise meant to develop interoperability between nations in the maritime and air domains and provide training opportunities for maritime activities from humanitarian assistance and SAR operations to high-end maritime war-fighting scenarios (Royal Australian Navy, 2016; U.S. Navy, 2016). It is held every two or three years. Other exercises

include the bilateral C-130 airlift exercise Rajawali Ausindo and the maritime surveillance exercise Albatross Ausindo. The former, begun in 1999, was last held in 2016. The latter, begun in 1997, has been held 12 times, with the last occurring in 2012. It will occur for a thirteenth time in 2018.

The two sides have also conducted some real-world joint military operations. Ever since the 2002 Bali attacks, Australia has come to view terrorism as its primary threat and sees a secure relationship with Indonesia as key to controlling this problem (Smith, 2004). This gave rise to CT cooperation that includes partnerships in law enforcement, legal framework development, criminal justice, CT financing, countering violent extremism, transport and border security, and intelligence sharing (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-a). In December 2015, they deepened cooperation with the signing of a MOU on Combatting International Terrorism. Efforts like the annual joint operation AUSINDO CORPAT, a maritime coordinated patrol covering the waters between the two countries[9] and the opening of the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation to train officials from many countries on transnational crimes, including terrorism, stem from this 2015 agreement.

While the two countries have not engaged in any joint or co-production of defense equipment, Canberra has sold and gifted defense equipment to Jakarta. According to the SIPRI report, the United States is the number one destination for Australian defense exports with 51 percent, followed by Indonesia at 28 percent (Wezeman et al., 2018). The specifics of these exports are not available in the public record. Rather, there is evidence of occasional defense sales throughout the years. This has included items such as patrol boats, a squadron of F-86 Sabre aircraft, and mapping assistance and technology (author interview).[10] To contribute to Indonesia's capability to patrol for asylum boats and assist in maritime emergencies, Australia also gifted four refurbished C-130H (Dodd, 2012). It also sold an additional five more of these aircraft at

[9] Last held in April 2018, its eighth iteration.

[10] For discussion on the Sabre specifically, see Air Power Development Centre, 2011.

below-market value, and included a flight simulator and all remaining Australian C-130H spare parts (Bateman, Bergin, and Channer, 2013, p. 26). There have even been rumors of a potential partnership on mine-resistant armored vehicles, based on Australia's Bushmaster.

Indonesia is and will remain a priority for Australian security planners for years to come. Their agreements, dialogues, and exercises demonstrate a concerted effort to strengthen ties and cooperate on issues of mutual concern. Despite occasional disruptions in their bilateral ties, Canberra's engagement with Jakarta has been successful, and bilateral relations continue to improve. In August 2018, the two signed a Joint Declaration on a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018b). Reflecting their continued desire to work more closely together in a variety of fields, the Joint Declaration defines a long-term vision for their bilateral relationship and their lines of effort along five main pillars. Defense cooperation is described as a central component. Through this elevated relationship, the two countries commit themselves to be "strong partners in a changing world" and to advance their relationship in new ways and work together more closely to address issues of shared concern (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018b). In March 2019, the two sides followed this up by signing a CEPA.

While Indonesia is not the largest recipient of defense cooperation funds nor Australia's most important military training partner, no regional country is more important to Australia than Indonesia. Indonesia's significance to Australia's security is its strategic geography (Laksmana, 2018b). Yet defense engagement activities with Indonesia are likely to continue to lag behind Australia's defense cooperation with other ASEAN countries, particularly Malaysia and Singapore. These ties are "indivisible" and essential to Australian security (author interview). Through the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA), Australia has access to and training opportunities with both Malaysia and Singapore. This includes exercises Bersama Shield, Bersama Lima, Suman Protector and Suman Warrior.[11] Australia plays a leading role

[11] The first three are joint and combined multithreat exercises. The last one is a land force exercise.

in the integrated area defense system that coordinates FPDA activities, through its command by an Australian air vice-marshal. Operationally, Australia enjoys a permanent presence of approximately 200 army and air force personnel at Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth. Jakarta's continued adherence to a nonalignment mentality is likely to constrain how far Australia will be able to deepen its security ties with Indonesia (author interview). Nevertheless, because of its geography and proximity, a "strong and productive relationship" with Indonesia will remain critical to Australia's national security and thus a priority for Canberra for years to come (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 125).

Japan: A Special Strategic Partner

Japan is Australia's "unspoken priority partner" in the Asia-Pacific region (author interview). Canberra views the partnership as Australia's "closest and most mature in Asia" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-b). The Australian government reserves its highest praise for Japan. Former Prime Minister John Howard has said that Australia "has no better friend or more reliable partner within the Asia-Pacific region than Japan" (Reuters, 2007). He even expressed his willingness to sign a full-scale alliance treaty with Japan (White, 2012b, p. 3). Likewise, Tony Abbott once referred to Japan as Australia's "best friend in Asia" ("Tony Abbott Reaches Out to Australia's 'Best Friend in Asia,' Japan," 2013) and even called Tokyo Canberra's "strong ally," a term usually reserved for the United States (Dobell, 2013). This led then–Foreign Affairs Secretary Peter Varghese to explain that Japan is not a capital 'A' treaty ally like the United States but a small 'a' ally in the sense of a very close economic and strategic partner (Commonwealth of Australia, Official Committee Hansard, 2014).

The closeness Australia feels toward Japan stems from numerous commonalities between the two countries. Both are U.S. treaty allies; liberal democracies; and supporters of free trade, the rule of law, human rights, and good governance. Their positions also converge on a range of regional issues (author interview). Importantly, both are concerned about China's assertive behavior in the East and South China Seas (Cook and Wilkins, 2014; Graham, 2015c). While there may be a

difference between their perceptions of what China represents in terms of opportunities and risks, they share the view that China poses a challenge to the U.S. regional dominance that sustains the rule-based international order (Satake, 2016). Because neither sees it in their interest for the balance of power to shift toward China, they want to ensure the United States is the regional predominant power. This has led to a "striking convergence of [their] strategic goals" (author interview) and "more synchronicity" than ever before (author interview). Canberra sees Japan as the only other country as truly "seized" by regional challenges and concerned about the power shifts that equally concern Australia (author interview). Because of this, the effort for stronger defense ties is a "mutual push" (author interview).

Today's security ties between Australia and Japan are rooted in real-world military cooperation aimed at postwar reconstruction, peacekeeping, and HA/DR. Since the Cold War, their armed forces have cooperated in various ways in places like Cambodia, East Timor, Afghanistan (Operation: Enduring Freedom), Iraq (Operation: Iraqi Freedom), the response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2010 floods in Pakistan, and the 2013 Super Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Somewhat less well known is Australia's extensive support to Japan after that country's March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, codenamed Operation: Pacific Assist. In that effort, Australian support included a 72-person urban SAR team, C-17 aircraft for relief operations, and a team of DOD operations-response officers (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-b). Working together on these noncombat operations enabled Australia and Japan to quickly build a multifaceted defense relationship that eased the way toward closer formal defense ties. Additionally, since the very early days of their defense relationship, the defense ministers of the two countries (or the ministerial equivalent prior to Japan's establishment of the Ministry of Defense) have enjoyed numerous meetings with one another, despite not having any formalized defense ministers' dialogue.[12]

[12] According to one figure received by the author from Japan's Ministry of Defense, the ministers have met a total of 36 times since their first meeting in 1990. These meetings have taken place in Australia, Japan, and other venues throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

While these real-world experiences helped strengthen Australia's bilateral security ties with Japan, the relationship was given added momentum and impetus from the United States through its participation in the Trilateral Security Dialogue. First held in 2006, the Trilateral Security Dialogue has played an important role in bringing Australia and Japan together on a more regular basis to discuss security issues. This not only helped encourage the bilateral relationship to grow, it legitimized their efforts given their common ally's participation.

The first formal step of building the current defense relationship between Australia and Japan was a joint declaration in March 2007. Focusing on areas like peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, maritime security, CT, and border protection, the joint declaration laid down formal priorities for cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2007a). This was followed with a detailed action plan that contained specific target areas for expanded security ties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2007b). The following year, Canberra and Tokyo inked a Memorandum on Defense Cooperation that revised a basic 2003 Memorandum on Defence Exchange as their platform for defense exchanges and cooperation in the areas outlined in the joint declaration (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2008). The two sides agreed, among other items, to a series of high-level exchanges between defense authorities, including an annual defense ministerial meeting and meetings between the chiefs of each of their services and their joint staffs; working-level exchanges, including staff talks between their services and joint staffs; unit exchanges between their services; and education exchanges. Importantly, they agreed to cooperate in international peace cooperation activities, including sharing disaster relief assets and capabilities (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2008). In 2014, Prime Ministers Tony Abbott and Shinzo Abe elevated ties to that of a "Special Strategic Partnership" (Abbott and Abe, 2014). In addition to reinforcing shared strategic interests, the elevated status reflected an agreement to transfer defense equipment and technology (below) and a decision to begin negotiations on improving administrative, policy, and legal procedures to facilitate joint operations and exercises.

Based on the joint declaration, they established an annual 2 + 2 dialogue between their foreign and defense ministers.[13] The first meeting was held in 2007 where they focused on ways to enhance cooperation in the areas highlighted in the joint declaration and how to promote measures to cooperate in information exchange (Ministry of Defense of Japan, 2007). It has been held seven times since, providing an important venue to discuss regional and global threats, challenges, and cooperative opportunities. In subsequent years, they added other venues for annual dialogues that focus on broad strategic issues and defense cooperation. This includes the deputy secretary–level defense policy talks (established in 2011 and held four times, with the fourth held in January 2018). Their militaries also enjoy robust discussions through annual staff talks between the three services and service exchanges, aircraft visits, and port calls. These are supplemented with trilateral meetings with the United States, such as the trilateral defense ministers' meeting and the security and defense cooperation forum.

Emerging from these closer ties was a set of agreements on practical matters. In May 2010, Canberra and Tokyo signed an ACSA on defense logistics cooperation. Entering into force in January 2013, it provides a framework for reciprocal provision of supplies and services to each other's armed forces during exercises and training, UN PKOs, humanitarian relief operations, disaster relief operations, and transportation of nationals during overseas contingencies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2010a). It already helped facilitate operational cooperation in the Philippines during the collective response to Super Typhoon Haiyan. In January 2017 the two sides revised their ACSA agreement to enable the JSDF to supply ammunition to Australian forces, thereby further enhancing the partners' capacity for logistical support during exercises and operations. Similarly, in May 2012, they signed an ISA that established procedures to protect and facilitate the exchange of classified information (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2012).[14] This entered into force

[13] Australia enjoys 2 + 2 talks with other countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Germany, Indonesia, and South Korea, but it was Japan's first agreement outside of the U.S. alliance structure.

[14] Australia has an ISA with 12 other countries, including the United States, France, New Zealand, and the European Union.

in March 2013. Finally, in July 2014, to support Japan's bid to sell Australia its *Sōryū*-class submarine, they signed an agreement to allow the transfer of defense equipment and technology, which Tokyo requires to undertake collaboration in sales and research and development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2014a). Although Japan failed in its bid, the agreement was nevertheless important, as it laid a foundation for the two countries to participate in joint research, development, and production of equipment and technology.

Despite this, there continues to be only one example of exporting equipment between the two countries. In 2014, Thales Australia built and supplied four Bushmaster vehicles to the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force at a cost of around $2.8 million (Grevatt, 2018a). In May 2018, the JGSDF welcomed the delivery of a second batch of four Bushmasters (Kerr, 2018). To date, this marks Australia's biggest defense export to Japan. But given a pledge by the leaders of both countries to increase bilateral cooperation in military equipment, science, and technologies, future defense equipment cooperation remains a possibility (Grevatt, 2018a).

There have not been any exports from Japan, largely due to Japan's domestic ban on exporting weapons and related technology. In December 2011, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda relaxed the ban with an eye on enabling Japanese companies to participate in the international consortium producing the F-35. The decision came too late for Japanese companies to participate in the joint development of the jet, but it enabled Japanese firms to manufacture parts ("Japan Chooses Mitsubishi Electric, IHI, MHI for F-35 Parts," 2013). Current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe built off this success, sealing an agreement for the two countries to share maintenance and upgrade responsibilities for the F-35 in the Asia-Pacific (Roulo, 2014). Abe then further relaxed the export ban and pursued a deal with Tony Abbott whereby Japan would build 12 next-generation submarines to replace the six boats of Australia's Collins-class submarine fleet (Hornung, 2016). It was estimated to be a $40 billion deal, but by late 2016, with Abbott out of office, Japan's bid lost (as did Germany's) in the competitive evaluation process that ultimately resulted in France's victory.

Officially, France's DCNS Group won because of its "ability to best meet all of the Australian Government's requirements" (Naval

Group, 2016). That is not how it was viewed in Japan. According to an unnamed Japanese official, Tokyo felt "Mr. Abbott entered into an agreement with us and Mr. Turnbull stepped away from that agreement" (Wroe and Johnson, 2016). Not surprisingly, the loss was taken hard in Japan, where then–Defense Minister Gen Nakatani told reporters that the decision was "deeply regrettable" and that he would ask Canberra "to explain why they didn't pick our design" (Wroe and Johnson, 2016).

The failure to secure the deal meant a major setback for Abe's efforts to develop an indigenous arms export industry. Importantly, it temporarily shocked the Australia-Japan relationship, given that most in Japan assumed Japan's bid was a sure thing given Abbott and Abe's close personal relationship.

Yet, in some regard this was precisely why Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Kawasaki Heavy Industries lost the bid. Japan staked much of its bid on the personal relationship built between Abbott and Abe. Once Abbott fell from power, this left Japan without its main political advocate and merely one of three bidders in a now highly competitive evaluation process where the other two competitors had distinct advantages in terms of experience with exporting major weapons platforms (Gady, 2016c). Because Mitsubishi and Kawasaki were convinced that the deal was certain, they lagged in their bidding efforts, including skipping important lobbying events that were heavily represented by their Germany and French competitors (Kelly, Altmeyer, and Packham, 2016). Further, France promised to build the submarines in Adelaide, South Australia. This was important because sustaining a naval shipbuilding program in Adelaide was critical to the Turnbull government retaining seats in a state in Australia facing severe deindustrialization. Japan, on the other hand, promised to build its submarines in Japan (although this position softened near the end of the bidding process) and deliver them off-the-shelf to Australia, as it was reluctant to transfer its sensitive submarine technology abroad. Seen from this perspective, Japan failed to understand the role of Australian domestic politics in the submarine bidding when it failed to commit to providing skilled shipbuilding jobs in Australia (Kelly, Altmeyer, and Packham, 2016). A final factor was simply experience and capacity

of Japan's defense industries. It was well known that Mitsubishi and Kawasaki only had the capacity to meet Japan's domestic demand for these submarines. Add to this the lack of experience in overseas defense sales, there was "some uncertainty about Japanese ability to deliver" (Tran, 2017). This was made more difficult because neither Japanese company had any Australian military industrial partners, so it had no track record to draw on (Kelly, Altmeyer, and Packham, 2016).

While the decision shocked Japan, it did no lasting damage to the growing Australia-Japan relationship. Shortly after Canberra made its decision, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said, "Australia will continue to be a special strategic partner for our country" ("Australia Says French Company Wins Huge Submarine Contract," 2016). Former Prime Minister Abbott echoed this sentiment, saying, "I am confident that our strategic partnership will continue to grow through other means" (McDonald, 2016). Indeed, it has. As two notable Australian scholars note,

> both capitals have doubled down on shared normative commitments around democracy and human rights and the importance of liberal economic order in the face of "America First" mercantilism. And the countries' trade and investment relationship continues to power along, almost under the radar. (O'Neil and Walton, 2017)

These practical areas of cooperation have remained untouched and are supplemented by an increasing menu of high-end military exercises. Japan's sophisticated capabilities mean that Australian forces learn from the JSDF as much as they teach the JSDF their own best practices (author interview). At present, Australia and Japan hold one exclusively bilateral exercise: the annual Nichi Gou Trident maritime exercise. First held in 2009, it engages surface ships and focuses on ASW, ship handling, aviation operations, and surface gunnery. To date, it has been held nine times. The JMSDF and RAN also conduct a separate exercise, Pacific Bond, though this is a trilateral exercise with the U.S. Navy designed to advance naval coordination and the capacity to plan and execute tactical operations in a multidomain environment.

Less regular, and held on an opportunity basis, it began in 2012 and has only been held three times, with the last iteration in 2014.[15]

Other regularized exercises are held, albeit in formats with the United States and others. While the JSDF has never participated in Pitch Black, it does regularly participate in Kakadu. The JMSDF first participated in the exercise in 2008 and has done so four times since, in every iteration.[16] The biennial Talisman Sabre exercise between the United States and Australia began in 2005, but Japan has participated twice (2015, 2017) embedded with U.S. forces; the exercise focuses on joint forces engaged in high-end war fighting with a near-peer rival. Southern Jackaroo is an annual, combined trilateral exercise led by the Australian Army that includes the JGSDF, the U.S. Army, and, since 2015, the U.S. Marines. Considered the "jewel in the crown" of Australia's joint exercises, it focuses on combined fires and maneuver support operations (author interview). To date, it has been held five times since its inauguration in 2013. The Japan Air Self-Defense Force and RAAF exercise in the annual Cope North Guam, which focuses on developing multilateral interoperability and coalition procedures in areas like HA/DR, close air support, interdiction, electronic warfare, tactical airlift, aerial refueling, and airborne command and control (Australian Government, Department of Defence, n.d.). Although it was a bilateral U.S.-Japan exercise begun in 1978, it was moved to Guam in 1999 and became an annual trilateral exercise after Australia began participating in 2012.[17] Perhaps the least known is Hari'i Hamutuk, a multilateral exercise begun in 2013 (known in its inaugural year as Exercise Sapper) and designed to increase interoperability between the U.S. Navy Construction Battalion (the Seabees), the U.S. Marine Corps' combat engineers, the Royal Australian engineers, and engineers from the Timor-Leste Defense Force (F-FDTL) (Gomez, 2015). Although the 2017

[15] Despite having started in 2012, trilateral navy exercises have been taking place since 2007. They were not under the *Pacific Bond* framework.

[16] The JMSDF first joined as an observer in 2001 and 2003 and only began to send ships in 2008. In the 2010 iteration, it began sending aircraft along with its ships.

[17] The first Japan-U.S.-Australia air combat trilateral exercise was held in Red Flag, Alaska, in 2011.

iteration was the exercise's fifth, it was the third time for the JGSDF, which began to participate in 2015.

While bilateral defense ties have strong bipartisan support in government, there is a public debate over the necessity and implications of closer ties (author interview). Some Australian observers question the intentions behind Japan's proactive outreach. In this view, Abe is driven by a desire to build a coalition of states to resist China, something that Australia is not necessarily ready to join (King, 2014, pp. 98–99). Hugh White has strongly argued for attention to this, warning that Tokyo's motivation with Canberra "is all about lining us up to support them against China" (White, 2012b).[18] He goes so far as to argue that closer Australian ties with Japan may actually escalate Australia's strategic rivalry with China (White, 2012a).

Australian officials do not deny that there are times they have a "different strategic language" than Japan in terms of what they want and why they want it (author interviews). But this has not stopped Canberra from moving closer to Tokyo. This is because both Australia and Japan see the benefits of working together to serve their individual security interests as well as their shared interest in supporting the U.S.-centered regional order (author interview). In a speech given in Tokyo in 2016, former Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said that "as outward-looking, energetic, innovative democracies, and as friends and partners—[Japan and Australia] are well placed to address the challenges and seize the opportunities to build a more stable, prosperous region" (Bishop, 2016). With the *2016 Defence White Paper* stating that Australia "will continue to deepen and broaden our growing security cooperation with Japan," bilateral ties are expected to grow (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 61).

Philippines: A Strategically Important Partnership

Australia and the Philippines share a 70-year old history. Over 4,000 Australian troops fought for the liberation of the Philippines from Imperial Japan (Australian Embassy, The Philippines, n.d.). The two sides established formal relations in 1946 and have since enjoyed

[18] Also see White, 2014.

extensive diplomatic and economic ties. This stems from complementary areas in their economies and common perspectives on many regional issues. Defense ties have been slower to evolve but have included shared real-world operations such as their responses to the East Timor crisis in 1999 and the disaster wreaked by Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. Due to shared interests in regional security challenges such as maritime security and combating terrorism, the two have strengthened their defense ties. Today, Canberra sees Manila as "an important regional partner due to its strategic location . . . and similar approach to security issues," as well as commonalities such as democracy, adherence to the rule of law, and their shared status as allies of the United States (Australian Government, Department of Defense, 2016, p. 131).

Because both Canberra and Manila are reliant on the United States for their security, they are naturally also concerned about regional challenges to U.S. predominance (Deogracias and Johan, 2016). Like Indonesia, the Philippines' strategic location means that Australia is concerned about Manila's ability to counter threats that might target Australia's northern approaches. Former Defense Minister Marise Payne, in speaking about Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and foreign fighters in the Philippines, said that terrorism "is a direct threat to Australia and our interests" (Marcelo, 2017). The concern is twofold: to protect Australia from direct terrorist attacks from terrorists in the Philippines and to prevent any spillover from the Philippines into Indonesia and Malaysia (Thayer, 2017c). Toward this end, the two signed a bilateral MOU on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism in March 2003, becoming one of the initial areas of cooperation. Since then, defense engagements have prioritized CT alongside maritime security and assistance to the Philippine Defense Modernization Program.

Defense cooperation is facilitated by a series of bilateral agreements. The oldest of these is an MOU on Cooperative Defense Activities signed on August 22, 1995. This MOU established the foundation for ties between their defense organizations, including training, exercises, exchanges and visits, and information exchange. It did not provide for the status of forces in a host country and was not legally bind-

ing. Given increasing numbers of personnel training in both countries, however, the Philippines proposed a status of forces agreement that would permit Australian forces to come ashore in the Philippines. In 2007, they signed a reciprocal status of visiting forces agreement (SOVFA) to "provide a more comprehensive legal framework" to support troops engaged in defense cooperation activities in both countries (Commonwealth of Australia and Republic of the Philippines, 2017). It covers practical issues like "immigration and customs; arrangements for visiting forces to wear uniforms while in the other country; and criminal and civil jurisdiction over visiting forces while in the other country" (Australian Embassy, The Philippines, 2012). After a lengthy deliberative process in the Philippines, it finally entered into force in September 2012. It is important because it opens the possibility of deeper relationships, more training opportunities, and more advanced exercises (Bateman, Bergin, and Channer, 2013).

A turning point in their relationship came in November 2015 with the signing of a Joint Declaration on Australia-The Philippines Comprehensive Partnership (Republic of the Philippines and Commonwealth of Australia, 2015). Not only did this acknowledge "the increasing breadth and depth" of their relations; it also set forth "the tone, pace, and direction" of future ties, which it raised to a comprehensive partnership (Cruz, 2015). While this served to consolidate the strong ties the two had already developed, it was not the stronger strategic partnership agreement that the Philippines sought because Australia wanted to avoid potentially escalating tensions in the region if it gave the appearance of being directed at China (Deogracias and Johan, 2016). Until a detailed plan of action is passed, however, it is unclear what functional improvements will result. With explicit reference to high-level defense consultations, maritime security and CT cooperation, participation in joint exercises, and support for the Philippines' defense modernization, it is likely they will continue along their current trajectory, particularly if they negotiate a mutual logistics support agreement, as is expected.

Regular bilateral meetings remain the foundation of strong ties. The most important is the annual joint defense cooperation committee, or JDCC. The JDCC, a product of the 1995 MOU, held its inau-

gural meeting in 1996. The two-star-level defense policy talks is an annual meeting to discuss ways to strengthen ties and enhance areas for cooperation. In lieu of a defense ministers' meeting, the JDCC governs the majority of the defense engagements between Australia and the Philippines (author interview). As of April 2018, it has met 16 times. A second meeting, the defense cooperation working group (DCWG), was also established in 1995. It is the working-level venue that receives policy direction from the JDCC but is responsible for initiating, coordinating, and monitoring joint cooperative activities in the defense sphere. It has met 15 times, with a sixteenth meeting scheduled for late 2018. A third meeting is the annual strategic dialogue. Composed of both DOD and DFAT personnel, this DFAT-led activity held at the two-star equivalent level focuses on regular senior strategic discussions across a range of bilateral and regional defense and security issues, with an aim on promoting whole-of-government cooperation. It concluded its fourth meeting in July 2017. A final meeting is the ministerial-level foreign and trade ministers' meeting, the Philippines-Australia Ministerial Meeting, which discusses activities to strengthen ties in broader foreign policy and trade realms. First held in August 2005, the meeting formalized "regular high level contact between the two governments and provid[ed] a forum for practical cooperation" (Australian Government, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Trade, 2005). Over the years, it has provided a venue to talk about issues that include security and defense cooperation, law enforcement, CT, transnational crime, border security, and the situation in the southern Philippines as well as trade, commerce, and development assistance. It has been held four times to date, with its last meeting in 2014.

Australia also provides extensive training, capacity assistance, and conducts exercises with the Philippines Armed Forces (PAF). The Defence Cooperation Program enables military personnel and civilians to undergo training in both countries, but PAF training in Australia predominates. In fact, after the United States, Australia is the second-largest provider of training to the Philippine military (Forrest Green, 2017). This includes Australian mobile training teams visiting Philippine bases, Philippine service personnel and civilians attending courses in Australia, and the ADF sponsoring PAF and Philippine Coast Guard

personnel to take master's-level degree studies in Australia. The large number of these activities was the driving factor behind the SOVFA to provide a more comprehensive legal framework for support. The focus of this training remains CT, maritime security, and assistance to the Philippines Defence Reform Program.

The two countries do not engage in any joint or co-production of defense equipment. Part of this is driven by Australia's concerns over human rights abuses by Manila (author interview). Instead of defense exports or production, Canberra engages in capacity assistance to Manila to help it conduct both CT and disaster relief operations. In the past, Australian aid to the Philippines included surveillance equipment, a modern radar system, long-range patrol aircraft, and faster ships to help with counterterrorism and coastal watch activities. In July 2015, Canberra donated two decommissioned landing craft heavy ships, and Manila purchased three more at a "friendship price" of 270 million pesos (US$5.3 million) (Parameswaran, 2016b). The purpose of these was to help the PAF improve its capacity in HA/DR operations (Eduarte, 2015). More recently, Australia helped Manila battle Islamic State-linked militants in Marawi in the country's south by providing two AP-3C Orion aircraft for surveillance support to PAF over Mindanao (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2017). This was supported by dispatching ADF personnel to provide urban warfare and CT training as well as other weaponry and technical support to the PAF, such as intelligence-gathering (Glang, 2017). Australia's objective was to train Philippine soldiers to enhance their capacity to address similar situations in the future. Similar to Canberra's CT efforts elsewhere, Australia has a strong interest in stopping the Islamic State from gaining a secure foothold in the region. Therefore, it places a priority on providing operational and policy support to regional partners battling these terrorist elements (Cox, 2018).

The two sides also conduct a number of exercises that give the PAF access to Australia's best practices on a wide range of activities and expose it to Australia's latest defense equipment (Forrest Green, 2017). The oldest of these is Lumbas. Begun in 1998 and held 17 times since, this biennial navy exercise includes a field-training exercise in even years and, since 2005, a tabletop exercise in odd years. It focuses

on maritime support operations and interdiction operations. The two also hold a pair of annual Army special forces exercises focused on CT. Begun in the late 1990s as Day Caracha and held intermittently until 2013, the two sides expanded and rechristened this exercise in 2013 as Dawn/Dusk Caracha, which were first held in their current form in 2015. Today, this series of exercises is an annual event held in Australia (for Dusk) and the Philippines (for Dawn) between Australia's Special Air Service Regiment of the Australian Army's Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the Philippine's Army Light Reaction Regiment SOCOM. The objective of the exercises is to enhance the interoperability of their special forces in CT operations, aiming to improve the skills of these elite army units through close-quarter battle training, sniper skills development training, and unit collective training (Romero, 2015c).

The Philippines also participates in Kakadu and Pitch Black, mentioned above. For Kakadu, the first time the Philippines participated was in 1999, when a patrol boat and landing ship tank participated in the exercise. It has sent either personnel or a ship, or a combination of both, to every iteration since, totaling ten occasions. While the Philippines Air Force has contributed two members to the Pitch Black International Observers Group in 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016, it has not participated with assets. Finally, since it joined in 2014, Australia has participated three times in the annual U.S.-Philippines Balikatan exercise, sending personnel, including special commando forces, to participate in CT exercises, amphibious raids, and ship boarding. Unlike the other exercises, the ADF learns from the exercise, particularly how to operate with U.S. and Philippines forces in a Southeast Asian environment (author interview).

Australia's defense engagement with the Philippines is clearly important, but it differs from that of, for example, Japan, another U.S. ally. This is primarily because of the substantial asymmetry in capabilities between the ADF and the PAF. Also a factor is the Philippines' ongoing challenges of governance and weak institutions, which give rise to concerns over corruption (Bateman, Bergin, and Channer, 2013, p. 30). Still, Canberra enjoys a fairly robust set of defense ties with Manila underpinned by a common interest in a strong U.S. regional

presence. This is unlikely to change soon, guaranteeing Canberra's continuing interest in strengthening bilateral ties. These ties will likely remain focused on CT and other military operations other than war, as Australia's strategic interest in the Philippines derives largely from concerns over regional stability and maritime trade transiting from Australia's northern approaches. Cooperating so that Manila has an effective security sector and stable government helps Canberra's security.

And while Australia and the Philippines share an interest in the continued security and stability of the region, with China looming the largest in their security concerns, the election of Rodrigo Duterte in 2016 has placed new stresses on the relationship. Not only was Duterte angered by Canberra's criticism of human rights abuses in his antidrug campaign that has left thousands dead in extrajudicial killings, but while he was still a presidential candidate, he told Australian's newly arrived ambassador to Manila to "shut up" after she criticized his "joke" about raping a murdered Australian missionary (Murdoch, 2016). This continues into 2018, with Duterte accusing an Australian nun of political activity that breached her visa "under the cloak of being a Catholic priest" and ordered her deportation ("Philippines Duterte Says He Ordered Probe into Australian Nun," 2018). And despite both countries sharing similar concerns over China, Australia is now concerned about a shift in the Philippines away from the United States toward China (Schreer, 2017). A Philippines that will not reassert its rightful claim on the South China Sea or support ASEAN's role on the issue does not help Australia's position on regional freedom of navigation (Aeinla and MacNeil, 2017). For now, this means that the gains made through the years on regional security issues are now jeopardized as the relationship will remain hampered by the uncertainty of the direction of the country under Duterte. As long as he is president, there will be limits on how much Australia can do with the Philippines and political hesitancy on getting closer (author interview).

Republic of Korea: Natural Partners, but Largely a One-Way Effort

Like Japan and the Philippines, Australia's ties with the ROK are built on shared interests and commonalities. The two countries are U.S. treaty allies that support its strategic presence in the region

(Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013b). They are also liberal democracies, support free trade and the rule of law, and share a common interest in promoting good governance. Like Australia's history with the Philippines, the two countries have a shared military history with approximately 17,000 Australian troops having served under UNC during the Korean War (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-d).

Yet, bilateral defense engagement remains underdeveloped. Unlike the strong language Australian leaders use to describe Canberra's relationship with Tokyo, Seoul has been described merely as a "natural partner" (Bishop, 2013). The reason for this is because of different strategic realities. Whereas Australia has looked to support U.S. regional and global operations, South Korea's security policy "has maintained a near-myopic focus on the Korean Peninsula" (Ungerer and Smith, 2010, p. 3). This has led to the ROK not having "room to develop relations" with Australia (author interview). As a result, the ROK has shied away "from a more active middle power role despite having adequate resources at their disposal" (Ungerer and Smith, 2010, p. 4). South Korea is simply "more standoffish" when it comes to actively reaching out because Australia "doesn't figure much in their strategy or calculus" (author interview).

The opposite is not true. North Korea is a concern for Australia. Like the ROK, Australia supports a nuclear-free peninsula and sees continued commitment by the United States as critical to regional stability (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-d) Importantly, "if conflict breaks out again on the Korean peninsula, Australia—a member of the UNC and a party to the 1953 Armistice Agreement—could be called upon to assist the ROK militarily" (Schreer, 2014). This is relevant since an ADF officer fills the position of Commander of the UNC Rear in Japan, which facilitates the movement of UNC sending states' forces into South Korea should hostilities break out (Osakabe, 2016). Importantly, from Canberra's perspective, they have mutual interests in "numerous non-traditional and human security challenges," such as maritime insecurity and natural disasters (Lee Jaehyon and Joo Haeri, 2013). As a consequence, Canberra seeks to get Seoul to focus on things not related to the pen-

insula in the hope that one day it will have the strategic bandwidth to engage other security issues of greater immediate relevance to Australia (author interview).

Despite the asymmetry of interest between the two sides on contributing to regional stability, they have gotten closer in the security realm. The origin for today's relationship is the March 2009 nonbinding Joint Statement on Enhanced Global and Security Cooperation (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2009a). The statement, and the action plan that followed it, attempted to provide a framework for expanding defense cooperation between two leaders, Kevin Rudd and Lee Myung-Bak, who saw their countries as muscular middle powers that could play a larger regional role (author interview). While much of the action plan merely reinforced existing forms of exercises and dialogues, it did promise a number of items. This included cooperation on combating transnational crime; cooperation on CT issues; pursuing global disarmament and nonproliferation of WMDs; joint exercises, training and exchange programs; peacekeeping; and conclusion of an agreement on protecting classified military information. Significantly, it promised greater consultation through regular meetings, including at the ministerial level, to discuss matters of common strategic interest in the region and beyond. This led to the establishment of a biennial 2 + 2 dialogue in 2013 between their ministers for defense and foreign affairs (examined below).

The joint statement was followed half a decade later by two documents that further advanced the two sides' defense relationship: the Vision Statement on a Secure, Peaceful and Prosperous Future in April 2014 and the Blueprint for Defense and Security Cooperation in September 2015. The Vision Statement focused largely on the Korean Peninsula but also on the importance of the regional security architecture, trade and investment, nonproliferation of WMDs, bilateral and joint military exercises, and strengthening practical defense cooperation in areas such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014a). The Blueprint sought to implement the Vision Statement with areas for practical cooperation that included a continuation of senior-level dialogues and consultation; increased joint exercises, education

and training, and staff exchanges; working together on peacekeeping operations; updating prior agreements; and increased cooperation in defense science and technology activities, including the defense industry (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2015). Although military cooperation is given reference, the bulk of bilateral engagement contained in these documents focus on nontraditional security threats and multilateral security cooperation.

While the number of dialogues between the two countries have increased over the years, they remain fewer in frequency and in number than Australia's dialogues with other countries detailed here. In December 2011, the two sides held their first defense minister dialogue, meant to be an annual formal discussion between the heads of their defense establishments. In the years since, it has only been held two other times, once in October 2014 and most recently in September 2015. Despite the infrequency, the defense ministers meet often on the sidelines of other events, like the Shangri-La Dialogue, as well as in their 2 + 2 dialogues with their foreign minister counterparts. In addition to regular talks between their services and relationships between military staff colleges, they hold a strategic dialogue, which are political-military talks held roughly every year to 18 months between senior foreign ministry and defense officials; defense policy talks, which are annual talks between civilians in their defense establishments; and defense industry talks, held roughly every year to 18 months, to discuss possible or real industrial cooperation. Importantly, in 2015 they helped establish the MIKTA grouping that brings together Mexico, Indonesia, (South) Korea, Turkey, and Australia. As partners, Australia and South Korea, along with the others, see themselves as playing pivotal strategic roles in their respective regions and, collectively, a constructive role internationally. Since its establishment, their foreign ministers have met 12 times, with the most recent meeting held in May 2018 (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.-c).

Their most significant security contact venue is the biennial 2 + 2 dialogue the two sides hold between their ministers for foreign affairs and defense. Their inaugural 2 + 2 was held in July 2013 and focused on "how to better coordinate and cooperate on foreign and defense

policies" (Lee Jaehyon and Joo Haeri, 2013). Their second meeting in 2015 focused on Korean Peninsular affairs with an agreement to extend cooperation in several nontraditional security areas, such as peacekeeping, counterpiracy, and the search for Malaysian Airlines Flight 370 (MH370) (Commonwealth of Australia and Republic of Korea, 2015). A third iteration was held in October 2017. Instead of hard security issues, the 2 + 2 venue focuses "on broader, longer-term strategic issues and visions the two share" that includes the regional strategic, nontraditional security cooperation and assistance for developing countries (Lee Jaehyon, 2015). According to one leading Australian foreign policy analyst, Canberra's ambition is to draw out "Seoul's gaze further beyond the DMZ" (Graham, 2015a). This is apparent in the sections in joint statements dedicated to bilateral cooperation on Pacific Island countries and pledges to work together on space and cybersecurity, law enforcement, border security, crisis management, maritime safety, counter- and nonproliferation, health crises, and regional institutions.

To date, there have been few tangible results stemming from these meetings. In May 2009, an Agreement on the Protection of Classified Military Information (CMI) was signed that established a legally binding framework for CMI transfer between defense organizations and related industry contractors, replacing a nonbinding arrangement in place since 2008. While it did not create any obligation to transmit information nor an entitlement to request it, the protections it offered for any voluntary information transfers was like those Australia has with other partners, such as NATO or the United States. In 2010, they also concluded an MOU on Mutual Logistics Cooperation that allows their armed forces to help each other during exercises and provide accommodation and mess halls to one another. As one interviewee commented, the practical utility of this agreement in a real-world contingency is extremely limited (author interview). Finally, in December 2011, the two signed an MOU in the Field of Defence Cooperation that is meant to promote friendly military ties between the ROK and Australia by defining the scope of cooperation in defense and setting out the principles by which they will undertake that cooperation.

While the two sides do conduct exercises, with one exception, these are all multilateral and focus on the ROK's security priorities,

which stems from the fact that Australia is a UNC sending state and participates in exercises focusing on ROK's defense. These have included the annual Ulchi Freedom Guardian command-and-control exercise that involves tens of thousands of American and ROK troops from all services (with Australian participation every year since 2010) (Rowland, 2015); the annual U.S.-ROK mine countermeasures exercise Clear Horizon begun in 2016 and focused on increasing the capabilities and coordination among UNC forces and the United States and ROK (again in 2017); and the annual computer-simulated command post exercise Key Resolve that focuses U.S.-ROK-UNC sending states' operation plans to support South Korea's defense in a Korean Peninsula contingency (every year since 2010). Australia also sends forces to participate in trilateral exercises with the United States and ROK on or around the Peninsula. These include the biennial Ssang Yong amphibious field exercise that began in 2012 (with additional instances in 2014 and 2016) and the annual Able Response biological and chemical warfare exercise that began in 2011 (which Australian forces observed in 2013 and participated in actively in 2014). Australia is also an observer to the U.S.-ROK annual Max Thunder air combat exercise that began in 2009. To date, Australia has participated once as an observer in 2009, and again as a full member in the May 2018 iteration. Australian forces have also cooperated with South Korea under the auspices of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) since Seoul joined in 2009. While ad hoc, Australian forces joined the PSI's maritime interdiction exercise called Eastern Endeavor, hosted by the ROK in both 2010 and 2012. They have also participated trilaterally with the U.S. Navy on maritime interdiction exercises. Their only exclusively bilateral exercise is held off the coast of South Korea, the biennial Haedoli Wallaby ASW exercise that aims to strengthen naval interoperability, both between ships and naval aircraft. Begun in 2012, it has been held twice since that time (2015 and 2017).

South Korea, for its part, has only joined two exercises in Australia, and neither of them were bilateral in nature nor were they continued on a regular basis. In 2004, ROK sent air force observers to the Pitch Black air combat exercise but has not participated again since. And in 2014 and 2016 it sent naval observers to the Kakadu maritime

exercise but has not returned to participate since 2016. Despite Australia's continued invitations to exercise more in Australia, Australian interviewees reported that there exists a widespread understanding in Australia that the ROK does not accept out of a fear that any forces it sent might be absent from the peninsula should a contingency erupt (author interviews). As a consequence, Australian critics point out that "despite much rhetoric . . . the ROK military has failed to reciprocate [Australia's] level of participation in military exercises in South Korea with a similar level of participation . . . in Australia" (Schreer, 2014). Nevertheless, the exercises contribute to the militaries of the two sides getting more comfortable working together and help Australia get a better sense of the operational environment on the peninsula (author interview).

Apart from their exercise schedule, Canberra and Seoul have cooperated in a few real-world operations. For example, Australia contributed to the investigation of the 2010 sinking of the ROK naval corvette *Cheonan* and to the ROK's force preparation for redeployment to Afghanistan in May 2010 (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013b). They also cooperated in the search for MH370. Finally, in addition to more than 3,000 ROK peacekeepers having served under Australian command in Timor-Leste, their navies have undertaken a limited number of joint maritime security operations, such as antipiracy patrols off the coast of Somalia (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013b). Given the RAN's long history of exercising and operating together with the U.S. Navy on counterpiracy and maritime interdiction operations (MIO) and the RAN's history of exercising MIOs with ROK, attention is now on whether Australia will leverage its experience to conduct MIOs against North Korea. This is particularly important since UN Security Council Resolution 2375 of 2017 included an authorization for MIOs against North Korea. The two sides have also achieved a limited degree of cooperation in defense industrial research and trade. In August 2001, the two signed an MOU on Defence Industry Cooperation, leading to regular defense industry meetings "to identify opportunities to promote defence industry cooperation" (Parliament of Australia, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence,

and Trade, 2006). In 2011, they signed an MOU in Defence Science, Technology, and Research to support cooperative defense research. Currently, the two governments are renegotiating this MOU. The results of these MOUs have been mixed. On the positive side, the Australian and Korean defense establishments and defense industrial sectors have cooperated on some small projects, such as upgrading Seoul's airborne early warning and control aircraft, Australia's purchase from Korea of a $50 million commercial oil tanker to replace the HMAS *Westralia*, and an agreement to purchase South Korean–manufactured 155-mm high-explosive artillery ammunition (Parliament of Australia, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Trade, 2006). On the negative side, the Gillard government abruptly canceled a $225 million order for 18 modified self-propelled howitzers in 2012 for which, two years earlier, the Australian government had informed Samsung and its partner Raytheon that they were the preferred bidders (Crowe, 2014). This rough patch was overcome in 2014 when Abbott moved to tighten defense ties by laying out plans to conduct more joint exercises and share more military technology (Crowe, 2014).

Australia-ROK defense ties are gradually growing but remain below their potential and heavily focused on ROK security priorities. As U.S. allies, bilateral ties will continue because of a shared interest in having the United States committed to underwriting regional stability. Moving Australia's defense cooperation ties with South Korea to a level on par with those with Japan seems unlikely, however (Schreer, 2014). This is because South Korea's ability to engage in broader issues is likely to remain limited as long as South Korea is preoccupied with the threat posed by North Korea (author interviews). Larger regional questions "are always second" to the existential peninsula question for Korea (author interview). This means that "the development of a truly strategic [South Korean] foreign policy [that Australian could plug into on a grander scale] is still a work in progress" (Ungerer and Smith, 2010).

Vietnam: A Growing Partnership

Australia and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam first established formal diplomatic relations in 1973. It was not until 1998 that they began

to take steps toward defense ties. Based on a common interest in a peaceful, prosperous, and stable region and a commitment to using regional and international institutions, they established a bilateral regional security dialogue in 1998 involving both civilian and defense officials, which is to date their longest ongoing dialogue at the senior officials level. In 2001, they inaugurated annual defense cooperation talks held at the senior officials' level that largely centers around the Defence Cooperation Program by which Australia provides professional military education and training to officers from the Vietnam People's Army. While Vietnam has emerged as a strategic player in Southeast Asia and developed closer ties with Australia, bilateral ties have not to date enjoyed any of the "intimacy" reflected in Canberra's defense ties to other countries in this study (author interview). Until recently, this has largely been due to fundamental differences in their political system and issues of human rights, which have complicated progress toward closer cooperation (author interview; Le Thu Huong, 2018; Clark, 2015). But things are changing. The defense cooperation that does exist represents a start. As one interviewee argued, the two sides "[have] to walk before [they] can run" (author interview).

A decade after the regional security dialogue was established, Vietnam indicated its interest in raising ties to the level of a "Strategic Partnership," a proposal that was rejected by then–Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. This was because Australia perceived such a partnership as merely symbolic and feared potential confusion with other more important alliance relationships while potentially aggravating relations with China (author interview; Luc Anh Tuan, 2018). While Vietnam was disappointed, it "begrudgingly accepted Australia's proposal that bilateral relations be raised to a comprehensive partnership" (Thayer, 2017a). This Comprehensive Partnership, signed in 2009 (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 200b), provided a general framework for strengthening and deepening cooperation across key areas that included defense and security ties.[19] Areas

[19] Other key areas included political ties and public policy exchanges, economic growth and trade development, development assistance and technical cooperation, people-to-people links, and the global and regional agenda.

identified included the continuation of personnel exchanges and human resources training, ship visits and the annual dialogue between officials from the foreign and defense ministries; a common interest in maritime and aviation security and nonproliferation of WMDs; and a mutual concern in fighting nontraditional security challenges like transnational crime, terrorism, and trafficking people, drugs, and money.

The following year, they agreed on a three-year plan of action to realize the areas of cooperation identified in the Comprehensive Partnership. This effort was strengthened by the signing of a MOU on Defense Cooperation in 2010. The MOU is credited with extending defense engagement from reciprocal educational exchanges to a limited number of practical training activities between the navies and special forces of the two countries, including Australia's provision of English-language instruction and specialist training for Vietnamese personnel about to deploy to the South Sudan on UNPKOs (Thayer, 2017a). Another MOU on Defence Cooperation was signed in August 2012 that provided a framework for more enhanced cooperation in training, exercises, HA/DR, and dialogues. Importantly, it established an annual defense ministers' meeting, with the first held in March 2013. To date, it has convened one other time in August 2017.

Importantly, Canberra and Hanoi have also upgraded their regional security dialogue to an annual joint foreign affairs/defense strategic dialogue. At the time of its inauguration in 2012, it was hoped that the strategic dialogue would provide a "useful mechanism . . . to boost mutual understanding and trust, and to deepen cooperation for common strategic interests, regional peace and stability" (Le Hong Hiep, 2012). In the years since, it has indeed gone beyond this. Although the representatives, held at the deputy secretary/deputy minister level, have only met five times, their discussions now include issues ranging from politics, economics, trade, defense, security, agriculture, education and training, tourism and people-to-people diplomacy, and regional peace and security, to include maritime and aviation freedom and the importance of international law ("Vietnam, Australia Hold Foreign Affairs, Defence Strategic Dialogue," 2017). They also talk about coordinating their efforts at regional organizations and forums

and have consented "to share information and step up cooperation in the fight against cross-border crime and terrorism" ("Vietnam, Australia Hold Deputy Ministerial-Level Strategic Dialogue," 2016). The first meeting was held in 2012 and, to date, five meetings have been held, with their most recent in September 2017 (Australian Embassy, Vietnam, 2017).[20] From Australia's perspective, the interest in greater security cooperation is driven by Vietnam's strategic location in the South China Sea and the fact that Vietnam remains an active player in regional forums (author interview).

With this growth in defense relations, in 2014 "Vietnam once again pressed Australia unsuccessfully to raise bilateral relations to a strategic partnership level" (Thayer, 2017a). Canberra was again reluctant. Instead, the two adopted a Declaration on Enhancing the Comprehensive Partnership in 2015 that signaled a growing convergence of interests (Australian Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015a). The aim was to expand bilateral ties beyond their 2009 and 2010 agreements in a way "that reflects the current dynamics of [the] region and a more mature bilateral relationship" (Australian Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015a). Similar to the 2009 comprehensive partnership, the 2015 declaration provides a framework for enhancing ties across many key areas, of which defense and security ties are only one. With relevance to defense ties, they pledged to continue high-level engagement through the annual defense ministers' meeting, strategic dialogue, defense cooperation talks, and the Australia-Vietnam Defense Track 1.5 Dialogue as well as continuing "personnel exchanges, officer training, and ship visits" (Australian Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015a). The two sides also agreed to work together in nontraditional security areas like "aviation and maritime security, peacekeeping, counter-terrorism, special forces and war legacy issues" as well as "transnational crime in the region, including human trafficking, narcotics trafficking, money laundering and cybercrime" and "food insecurity, natural resource management, and the risk of disease, pandemics and natural disas-

[20] Inaugural meeting: February 2012; second meeting: November 2013; third meeting: November 2013; fourth meeting: November 2016; fifth meeting: September 2017.

ters" (Australian Government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015a). The following year, they signed an action plan that outlined the practical steps to implement the 2015 declaration (Australian Embassy, Vietnam, 2016). In November 2017, the two inaugurated their first defense policy dialogue held at the deputy defense minister (Vietnam)/assistant secretary of defense (Australia) level (Parameswaran, 2017d).

Despite these promising hints of deeper security ties to come, to date the core of the defense cooperation relationship largely remains the education and training program under Australia's Defence Cooperation Program, most notably the English-language program managed by the ADF at the Vietnam People's Army's facilities. The priorities for these programs are in the areas of peacekeeping, special forces, maritime security and English-language training/officer education ("Vietnam Defence Relationship Factsheet," 2017). Annually, about 200 Vietnamese officers enjoy these education and training opportunities ("Vietnam Defence Relationship Factsheet," 2017). Exercising exists, but it is limited to one bilateral training exercise called Dawn/Dusk Buffalo, depending on the country in which it is held. The annual exercise began in 2014 as a special forces CT training exercise between their armies.[21] It has been conducted annually since.

After years of Vietnam calling for a strategic partnership, in 2018 Australia finally agreed, reflecting the years of positive developments between them and the transformation of geopolitical conditions in the Indo-Pacific region (Luc Anh Tuan, 2018). With its *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* stressing Australia's commitment to devote more energy and attention to Southeast Asia, Canberra signed a strategic partnership with Hanoi in March 2018. Agreeing to work together to realize a vision of a secure, open, and prosperous region based on international rules, the two agreed to deepen ties through cooperation in five broad domains: political; economic and development; defense, law and justice, intelligence, and security; education, science and technology, labor, social affairs and cultural exchanges; and regional and international cooperation (Australian Government, Department of Foreign

[21] The first small-scale tactical exercise between the armies was held in 2012.

Affairs and Trade, 2018a). One tangible proof of improved ties came in October 2018 when the RAAF used aircraft and personnel—on two separate occasions—to transport a Vietnamese medical team (and their equipment and supplies) to South Sudan as part of that country's peacekeeping mission. For Australia, the operation allowed it to further develop defense relations with Vietnam (Nicholson, 2018).

In particular relevance to defense and security issues, they agreed to establish an annual foreign ministers' meeting while continuing their annual defense ministers' meeting. They also committed themselves to continue to strengthen bilateral cooperation in regional efforts to address traditional and nontraditional security threats, to strengthen cooperation between and among maritime policymaking, administration, and law enforcement agencies; and strengthen further security and law enforcement cooperation between their police and maritime/border authorities, including through an annual security dialogue and greater exchange of intelligence and information sharing and capacity-building.

Australia's defense relationship with Vietnam has undoubtedly grown, but it is undeniable that Canberra's ties with Hanoi are the least developed of its partnerships considered in this chapter. This is because of the differences between Canberra's support for a U.S.-centered regional order and its discomfort with close security ties with a nondemocratic country (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 131). Continuing differences in political systems and human rights concerns also remain. Nevertheless, things are changing. Vietnam's improvements in ties with the United States, Japan, and India are positive developments for Australia, as Canberra is committed to "continuing to build [the] defence relationship" (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2016b, p. 131). And it is likely that this partnership will grow in the years ahead. The two already share growing economic ties. Vietnam is currently Australia's fastest-growing trade partner in ASEAN. Beyond this, buttressed by Vietnam's strengthening ties with other regional democracies, Australia and Vietnam share a convergence of security views on the South China Sea; a commitment to trade and investment liberalization; the importance of international law to settle regional disputes; and a commitment to work with

regional institutions like the EAS, APEC, and ASEAN (Thayer, 2018). Although not usually explicitly stated, underlying all of this is a shared concern over China.

A Missing Component

While Australia views all the countries in this study as important security partners, the robustness of its defense dialogues, defense agreements, and military training/exercises varies by country. A commonality, however, is the rather infrequent partnerships Australia has in the field of defense sales/transfers or joint development. With the exception of Indonesia, Australia does not enjoy defense industrial relationships in any significant way with the other countries in this study. According to the SIPRI report cited above, the United States, Indonesia, and Oman shares of Australian defense exports collectively total 87.5 percent of Australia's total defense exports (Wezeman et al., 2017). Understanding that the government has built the defense relationships outlined above and supports the conditions for the Australian defense industry to expand its ties with regional counterparts, the question remains: Why is the role of Australia's defense industry in its overall defense cooperation with foreign partners in the Indo-Pacific so marginal?

There are several possibilities why Australia is not actively pursuing such relationships with other countries in this study. One could be economic. Australian defense exports are expensive and not exactly what the buyers in the region want (author interview). A second could be strategic. Despite building defense relationships at the strategic level, the government has not traditionally had a systematic export strategy that helps the defense industry in an effective manner (author interview). This has meant that the government was not "expeditionary" in the sense of actively trying to get into certain countries' defense markets nor supporting its own defense industry actively (author interview). A third reason may be institutional. Canberra sees itself as a responsible exporter. It is reluctant to support defense exports or engage in joint or co-production of defense equipment should Canberra have any

concerns regarding human rights or how exports will be used (author interview). Because many of the countries examined in this paper are not members of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), Canberra may be reluctant to actively pursue defense industrial relationships, particularly if they are suspected of human rights concerns. For countries that are ATT members, such as Japan and ROK, they either make their own equipment or buy from their U.S. ally, thereby making it difficult for Australia to cooperate on defense sales in any substantial manner.

Regardless of the reason, it appears that Canberra has recently decided to become more active in promoting its defense industrial ties with the countries examined in this study. In March 2018, Canberra released a defense export strategy that aims to transform Australia into a top-ten global arms exporter in the next decade (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2018). To do this, Canberra will create a $3.1 billion fund to lend to Australian exporters that banks are reluctant to finance, in addition to creating a central defense export office and expanding the roles of defense attachés in Australian embassies. One of the regions identified as a priority market in the strategy is the Indo-Pacific. While critics point out that Australia will require a sevenfold increase in its exports for that to happen, some Australian analysts and senior Australian officials do not appear deterred (Nan Tian, 2018). As Defense Minister (formerly Defence Industry Minister) Christopher Pyne has stated, Australia seeks "to maximize . . . markets where we perhaps haven't been making the most of our opportunities" (Associated Press, 2018a). Further stating that Canberra is "more focused on countries like Japan and South Korea, Malaysia, in the south-east Asian and Asian region," Pyne's remarks suggest Australia is likely thinking of countries examined in this study as potential future defense sales partners (McMahon, 2018b). Supporting evidence that the Morrison government continues this focus came with an announcement by current Defence Industry Minister Linda Reynolds, who has launched an initiative aimed at spurring Australian defense industrial sales in the Indo-Pacific (Australian Government, Department of Defence, 2019). Of the countries to be visited during Indo-Pacific Endeavour (IPE) 2019, a major regional engagement activity for the ADF, Australia's defense industry showcased their products

and services in port calls to Indonesia, India, Vietnam, Malaysia, and others.

Conclusion

Australia has a long history of developing strategic relations with regional countries. Based on this research, there is no evidence to support the argument that the growth in Australia's defense relationship with regional countries is motivated by voter expectations of their country as a middle power or rising defense industrial costs that require Canberra to export or co-development defense equipment to retain a defense base. Rather, trapped in a region where bigger powers play geopolitics, Australia has always established defense connections for its own security (author interview). Today, Canberra sees the region undergoing dramatic shifts in the balance of power, particularly with the rise of China. This has reoriented Canberra's defense relationships with many key regional countries. While there are many reasons for the defense cooperation relationships we see today, one overriding rationale appears to be driving Australian defense engagements: the concern that U.S. regional dominance may weaken, which may, in turn, affect regional stability and therefore, Australia's security.

Australian National University professor Brendan Taylor argues that Australians do not like to call this hedging; rather, the government seeks to exercise some independence within the context of its alliance (author interview).[22] In reality, Australian policymakers are pursuing a more nuanced policy. Instead of hedging, they are attempting to augment the Australian-U.S. alliance to help offset the burdens and costs that the United States absorbs to maintain regional peace and security. Australia's defense relationships are supportive and additive to U.S. presence in the region (author interview). Indeed, former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said as much explicitly, stating that "we are stronger when sharing the burden of collective leadership with trusted partners and friends" (Turnbull, 2017). As stated in the *2017*

[22] This notion of hedging is supported by others (Cronin, et al., 2013; Channer, 2014).

Foreign Policy White Paper, Canberra sees the alliance as "a choice we make about how best to pursue our security interests. It is central to our shared objective of shaping the regional order" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017). Given the centrality the United States has played in Australian security considerations, it is natural for Canberra to seek to ensure the longevity of the U.S. presence in an increasingly challenging regional security environment by expanding its defense cooperation with like-minded regional partners.

The election of Donald Trump as U.S. president has introduced complexities to Australia's strategy. There are always anxieties in Australia about the U.S. commitment to Australia and the region, but Trump has caused these concerns to intensify (RAND Australia interviews). Things started on the wrong foot, as Trump cut short his first phone call with Turnbull after complaining about a deal made by the Obama administration that promised to resettle 1,250 refugees to the United States from camps run by Australia. Trump's withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and treatment of treaty allies in transactional terms have led to questions in Canberra about its relationship to the United States, prompting a debate about the nation's responsibilities to its ally and the direction of its foreign policy. Because the United States remains Australia's most important ally, former Prime Minister Turnbull has doubled down on Australia's commitment to the United States, understanding that Australia has "to work harder and smarter on the US relationship under Mr. Trump, take more of the initiative, and demonstrate leadership as Indo-Pacific powers adjust . . . to the 'new normal' under the president" (Jackman, 2018). Australia simply has few alternatives to the United States to protect its security and the global rules-based order (Miranda, 2017). Thus, Canberra remains committed to the United States. Wary of the extent of U.S. commitment to the region, however, Australia has devoted extra effort to engage the countries in this study to ensure both a broad and deep set of security partners to secure the regional order in a world where the United States is no longer the dominant power (Perlez and Cave, 2017).

But this course may be difficult to maintain. While Australians continue to support the U.S. alliance, trust in the United States has

fallen. According to the Lowy Institute, popular support for the alliance stands at 76 percent (Oliver, 2018). And even when asked whether Australia should remain close to the United States under Trump, the number remains at 64 percent. More troubling, only 15 percent of Australians have a "great deal" of trust in the United States "to act responsibly in the world," and 55 percent overall (a combination of "a great deal" and "somewhat") trust the United States to act responsibly. This is a 28 percent drop since 2011. By comparison, 90 percent trust the United Kingdom, 87 percent Japan, and 84 percent trust France. Even India is trusted by 59 percent of Australians. Given this, there is a potential for the Trump administration to push Australians away from the United States should those feelings of dislike for Trump translate into dislike for American actions and policies.

Yet, whether Australia chooses to support the United States or not, the result is likely to be the same. Opting for more robust regional partnerships, like those examined in this paper, to support the United States against a rising China or to hedge against its withdrawal from the region result in a similar endpoint. For Australia, "greater cooperation with like-minded regional powers can be an important hedge against the dual hazards of a reckless China and a feckless United States" (Fullilove, 2017). Australia faces an opportunity to shape its security environment in a way it has not had before. Grasping the opportunity, Australia is actively creating a network of defense relationships that help secure the regional order and contribute to a stable balance of power on which its security depends. In the end, it is in Canberra's strategic interest both to support the United States and to strengthen its defense ties with key regional partners so as to support the underlying liberal order and manage regional security issues that are expected as China continues to rise and challenge U.S. primacy in the Indo-Pacific region.

CHAPTER SIX

Indonesia: Growing Defense Cooperation in a Period of Transition

Indonesia has developed a complex web of international defense partnerships in recent years, including with distant powers such as the United States and Russia, regional powers such as Japan and Australia, and neighbors such as the Philippines. Indonesia has also built defense partnerships with countries with which it has complex ties such as China. This chapter explores how Indonesian security behavior has evolved with respect to the six key regional actors in the Indo-Pacific explored in this volume: Australia, Korea, India, Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam. It also looks at other important Indonesian defense partnerships, namely the United States, Russia, and China. As a baseline for assessing the scope of these relationships, it looks at five types of cooperative defense engagements, including high-level security dialogues, training and exercises, arms sales and transfers, joint or co-development of defense industrial output, and acquisition/cross-servicing and GSOMIA. It finds that Indonesia is developing ties with each country examined in this study, each for different specific reasons, all aimed at modernizing the Indonesian military and building an indigenous defense industry to defend national sovereignty.

First, this chapter provides the reader with background information on Indonesia's security outlook from the founding of the Republic of Indonesia to the present day. It then examines Jakarta's key relationships with Washington, Moscow, and Beijing before turning to its complex relationship with neighbor Australia and newly developing defense ties with Korea, India, and Japan. The chapter then explores

developments in Indonesia's relations with smaller Southeast Asian neighbors the Philippines and Vietnam before turning to a final conclusion that summarizes the overall findings of the chapter.

These findings are based on primary research in the form of meetings with officials and analysts in the United States and Singapore, and interviews with more than 20 Indonesian officials and analysts between August 2016 and August 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia, and Washington, D.C. These interviewees included current and former Cabinet ministers and other senior officials responsible for foreign and defense policy, midlevel defense policy officials, leading nongovernment analysts, and journalists.

Background

Two decades since the end of President Suharto's 33-year authoritarian, military-led "New Order" regime, Indonesia is a vibrant democracy with elected officials exercising civilian control over a generally professional military and national police. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is now generally in control of Indonesian foreign policy, operating under the guidance set by presidential priorities as well as powerful business interests. Yet while the Indonesian military (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia*, or TNI) has pulled back from its once-dominant role, old habits die hard, and the military remains a significant political actor and a pillar in Indonesia's national life.

The TNI's vision for itself centers around being the essential guardian of Indonesian independence and sovereignty. This narrative finds its origins in Indonesia's violent struggle against the Dutch from 1945 to 1949, with the newly founded Armed Forces of Indonesia (ABRI) waging a "people's war" when the Netherlands attempted to reinstate control over the archipelago following World War II. This guerilla war experience led directly to an Army doctrine that continues today. Layered on top of a centuries-long history of foreign powers coveting Indonesian resources, protecting sovereignty and territorial integrity loom large in the Indonesian psyche and creates substantial support for the TNI.

Following an initial period of stability following independence, Indonesian politics began to splinter in the early 1960s, with founding President Sukarno[1] veering sharply left, aligning himself with Beijing, Hanoi, and Pyongyang. In 1965, the military stepped in, in its view, to save the country from communism, setting the stage for decades of deep military involvement in politics. Taking advantage of a failed coup against Sukarno in 1965, then–Major General Suharto seized power, officially becoming president in 1967. For the next 31 years, Suharto used military power to control all aspects of life in Indonesia and used the specter of communism to animate the importance of ABRI in national life.[2]

Under Suharto's New Order Regime, the military explicitly subscribed to a *dwifungsi*, or dual function, serving as both a defense and a political force. Meanwhile, the Army fought bloody insurgencies against separatist forces in the provinces of Aceh, Papua, and East Timor, cementing the military's self-image as the guarantor of national security and unity. However, aside from the relatively minor *Konfrontasi* (Confrontation) naval conflict with Malaysia from 1963 to 1966, the military has not engaged in conflict against an external power.

During the Cold War, the United States and its allies looked to Indonesia as an important anti-Communist partner and overlooked significant human rights abuses. However, by the 1990s, with Indonesia's strategic value significantly diminishing, the United States, Australia, and other Western countries introduced sanctions in response to human rights violations perpetrated by the Indonesian military in East Timor, first in 1991 and then again in 1999.

The experience of U.S. sanctions during the 1990s, which put an end to U.S. military equipment supply, was described to the author as "traumatic" by a sitting minister and continues to play a defining role in how the TNI approaches international defense partnerships today (author interview). Most importantly, this experience has made having

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1 Many Indonesians go by one name, including its first two presidents, Sukarno and Suharto.

2 ABRI was the official name of the TNI during the Suharto era.

a diverse group of weapons suppliers a top priority and the development of a robust indigenous defense industry a long-term goal for Indonesia to remain an independent global and regional actor. Beginning in the 1990s, Indonesia began building new ties with a wide range of countries including China, Russia, Turkey, South Korea, and Brazil, creating the kaleidoscope of international defense relationships Indonesia enjoys today, despite its defense ties being back on track with the United States and other key Western powers (Gindarsah and Priamarizki, 2015).

Reformasi

President Suharto resigned in May 1998 in the wake of the 1997–1998 Asian financial crisis and in the face of massive public demonstrations demanding *reformasi* (reform). As the regime fell, the military perpetrated major human rights violations, cementing the need for reform in the popular consciousness.

In the succeeding years, as all organs of state underwent a dramatic overhaul, the military's role in politics and society was dramatically reduced. This included the removal of serving military officers from nonmilitary roles in government and the end of the military's allotted seats in parliament, which was phased out and ended in 2004. The National Police was also separated from the Armed Forces, and ABRI was renamed the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI), the National Armed Forces; the police were renamed the *Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia* (POLRI), the Indonesian National Police Force, with the TNI nominally charged with external defense rather than internal security

More broadly, investments in defense and military affairs were quickly deprioritized as the government focused on democratic reforms, fiscal health, and other key national priorities. With the country focused on other matters, defense policy and the military's role in society continued to wane under Presidents Abdurrahman Wahid (1999–2001) and Megawati Soekarnoputri (2001–2004). However, in 2004, and with the election of retired Army General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono came new attention to the military and top-level interest in modernizing and professionalizing the TNI.

Military Structure and Profile

While reforms following the fall of Suharto ended the military's formal role in national politics, they also muddled the chain of command. A civilian minister of defense now sits in the Cabinet, but he sits alongside the commander of the Armed Forces (*Panglima*) and has little direct control of planning and budgeting within the military services. The minister and the *Panglima* also separately answer to the president. The chiefs of staff of the navy, air force, and army answer to the *Panglima*, and not to the minister of defense. This apparatus gives the president an especially important role in shaping national security policy when they are engaged. The TNI itself consists of three services—Army, Navy, and Air Force. However, despite being an archipelago spanning 3,000 miles east to west, the Army is by far the largest service with around 80 percent of the military's total force of approximately 400,000. The army divides the country into regional units called *kodams* roughly mirroring the country's provinces (Lowry, 1999). However, given regional disparities in resources, education, and wealth, the Army is often the most capable institution in remote regions and sometimes the only entity present with the capacity to govern (Laksmana, 2015). As a result, the Army still often finds itself in a *dwifungsi*-type role, despite statutory reforms.

The Army is also intensely focused on perceived internal threats to national sovereignty. Counterterrorism is a particular focus. Through counterterrorism, the Army seeks to "reinvigorate some of its territorial command functions and nation-building projects to counter the influence the police," according to one leading Indonesian defense analyst (Laksmana, 2015).

The Army has often also been keen to keep alive the latent threat of communism as a menace to Indonesian unity and has supported movements that vow to protect the nation against such threats. As recently as June 2016, a military-led, youth-membership-based *Bela Negara* (defend the nation) movement marched in Jakarta to protest the alleged communist threat. *Bela Negara* also featured prominently in a *2016 Defense White Paper* and at the time of publication still appears as a high-level priority on the official ministry of defense website. In meetings with a range of defense experts in support of this study, this

movement was widely understood to be a personal priority for then–*Panglima* General Gatot Nurmantyo (author interview).

In contrast to the Army, the Navy and Air Force have more traditional external defense postures, with clear missions to defend the country's territorial integrity from external threats. However, with most resources directed toward the Army, investments in naval and air capabilities have been limited.

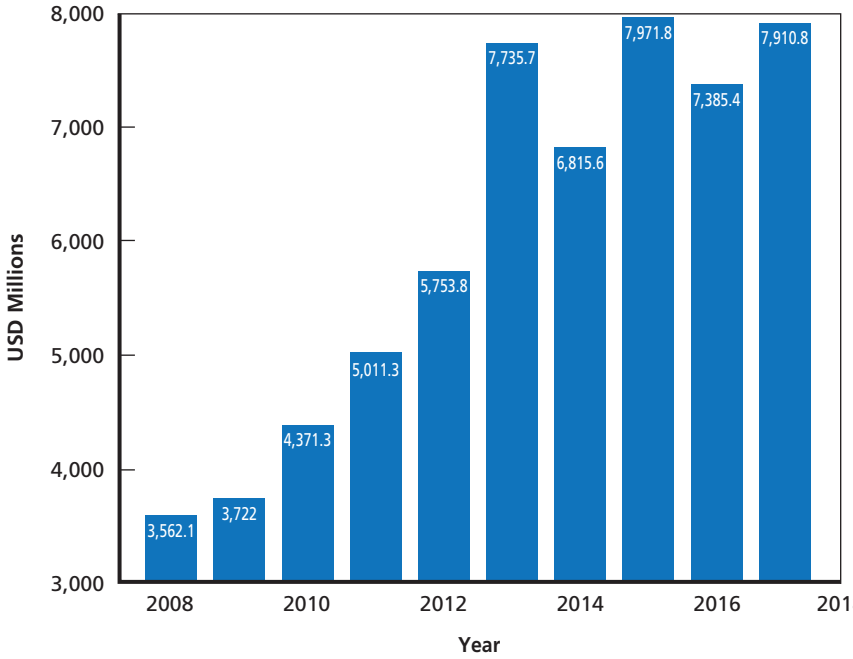
Minimal Essential Force and Defense Spending

In addition to receding from political life beginning in 1998, the *reformasi* era also saw the deprioritization of investments in the TNI. This began to change in earnest in 2009 when President Yudhoyono began his second term as president and focused attention on professionalizing and modernizing the TNI. Critically, Yudhoyono introduced a modernization and recapitalization plan called Minimum Essential Force (MEF), which has guided acquisition and priorities for international cooperation since 2009.

At its core, the MEF is a list of equipment that Yudhoyono determined Indonesia requires to have a credible military consistent with Indonesia's international stature by 2024. The MEF, which is confidential, is widely understood to not be a strategic document focused on missions and capabilities, but rather as a laundry list of equipment, with everything from guided-missile frigates and tactical submarines to battle tanks and artillery systems to new jet fighters (Gindarsah, 2014). Nonetheless, Indonesian defense analysts argue that the MEF provided the military "a new sense of professional purpose: to become a modern fighting force" (Laksmana, 2015). Beyond equipment, Yudhoyono sought to put his stamp on TNI professionalization by establishing the Indonesian Defense University and expanding international cooperation programs.

To achieve goals outlined in the MEF, the defense budget has grown significantly. While Indonesian defense spending remains low by international standards, the government plans to boost spending from its current level of 0.8 percent to 1.5 percent of Indonesian GDP by 2024 (Parameswaran, 2015a). However, while Indonesian spending has increased dramatically since 2010 (see Figure 6.1), its spending is relatively small compared with its ASEAN neighbors.

Figure 6.1
Indonesian Military Expenditure, 2008–2017 (in Millions of US$)



SOURCE: Trading Economics, n.d.

In conjunction with the MEF, Yudhoyono sought to build Indonesia's domestic defense industry and began to prioritize defense industrial cooperation and technology transfer in international defense diplomacy. Indonesia began to develop its defense industry in the early 1980s, primarily through three state-owned enterprises: one for aerospace, PT DI or Indonesian Aerospace; one for naval, PT PAL; and one for land, PT Pindad. However, mismanagement and lack of resources has left them well behind international peers (RSIS Indonesia Programme, 2012). During Yudhoyono's second term, he appointed a former businessman and energy minister with little background in defense issues, Purnomo Yusgiantoro, as defense minister and directed him to expand the indigenous defense industry with the aim of Indonesia eventually becoming generally self-sufficient in

arms production. In 2012 the Indonesian parliament passed a defense industry law, stipulating that for every weapon bought overseas, industries must also develop new weapons technology capacity, and the value of foreign acquisitions must be offset in Indonesia. Initial offsets were slated at 35 percent of total value in 2014 with a plan to increase this limit 10 percent every five years until it reaches 85 percent (Sapiie, 2016b).

While a priority, Yudhoyono's military modernization efforts did not take place in a vacuum. He saw the TNI as one means to support his goal of expanding Indonesia's role on the global stage, something, generally expected by Indonesians (Cook, 2006). Critically, this was done in the long tradition of a "free and active" Indonesian foreign policy and within Yudhoyono's foreign policy doctrine of "a thousand friends and no enemies." As such, Yudhoyono looked to the TNI to burnish Indonesia's credentials as a rising, nonaligned middle power with global interests. In particular, he saw participation in UNPKOs as a major international role for the TNI and as a mission that would encourage professionalization of the Army.

Jokowi Foreign and Defense Policy

President Joko Widodo, elected in 2014, is the first Indonesian president to come from outside the Jakarta elite. Prior to assuming the presidency, he had no experience in foreign and defense policy and needed to make allies with political heavyweights in Jakarta, not least the military. Jokowi's interest in courting current and former military leaders, coupled with a general lack of interest in foreign policy, has allowed the TNI to set military and defense policy with a high degree of independence since 2014. Appointing a retired army general as minister of defense has further encouraged independence.

Generally speaking, Jokowi has stepped back from Yudhoyono's ambitious plans for developing Indonesia as a major global player and has instead adopted a foreign policy that exists to narrowly serve immediate domestic interests, best described privately to the author by one of Jokowi's top foreign policy advisers as "transactional" (author interview). Specifically, key administration goals of economic growth, infrastructure investment, and Indonesia's advantageous geography

drive foreign policy, including through a stated aim for Indonesia to become a "Global Maritime Fulcrum."

Another important structural factor affecting defense policy is extremely conservative leaders in the TNI. Exemplified by recently retired Chief of Armed Forces General Gatot Nurmantyo, today's military leaders rose in the ranks with little exposure to the international community, since they came up at a time when the West had imposed sanctions on Indonesia that severely restricted military-to-military contacts. Many of these leaders also fought brutal domestic counterinsurgency campaigns in East Timor and Aceh. As a result, as articulated in the *2016 Defense White Paper*, the TNI leadership currently sees its role as protecting the state from internal enemies and foreign threats to Indonesia's unity and independence. The Army, in particular, seeks deep involvement in social issues and presence throughout society, much like during Suharto's New Order.

While the Air Force and Navy do not look to be involved in society to such a great extent, like the Army, they also squarely see their primary role as protecting Indonesian sovereignty from the threat of foreign interference rather than taking a broader view of regional stability. However, one key such threat is Chinese encroachment around Indonesia's Natuna Islands in the South China Sea. While China does not claim the Natunas, its nine-dash line intersects with Indonesia's exclusive economic zone around the Natuna Islands, which are rich in natural gas and fisheries. While Jokowi has taken a strong stance in the face of Chinese encroachment, Indonesian concerns generally stem from domestic priorities, namely protecting Indonesian energy and fisheries resources, rather than broader concerns about China's role in the region.

International Defense Diplomacy

In line with overall Indonesian foreign policy, which is deeply nonaligned and focused on ASEAN but with global reach, Indonesia engages in defense diplomacy with much of the world.

This section and Table 6.1 provide analyses of Indonesia's bilateral defense relationships with the countries examined in this volume,

Table 6.1
Indonesia's Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	Australia	India	Japan	Philippines	South Korea	Vietnam
Partnership Type	Comprehensive strategic	Comprehensive strategic	Strategic	None	Special strategic	Strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Arms Sales and Transfers	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes[1]
GSOMIA	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

SOURCE: RAND interviews and open-source data collection.

NOTES: [1] Indonesia and Vietnam have formally agreed to training and exercises and possibly conducted some small-scale exchanges with minimal public reporting. Additionally, Indonesia has hosted Vietnam as one of many participating countries in the multilateral Komodo exercises.

as well as with the United States, Russia, and China—three other major Indo-Pacific partners.

Indonesia-United States Relations: A Top Priority Despite a Difficult History

Indonesia-U.S. defense relations were curtailed from 1991 to 2005 due to sanctions imposed over human rights abuses. However, ties began to warm in the wake of the October 2002 Bali bombing. Quietly, the United States began providing law enforcement assistance, focused on counterterrorism, together with Australia. The massive U.S. response

to the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami disaster was a further opening, with groundbreaking contact between U.S. and Indonesian military forces on Indonesian soil (O'Brien, 2005). In 2005, the United States lifted all remaining restrictions on military assistance and weapons sales, aside from training with Army Special Forces (*Kopassus*) ("Timeline: US-Indonesia Relations," 2010).

Defense trade began in earnest in 2011 when United States gifted 24 excess defense articles—F-16 fighters—to Jakarta that Indonesia refurbished with its own funds. In 2013, the United States agreed to sell Indonesia eight new Apache AH-64E helicopters (Ratnam and Moestafa, 2013). These transactions are examples of a major motivation for Indonesia's interest in a strong defense partnership with the United States: access to high-end weapons platforms. Likewise, Indonesia and the United States are currently working to update a 1980s-era GSOMIA to facilitate greater exchange of classified information related to technology (author interview). The United States is also Indonesia's most frequent partner in terms of military exercises, activities that the TNI sees as useful for professionalization. A 2010 ACSA helps facilitate these exchanges, which is Indonesia's only ACSA agreement.

Politically, overall U.S.-Indonesia relations blossomed under the coincidence of leadership of Presidents Yudhoyono and Obama, who had extensive personal experience and interest in one another's countries. During this time, high-level security dialogues flourished, and in November 2010 the two countries established the U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership, which effectively created an annual meeting of the Secretary of State and foreign minister, with supporting working groups, including a security working group. While there is no formal annual meeting of defense ministers, there exists an annual, Indonesia-U.S. security dialogue, a defense policy dialogue, and a bilateral defense dialogue between PACOM and the TNI. There is no 2 + 2 ministerial dialogue. Since President Jokowi's inauguration, relations have stayed on track, and the relationship was formally upgraded to a strategic partnership during a visit by Jokowi to Washington, D.C.

Indonesia-Russia Relations: An Important Supplier of High-End Equipment

Since the end of the Cold War, Indonesia-Russia ties have been stable, and Moscow has become a major supplier of arms to Indonesia. In 2003, Indonesia and Russia signed a Joint Declaration of Friendship and Partnership, which subsequently increased the frequency of high-level exchanges between the two countries and pledged to strengthen their cooperation in various domains, particularly in military technology and security.

High-level security dialogues have focused on countering terrorism and piracy. In August 2017, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and his counterpart Retno Marsudi met and agreed to increase coordinated efforts to fight terrorism bilaterally and through ASEAN as part of the Plan of Consultation for 2017–2019, signed during the meeting. In March 2018, Coordinating Minister for Security Wiranto and Russia's Security Council Security Nikolai Patrushev met in Jakarta to discuss technical aspects of the military, cybersecurity, and efforts to address terrorist threats.

Joint military exercises have been conducted between the two armies and navies on several occasions. In December 2017, the Russian Air Force sent strategic bombers to an airport in Biak, eastern Indonesia, as part of a navigation exercise (Parameswaran, 2017e). Separately, earlier that year, two Russian Pacific Fleets ships and a large antisubmarine ship conducted joint drills with Indonesia's Navy.

Russia is Indonesia's largest military supplier in terms of value. In 2007, President Putin witnessed the signing of a $1 billion arms deal that many experts saw as an effort to restore Russia's diplomatic and military clout in the region. In February 2018, after seven years of negotiation, Indonesia signed a contract with Russia to procure 11 Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets for around $1.14 billion, half of which will be paid in commodities (Parameswaran, 2018c).

Indonesia and Russia have also been discussing co-development. In 2016, Presidents Jokowi and Putin signed a series of MOUs, including one on cooperation in defense and the importance of technology transfer and weapon purchase as part of this cooperation. At the time of publication, the two sides were negotiating a "Mutual Protec-

tion Classified Information" agreement to facilitate greater exchanges (author interview).

In general, Russia is seen to be an important supplier of high-end equipment, such as fighter jets, which Indonesia sees as essential to hedge against potential future disruptions to defense trade with the United States.

Indonesia-China Relations: A Modest Defense Relationship Focused on Hardware

Indonesia-China diplomatic relations were suspended from 1967 to 1990 due to China's alleged support in the 1965 attempted coup and the related political utility of labeling China and communism a threat to national unity. Ties have since recovered dramatically and China is one of Indonesia's most important international partners. At a formal level, China and Indonesia became "Strategic Partners" in 2005, signed a defense cooperation agreement in 2007 providing the basis for defense engagement, and became "Comprehensive Strategic Partners" in 2013.

In 2011, Indonesia and China began a weapons development production and acquisition partnership, beginning with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that launched a partnership in missile production (Adamrah, 2011). In March 2016, Indonesia announced that the military was evaluating Chinese integrated air defense systems, specifically the AF902 Radar/Twin 35mm gun and the PL-9C missile system (Parameswaran, 2016a). The two countries have also conducted periodic counterterrorism exercises. Recently cooperation has slowed, in part due to the lack of success in these cooperative projects as well as tensions in the Natuna Sea, although interactions continue as part of a robust overall bilateral relationship.

During the Jokowi administration, relations with China have become a top priority but are squarely focused on economic ties, with Jokowi and President Xi Jinping meeting multiple times a year (Parlina, 2016). President Jokowi has also enthusiastically supported the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank and China's Belt and Road Initiative and traveled to Beijing in May 2017 to attend Beijing's Belt and Road Forum ("Jokowi Seeks Infrastructure Investors at China

Summit," 2017). Indonesian leaders, however, are increasingly skeptical of China's actions in the South China Sea, and views of Beijing in Jakarta are hardening (Kurlantzick, 2018).

Indonesia-Australia Relations: Deep and Complex Ties

Due to geography, Indonesia's relations with Australia are arguably its closest and most developed but also frequently among the most complicated. While Indonesia's defense community often views Australia warily, it recognizes that a close relationship is inevitable and can bring significant, substantive gains in support of Indonesia's military modernization and professionalization efforts. Indonesian wariness stems from a nagging suspicion that Australia is a potential threat to the unity and sovereignty of Indonesia—colored by Australia's intervention in East Timor in 1999 that resulted in a cessation of cooperative contacts. This is augmented by lingering Indonesian suspicions that Australia does not support Indonesia's sovereignty over Papua.

However, as with the Indonesia-U.S. relationship, ties began to mend following the October 2002 Bali bombing, when common security interests became apparent in dramatic fashion. Following the bombing, law enforcement and intelligence cooperation surged, with Australia playing a critical role in developing the National Police's counterterrorism force. In 2004, Indonesia and Australia announced the creation of the Jakarta Center for Law Enforcement Cooperation to carry out law enforcement, counterterrorism, border security, and legal justice cooperation, which has included TNI participation. Similarly, in 2005, Australia announced it would reestablish Special Air Service-*Kopassus* cooperation on counterterrorism, despite *Kopassus*'s direct responsibility for most Indonesian human rights violations in the 1990s (Forbes, 2005).

The defense relationship warmed further in 2006 with the signing of the landmark Framework for Security Cooperation, also known as the Lombok Treaty. The treaty, which critically commits to mutual respect for one another's sovereignty, allowed for the renewal of a wide range of bilateral defense activities and continues to be the defining framework of the bilateral relationship. The relationship became a strategic partnership in 2010, and details of the Lombok Treaty were for-

malized with a DCA in 2012 (Roberts, Habir, and Sebastian, 2015). However, in 2013 cooperative activities temporarily stopped in the wake of revelations of Australian espionage in Indonesia. Despite the ups and downs, in August 2018, the partnership was elevated to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" (Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018b).

Indonesia's top priority for its defense relationship with Australia is professionalization, meaning training, exercises, and exchanges form the heart of the partnership rather than the defense trade that drives many of Indonesia's other partnerships. The two countries have restarted a program of joint exercises, now with more than ten annually including coordinated naval patrols along their shared maritime border and counter hijack and hostage recovery exercises (Laksmana, 2018a). In 2012, both countries, along with Singapore, Thailand, New Zealand, and the United States, began the now-biennial exercise Pitch Black, an air force exercise conducted from RAAF Bases Darwin and Tindal (Zurbrugg, 2016). Indonesian special forces also train with Australia's Special Air Service troops in Perth, and although training was suspended in December 2016 because of the discovery of material "insulting" Indonesia on the bases, ties were restored the following month (Pearl, 2017).

These efforts are joined by numerous exchange programs. In 2011, the two countries established IKAHAN, the Indonesia-Australia Alumni Association, to further deepen ties (IKAHANid, 2012). In 2016, the two sides initiated an intelligence personnel exchange program focused on counterterrorism issues, a significant step considering the suspicions that the Indonesian intelligence community holds regarding Australia (Fitsanakis, 2016).

Strategically, Indonesia's security cooperation agenda with Australia is set by the countries' annual 2 + 2 foreign and defense ministerial meetings, which began in 2012. While a standard format for Australia, this was Indonesia's first 2 + 2 dialogue with foreign and defense ministers, as officials who often work in stovepipes in the Indonesian system. This is undergirded by a range of bilateral consultative mechanisms, including the Indonesia-Australia Cyber Policy Dialogue (Commonwealth of Australia and Republic of Indonesia, 2016).

Defense trade, which is at the center of many of Indonesia's other relationships, also plays a part in Indonesia-Australia defense cooperation, even though Australia is not a major producer of defense equipment. Most efforts have focused on building up the TNI's capacity to engage in disaster relief through the gifting of used Australian transport aircraft. In 2011, Australia agreed to a transfer of four former Australian air force C-130H aircraft (Dunning, 2011). In 2013, Australia sold another five used C-130H aircraft to Indonesia at a discounted price (Hashim, 2013).

Overall, Indonesia-Australia defense engagement is extensive, and Australia is one of Indonesia's most important partners. However, while ties help to advance major Indonesian goals such as modernization and professionalization, a complicated history and lingering suspicions continue to create headwinds for a deeper partnership.

Indonesia-South Korea Relations: A Top Defense Priority for Jakarta

Relations between Indonesia and the ROK are positive, and from Jakarta's perspective, defense relations are a major highlight of the overall relationship. In numerous interviews with senior Indonesian government officials, including at the Cabinet level, South Korea was highlighted one of Indonesia's most important defense partners. Formally the two countries became "Strategic Partners" in December 2006 and "Special Strategic Partners" in November 2017. The two countries also cooperate multilaterally as middle powers through MIKTA, an informal partnership between Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey, and Australia, which aims to "contribute to protecting public goods and strengthen global governance" ("Vision: MIKTA Mission Statement," 2015).

For Jakarta, defense relations with South Korea are among Indonesia's most important with any country. Indonesia views South Korea as a desirable defense trade partner because of its willingness to engage in defense industrial co-production and technology transfer, which are key priorities for Indonesia.

High-level dialogues have also increased in recent years; in 2014, President Jokowi visited Busan for the 25th South Korea-ASEAN Commemorative Summit, where he and President Park Geun-hye high-

lighted expanding defense industry cooperation and discussed shipyard development in Indonesia (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, 2017). Both sides continue to look for new opportunities in defense cooperation, particularly since President Moon Jae-in introduced his New Southern Policy.

Joint development defense industry projects date to 2004 when the two countries agreed to cooperate on the development of Indonesia's Makassar landing platform dock ("Makassar Class Landing Platform Docks, Indonesia," 2017). South Korea's Daesun designed the landing platform for the Indonesian Navy; four platforms were built in total: two by Daesun, and two by Indonesia's state-owned PT Pal with assistance from Daesun. From Indonesia's perspective, this type of cooperation is ideal. The last of the ships was commissioned into the Indonesian Navy in 2011. This partnership helped facilitate increased hardware transfers and co-development projects. In 2011 Indonesia also purchased 16 Korean supersonic T-50 trainer jets (Haseman, 2011).

By 2013, the two countries began joint development projects in earnest, starting with PT Pindad, a key state arms manufacturer, assembling 11 Panser armored vehicles with South Korean–manufactured parts (Cochrane, 2014). South Korea's Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) delivered 16 single turboprop basic trainers to Indonesia that same year (Shim, 2017).

In 2015, KAI and Indonesia's PT Dirgantara Indonesia signed an agreement to deepen cooperation between the two firms, which focused on cooperation in unmanned aircraft (Kang Seung-woo, 2015). Additionally, both countries are involved in an Indonesian-government-sponsored agreement to produce KFX/IFX aircraft, with 16 scheduled to be delivered to Indonesia (Rahmat, 2019a). PT Dirgantara will be involved in aircraft design and will secure rights to some of the aircraft's intellectual property (Grevatt, 2015b). In 2016, the two defense firms agreed to market these planes globally. KAI also agreed to replace PT Dirgantara Indonesia's aging helicopter fleet with KUH-1 Surion utility helicopters in exchange for increases in KAI contracts for local projects in Indonesia such as aircraft maintenance, repairs, and operation ("South Korea, Indonesia Sign Agreement to Market Aircraft Globally," 2016).

Finally, South Korea has been supporting Indonesia's efforts to develop its submarine capabilities. The Indonesian Navy commissioned three Type 209/1400 Chang Bogo–class diesel-electric attack submarine from South Korean defense contractor Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering (DSME), with production taking place in both South Korea and Indonesia and deliveries taking place from 2017 to 2019. A follow-on contract for three additional submarines is under negotiation (Rahmat, 2019b). DSME was selected to partner with PT PAL for repair and overhaul work on Indonesia's lead Cakra-class boat, a project will last until 2024 (Rahmat, 2017).

Defense industry cooperation is a key basis for the two sides to strengthen overall defense ties. The Indonesian Defense Ministry and the South Korea Defense Acquisition Program Administration hold an annual Defense Industry Cooperation Committee (DICC). The seventh DICC, held in Jakarta in May 2018, saw the two parties reevaluate ongoing defense industry cooperation and opportunities for increasing defense cooperation. Indonesia and South Korea are currently negotiating a classified information-sharing agreement to facilitate expanded future cooperation, which would be Indonesia's first such agreement with a country examined in this volume, aside from the United States.

Overall, the Indonesia-Korea defense relationship has primarily been driven by Indonesian interest in weapons purchases and related technology transfers. For Indonesian defense leaders, South Korea is a source of high-end air and naval platforms and technology that both meet current needs and help develop Indonesia's domestic defense industry. As one interviewee pointed out, despite an absence of joint exercises or regular ministerial talks, the relationship is among Indonesia's most important (author interview). However, with a formal defense cooperation agreement signed in July 2018, the two sides signaled an intention to diversify the relationship beyond defense industry and sales.

Indonesia-India Relations: An Increasingly Comprehensive Defense Partner

Indonesia-India relations are warm and are bound by shared nonaligned ideals and a vast maritime border. Building on a 2001 defense framework agreement, in 2005 the two countries became "strategic partners"

and launched an annual strategic dialogue during a visit by President Yudhoyono to India (Jha, 2011). Government-government collaboration occurs across numerous fields, as demonstrated by the establishment in 2011 of 16 intergovernmental agreements, including MOUs on counterterrorism, air services, and the exchange of financial intelligence. In December 2016, on a state visit by President Jokowi to India, the two sides agreed to "review and upgrade" their existing defense agreement and to increase the frequency of exchanges and scope of industrial cooperation (Prime Minister of India, 2016). In May 2018, Prime Minister Modi visited Indonesia, and the two countries elevated their bilateral ties into a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" and signed 15 agreements including a renewed defense cooperation agreement calling for increased bilateral dialogue, exchange of information, and military education and training (PTI, 2018).

As both countries seek to build their domestic defense industries, the two parties have had extensive talks on possible defense technology cooperation projects. In August 2015, India announced that it would help Indonesia with its defense procurement goals, which would likely entail collaboration between Indonesian and Indian shipbuilders, PT Pal and Pipvav Defense (respectively) and Indonesian and Indian aerospace companies, PT Dirgantara Indonesia and Hindustan Aeronautics (respectively) (Parameswaran, 2015c). In November 2016, India's largest automobile manufacturer, Tata Motors, and PT Pindad signed a MOU to source defense-related equipment for mutual benefit. In 2018, an MOU was concluded between PT Pindad and Bhukhanvala Industries to develop ceramic-based ballistic protection systems for land vehicles and promote firearms to the Indian military and paramilitary forces ("Indonesian PT Pindad Expands Co-Operation with Indian Firms," 2018.)

Military exercises have also expanded steadily in recent years. The Indonesian and Indian navies have conducted coordinated patrols (known as CORPAT) since 2002 in the Andaman Sea, increasing in size since their inception, along with regular bilateral exercises (Parameswaran, 2016d). In 2012, the two armies started annual exercises called Garuda Shakti, alternating between hosting the exercise in India and Indonesia, with six iterations to date (Government of India,

Ministry of Defence, 2016a). The two countries have carried out personnel exchanges, military staff talks, and conduct biannual patrolling near their international maritime boundary line (Embassy of India, Jakarta, 2014). A 2016 MOU between the two coast guards institutionalized training cooperation, capacity-building, coordinated patrol and joint exercises (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2018b). In February 2017, during a visit by Indian Defense Minister G. Mohan Kumar to Indonesia, the two countries announced that their air forces would begin joint exercises and that India would begin training Indonesian submariners (Pandit, 2017b). The two countries' defense ministers meet biannually at the biennial defense minister dialogue.

Overall, the Indonesia-India defense relationship is among the Indonesia's most comprehensive. It includes regular military exercises, high-level government meetings, and substantial defense industry collaboration. The relationship is likely to deepen as Jakarta and New Delhi have recently announced more military exchanges and more defense technology deals, with Prime Minister Modi's May 2018 visit to Jakarta underscoring the importance both sides are placing on the relationship.

Indonesia-Japan Relations: Modest Defense Ties as Part of an Important Bilateral Relationship

Overall Japan-Indonesia relations are very strong, and Japan is one of Indonesia's most important partners in a number of areas. While deep economic collaboration has been long-standing, defense relations have only begun to develop since Japan became more active in regional defense diplomacy since Shinzo Abe's return to the premiership in 2012. This has also been reflected in the formal structure of Indonesia-Japan relations with a 2 + 2 foreign and defense ministerial becoming the agenda-setting mechanism for bilateral relations beginning in December 2015. A bilateral defense cooperation agreement was also signed in 2015, affirming both parties' willingness to deepen ties.

While Japan has been eager to cultivate maritime security ties with Indonesia similar to their efforts with Vietnam and the Philippines, Indonesia has been a less enthusiastic partner, likely because it does not want to roil its overall relations with China by engaging deeply with Japan in defense issues. Nonetheless, Indonesia has welcomed Japan's

offers of assistance to build maritime capacity particularly in nondefense areas, and in December 2016 the two agreed to establish a bilateral maritime forum (Parameswaran, 2016g). Further, in June 2018, Japan, in its effort to promote its "FOIP strategy," pledged to provide $23 million in aid to Indonesia for the development of ports and fishing facilities on remote islands, including the Natuna Islands.

Overall, despite positive momentum, with no military exercises and no technology cooperation to date, defense relations remain an underdeveloped part of the overall relationship between Indonesia and Japan and are not particularly significant in the eyes of the Indonesia's defense establishment (author interview). However, with Japan pledging to provide Southeast Asian countries cooperation, assistance, and support, particularly in realms relating to maritime security, it is possible that defense relations will develop more substantially in the years ahead.

Indonesia-Philippines Relations: Cooperation on Shared Immediate Challenges

Indonesia and the Philippines also enjoy warm ties as fellow founding members of ASEAN and as partners on security challenges along their shared maritime border in the Sulu and Celebes seas. The bilateral relationship between Indonesia and the Philippines has not been officially given a status such as "strategic partnership" (as is the case with Indonesia's other close neighbors Singapore and Malaysia), yet the countries have participated in a joint border committee forum since 1975.

The two parties have enjoyed a formal defense relationship since the signing of a 1997 Agreement on Cooperative Activities in the Field of Defense and Security. Defense officials from the two countries meet annually for the Philippines-Indonesia Joint Defense Cooperation Committee to "implement, manage and monitor defense cooperation between the two countries" (Republic of the Philippines, Department of National Defense, 2010b). Indonesian, Philippine, and Malaysian defense ministers also began an annual trilateral defense ministerial meeting in 2012 (Republic of the Philippines, Department of National Defense, 2016).

In 2011, Indonesia began arms exports to the Philippines, including three landing platform docks, aircraft, ammunition, and assault rifles

(Febrica, 2017, p. 53). In January 2014, PT Dirgantara Indonesia and the PAF signed a deal for two NC 212i light utility transport aircrafts. After delays, the aircraft were delivered in June 2018 (Parameswaran, 2018g). Tangible defense cooperation accelerated in 2016, with Indonesia exporting its first-ever warship, the "Strategic Sealift Vessel," as part of its growing shipbuilding industry; another ship was delivered in 2017.

In June 2018, Indonesia delivered two NC212i light lift fixed-wing aircraft worth $19 million to the Philippines. These aircraft were fully made by PT Dirgantara Indonesia, marking the first steps in the Indonesia-Philippines defense industry collaboration. Indonesian defense leaders see the Philippines as an export destination and a potential co-production partner.

The two countries also conduct naval exercises in partnership with Malaysia to address maritime piracy and other maritime crimes in the Sulu Sea under the 2016 Sulu Sea Trilateral Patrol pact. In this context, Indonesia and the Philippines also work together on counterterrorism and exchange intelligence, although have no formal classified information sharing arrangement exists. After events in Marawi in 2017, the three countries established joint trainings to combat the terrorist and militancy threat and locate and contain the spread of ISIS in the southern Philippines. These training exercises will focus on anti-guerilla warfare, urban warfare, and countersniper operations.

Overall, the Indonesia-Philippines security relationship has primarily been focused on defense cooperation to combat transnational threats and is beginning to focus on defense industry development.

Indonesia-Vietnam Relations: Modest Bilateral Defense Ties

Indonesia and Vietnam enjoy warm, robust ties as fellow members of the ASEAN. The formal bilateral partnership dates to 2003, when Presidents Megawati and Luong signed a "Declaration on the Framework of Friendly and Comprehensive Partnership" that included cooperation on "regional and global challenges concerning both countries" (Hoang, 2013). In 2010, the two countries signed an MOU on cooperation between defense officials that focused on expanding bilateral dialogue, humanitarian aid, and defense industry ties ("Indonesian Defense Chief Visits Vietnam," 2016). Relations were elevated to a

"strategic partnership" in 2013, and the two foreign ministers signed an action plan for 2014–2018 to implement the partnership ("Vietnam, Indonesia Celebrate 60-Year Relations," 2015).

While defense relations have not developed significantly in practical terms, Indonesian defense officials see strong mutual interests, especially on maritime issues, and symbolic moves have been made to strengthen the relationship. In February 2016, Indonesian and Vietnamese militaries agreed to accelerate cooperation on joint patrols and antiterrorism, establishing a naval hotline and a policy dialogue mechanism. Although to date joint exercises appear to have been small scale, Vietnam has taken part in the Indonesia-hosted Komodo multilateral exercise. In October 2017, Vietnamese Minister of Defense Ngo Xuan Lich visited his counterpart in Jakarta and signed a Declaration on Joint Vision on Defense Cooperation for 2017–2022. The declaration aims to boost the defense partnership, maintain security and stability in the region, protect international principles and law, and cooperate in combating nontraditional security threats. The two ministers also suggested that law enforcement agencies exchange information related to the South China Sea and fishing issues ("Vietnam, Indonesia Sign Declaration on Joint Vision on Defence Cooperation," 2017). In April 2018, the third iteration of the Vietnam-Indonesia Bilateral Cooperation Committee was held in Hanoi by the foreign ministers. Both parties agreed to establish a coordination mechanism for the protection of fishing vessels and to combat maritime crimes ("Vietnam-Indonesia Cooperation Committee Convenes Third Meeting," 2018).

Recent agreements and the increasing number of high-level visits indicate strengthening of the Indonesia-Vietnam relationship, a natural strategic development given shared maritime concerns in the South China Sea. However, tangible cooperation remains limited.

Summary of Findings

Based on meetings with over 20 Indonesian officials and nongovernment experts from August 2016 to May 2018, it is clear that Indonesia is developing international defense partnerships with all of the

countries examined in this study. However, these partnerships are not part of a cohesive strategy for Indonesia to play a particular role in the emerging security architecture of the broader Indo-Pacific region and are certainly not in pursuit of alignment. Rather, each partnership serves a particular end for Indonesia, most often as an enabler of Indonesia's progress toward developing a modern military that can safeguard Indonesian sovereignty.

Specifically, there are five key factors that drive how and why Indonesia engages in international defense cooperation, each affecting relations with the partners described in this volume. These are outlined below.

Modernization Is the Primary Goal

The primary driver for Indonesian defense diplomacy is the modernization of the TNI, which is ultimately linked to the defense of sovereignty and national unity. After a period of neglect during the early years of political reform following the fall of Suharto in 1998, the TNI has been eager to catch up and become a military suitable for a country of Indonesia's size. Defense leaders do not aspire for a globally competitive force but do seek to have a "minimal essential force" that Indonesia can hold in high esteem, particularly compared with smaller neighbors Singapore and Malaysia. In this sense, prestige is a significant factor that undergirds Indonesia's defense modernization goals, in addition to building a force that can defend the nation.

Indonesia's defense modernization goals play a role in nearly all of the defense partnerships examined in this volume. With Australia, they see a partner who can help Indonesia with professionalization, including through education. With South Korea, Indonesian defense leaders see a source for high-end air and naval platforms and technology. With India, they see a partner for building naval and air platforms, as well as a Navy from which they can learn. With Japan, they see the possibilities for gifting of efficient, effective naval vessels. With the Philippines, they also see an export destination and potential co-production partner. While modernization is not a driver of ties with Vietnam, initiatives for co-developing naval equipment would be warmly welcomed should they be put on the table in the future.

It should be noted that modernization goals are also major drivers in relations with countries not examined in this volume, including the United States and Russia, countries that Indonesia regards as essential sources for high-end platforms. In these cases as well, geopolitical considerations are secondary.

Protecting Indonesian Sovereignty Is Also a Key Objective

While Indonesian defense policy does not have many clearly articulated ends, it is clear that protecting Indonesian sovereignty and asserting greater control over activities within Indonesia's vast exclusive economic zone are first-order issues. These concerns are compounded by Indonesian history, which is dominated by a colonial experience that looms large in the Indonesian psyche; Indonesians are constantly wary of the designs of outsiders on Indonesia's rich natural resources. Likewise, Indonesia's postcolonial history during which separatism routinely threatened the unity of Indonesia make territorial integrity a top priority for political leaders as voters expect leaders to maintain national cohesion.

Indonesia's dispute with China regarding overlapping exclusive economic zone claims in the waters surrounding Indonesia's Natuna Islands (which are not in dispute) has become the most visible perceived threat to Indonesian security and national interests in recent years. In private meetings, senior defense officials suggested in private communications that the Natuna Islands provide the military a chance to gain Jokowi's attention, due to the political salience of the issue. The Natuna Islands issue has also become an important planning consideration for defense policy and factors into how Indonesia approaches international defense partnerships. This issue has highlighted Indonesia's need to build its maritime capabilities to patrol its own waters, which are an important driver in its international defense diplomacy. It also makes deeper defense ties with China undesirable, despite the importance Jakarta ascribes to close economic ties with Beijing.

More broadly, porous borders and proliferation of transnational threats are also bringing Indonesia closer to its neighbors, most importantly the Philippines. Building ties with immediate regional neighbors helps the government counter illicit threats that it views as disruptive

to domestic stability: most pertinently in the eyes of the government, to combat drug trafficking and terrorism. This was poignantly on display in 2016 with Jokowi's immediate reaction to a hostage crisis in the Philippines that endangered Indonesian citizens: within months, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines agreed to joint patrols (Sapiie, 2016a).

Regional Order Is Not a Top-Level Concern

Compared with some of the other countries examined in this volume, concerns regarding regional order and China's growing assertiveness and military modernization are not primary drivers of Indonesia's international defense diplomacy. Unlike many of Indonesia's neighbors, China-U.S. competition and challenges to the postwar liberal international order are simply not the dominant lens through which Indonesian leaders approach foreign and defense policy.

Rather than seeking to bandwagon with the United States and its allies in the face of China's assertiveness, senior Indonesian officials instead continue to describe the 1990s U.S. weapons embargo as "traumatic" for Indonesia and argue that Jakarta has learned the lesson to diversify and not depend on any one country—or alignment in general—to protect itself. In the words of a former Cabinet official, "East Timor was a wakeup call for Indonesia, and led to the trust deficit that remains currently. Indonesia lost trust in the world and is still shaped by the belief that they will do everything they can to avoid this situation again" (author interview).

Meanwhile, Indonesia seeks an increasingly deep relationship with China, which can at times make Jakarta reluctant to confront China over territorial concerns, with Indonesia's muted reaction to the 2016 Law of the Sea tribunal decision standing as a key exemplar of this approach. As a nonclaimant to the disputed features of the South China Sea, Indonesia has largely seen its role as an intermediary and seeks to maintain good offices with all parties without incurring damage to its relations with China by standing up to Beijing.

This factor also means that partners seeking to use Indonesia as a potential balancer against China are unlikely to find much interest in this proposition in Jakarta. Japan, in particular, has encountered dif-

ficulties in building strategic ties with Indonesia, as Indonesia is reluctant to alienate China by building a deeper defense partnership with Japan. Instead, according to private conversations with senior defense officials, Indonesia sees benefits in engagement with partners such as Korea who do not carry the same sorts of political baggage with China that would accompany deeper defense relations with Japan.

Defense Industrial Cooperation Is an Important Goal

Indonesian administrations in recent years have been interested in building Indonesia's domestic defense industry, which is in line with the broader national goal of expanding manufacturing in Indonesia. The Jokowi administration, which is seeking to bolster state-owned enterprises (SOEs) across the board, has encouraged foreign defense firms to partner with Indonesian SOEs to build up the country's defense industry. This trend goes back to the second Yudhoyono administration (2009–2014), with the appointment of Purnomo Yusgiantoro as defense minister with the mandate to build Indonesia's defense industry. Parliament has also loudly concurred with its defense industry law because, as a member of parliament with responsibility for defense and foreign affairs bluntly commented, "We prioritize our defense industry" (author interview).

In private meetings in support of this study, Indonesian defense officials and other experts routinely stated that building Indonesia's defense industry was a key driver for international defense diplomacy. The example most often cited as a success story in this area is with South Korea (Santosa and Perdani, 2013). South Korea is often cited as a perfect partner for Indonesia, given the sophisticated level of technology, a willingness to transfer technology, and relatively low costs.

On the other hand, partners with whom defense industrial cooperation is undesirable become lower priority overall defense partners for Indonesia. For instance, Japan is seen to be a more difficult partner in this field due to domestic Japanese restrictions on defense trade and the perceived high cost of Japanese equipment. As the defense ministry's defense industry policy committee has publicly stated, Indonesia's limited defense budget constrains Indonesia's partnerships for defense

knowledge and technology acquisition, especially with major Western firms (Sapiie, 2016b). Partners like South Korea, then, who not only offer attractive packages that can come with co-development options and carry less political risk, become more attractive for Indonesia.

Defense Policy Not a High Priority, but Is Seen as Useful for Broader Ties

Finally, it is important to note that Indonesia's defense relationships do not occur in a vacuum—they are part of overall bilateral relationships. In some cases, with countries that are key overall partners for Indonesia, defense ties have achieved a measure of prominence that outstrips the priority that the Indonesian defense establishment might otherwise place on that relationship.

Of the countries considered in this volume, two stand out in this regard: Japan and Australia, the two countries with which the Indonesian defense minister takes part in 2 + 2 ministerial dialogues. In the case of Japan, it should be noted that while Japan is not a particularly important defense partner for Indonesia, Japan is an enormously important overall partner for the government of Indonesia due its importance as a foreign investor. Given the government of Japan's interest in building a deeper defense relationship with Indonesia and Indonesia's interest in overall relations, Indonesia is happy to engage in these types of forums. However, one should not conclude that the level of dialogue indicates the priority that the Indonesian defense establishment places on the relationship.

Likewise, with Australia, the intensity and frequency of bilateral dialogue should not be read as suggesting that the Indonesian defense establishment sees a strong alignment of interests with their Australian counterparts. Rather, close defense ties are seen as an important component of a difficult relationship that must nonetheless be managed and remain stable. It is also a testament to intensive Australian efforts to build the relationship over time. However, while senior Indonesian defense officials will—sometimes begrudgingly—acknowledge the benefits of joint training with the Australian Defense Force, close ties are largely in recognition that to a great extent, as neighbors, they must get along.

Conclusion

In sum, this chapter argues that Indonesia is developing defense ties with other Indo-Pacific countries for an array of reasons, with the broad goal of modernizing the Indonesian military and building a domestic defense industry to ensure Indonesian independence and sovereignty.

For the purposes of this volume, the most important finding of this chapter is that neither China's military modernization nor doubts about U.S. staying power in Asia are the main drivers for Indonesia's expanding defense diplomacy. Rather than strategic alignment, Indonesia's main goals are more immediately practical—to procure equipment, to acquire technology, to counter transnational threats, and to build a defense industrial base.

China does lurk in the background and is concerning to Indonesian defense planners, particularly as it relates directly to Indonesian interests around the Natuna Islands. However, this dynamic is balanced internally by Indonesia's interest in building a deeper economic relationship with China, as well as the nonaligned core of Indonesian foreign policy.

Nonetheless, while Indonesia eschews strategic defense alignment with particular countries, most of its key defense partners happen to be the like-minded countries considered here. As a result, in the end, Indonesia sits at the edge, in close proximity, to the new constellation of defense partnerships in the Indo-Pacific examined in this volume.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Vietnam: Seeking Partners Through Omnidirectional Engagement

This chapter assesses the key drivers behind Vietnam's defense relationships with Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea.[1] It finds that, for the most part, Hanoi seeks to strengthen these regional partnerships with the primary goal of complicating China's expanding presence and military operations in the South China Sea. Vietnam believes that deepening defense contacts with these countries, as well as others (most notably the United States and Russia), enables Vietnam to procure the military assets and training needed to more effectively deter Beijing from settling territorial disputes through the use of force. In addition, these partnerships bolster Hanoi's emphasis on the need to establish a code of conduct in the South China Sea.

A secondary objective of these defense ties is to assist Vietnam more broadly in modernizing and professionalizing the Vietnam People's Army (VPA)[2] to carry out nontraditional military operations, such as peacekeeping operations (PKO), SAR, and HA/DR. Vietnam welcomes the opportunity to learn from regional partners to enhance VPA

[1] Vietnam's perspective on strengthening these regional defense partnerships is derived from a range of Vietnamese state- and party-run media articles and defense journals; official defense documents; government-affiliated academic papers; and roughly a dozen interviews of Vietnamese government and think-tank personnel, retired Vietnam People's Army (VPA) generals and colonels, and defense correspondents with state-run media outlets. We also spoke with numerous current and former defense attaches representing the countries of interest to this study who had experience serving in Vietnam.

[2] In this chapter, "VPA" refers to Vietnam's ground, navy, air, border forces, and maritime police.

capabilities and operational skills. Hanoi's approach leverages defense contacts, including rotational officer training and joint exercise opportunities, to improve the VPA's overall effectiveness.

Finally, as a non-U.S. ally, Vietnam's defense cooperation outreach to its neighbors is not substantially driven by direct concerns about U.S. staying power or commitment to the Indo-Pacific, but it is driven by a concern over regional balancing calculations that are at least indirectly tied to U.S. presence, capabilities, and commitments and the implications of these for the regional balance of power. However, Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) leaders continue to harbor suspicions of Washington's intentions and are particularly concerned that the United States might seek to encourage a "peaceful evolution" to liberal democracy within Vietnam; they have to balance these concerns against the need for assistance in resisting an increasingly powerful China, making for some challenging trade-offs in a foreign policy that seeks to maximize autonomy and derive resources to improve Vietnam's own security.[3] Either way, Hanoi is generally cautious not to unnecessarily antagonize China by cultivating too close a defense relationship with Washington. Yet, based on recent developments in U.S.-Vietnam bilateral ties, there are ample indicators that this dynamic is changing in favor of further engagement with the United States across many facets of the relationship—with defense as an important component. Relatedly, during the late–Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang's visit to India in early 2018, Hanoi seemingly endorsed the Trump administration's call to keep the Indo-Pacific region "free and open," which aims to prevent any one power (implicitly China) from dominating and controlling the South China Sea and Indian Ocean (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2018a).

To describe Vietnam's defense cooperation with the partner countries of this study, this chapter draws on key official documents as well as secondary source scholarly analyses and primary source in-person interviews conducted in Vietnam in the fall of 2017. These interviews included discussions with current and former Vietnamese government

[3] See for example, Le, 2014.

officials and military officers, academics and think-tank analysts, and officials stationed at foreign embassies in Vietnam.

This chapter proceeds by first examining the historical underpinnings of Vietnam's decision to move away from maintaining bilateral ties with only the socialist bloc and nonaligned movement (NAM) states during the Cold War in favor of a significant diversification of bilateral relationships by the early 1990s. Following this, it turns to an exploration of how China's military expansion and assertiveness in the South China Sea has bolstered and deepened Hanoi's interest in diversifying its defense cooperation with foreign partners in recent years. The third section assesses the contours of Vietnam's bilateral defense relationships with Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea in the areas of high-level defense and security dialogues, training and exercises, arms sales and transfers, co- or joint-industrial defense development, and defense-related cooperation arrangements such as GSOMIAs or ACSAs. The fourth section provides a brief overview of Hanoi's defense ties with ASEAN, China, Russia, and the United States for comparative context. The penultimate section compares the key driver behind Vietnam's behavior in the defense domain—to constrain Chinese actions in the South China Sea—with other potential explanations that are examined in this study. The final section offers some concluding thoughts on the relevance of our findings for Asia-Pacific security and U.S. policy.

Policy Reorientation Drives Proliferation of Relationships

Shortly after the end of World War II, in September 1945, Vietnamese nationalist and communist leader Ho Chi Minh declared the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). The DRV at this time, however, remained under threat from French military forces, prompting Ho to attempt to enlist President Harry S. Truman's support in 1946. Truman rebuffed Ho, leading Hanoi to rely exclusively on socialist partners China and the Soviet Union to defeat the French in 1954, and, ultimately the United States in 1975. After reunifying the country, the VCP remained plugged into the broader socialist bloc

and NAM partnership network (most notably India and Indonesia, for the purposes of this study). This all changed in 1979, however, when Vietnam, following repeated attacks by the Khmer Rouge, responded by invading Cambodia. The war resulted in the formation of an economic sanctions regime against Vietnam, which included China along with ASEAN, the United States, and other Western countries.[4] Beijing subsequently launched attacks along the China-Vietnam land border in 1979 to "teach Vietnam a lesson" (Womack, 2006). By 1982, Sino-Soviet tensions had sufficiently recovered from their split in 1960 that Beijing was no longer as concerned about losing influence to the Soviets and their proxies in Indochina. China therefore sought to "bleed Vietnam white" by encouraging it to stay longer to fight insurgency in Cambodia (Womack, 2006). Hanoi did not fully withdraw from military operations in Cambodia until 1989.

Sustained tensions with China, along with severe domestic economic challenges, contributed significantly to the VCP's decision by the mid-1980s to chart an entirely different path, and it adopted two specific policy steps to do so. First, in late 1986 at the Sixth Party Congress, it implemented the watershed policy of *doi moi*, or "renovation," which liberalized Vietnam's economy and enabled it to interact with nonsocialist economies, both bilaterally and through multilateral economic institutions. According to Vietnamese academic Le Hong Hiep, an expert on the domestic political drivers of *doi moi*, the VCP was concerned about its very survival and therefore felt compelled to open up Vietnam's economy. Interestingly, *doi moi* was mostly focused on normalizing relations with Vietnam's largest economic partner, China, but it simultaneously authorized economic interactions with other countries as well (Le, 2013a, 2017b). Indeed, a scholar with the ministry of foreign affairs' think tank the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV) argues that *doi moi* was Hanoi's way of avoiding having to choose sides between major powers—such as when Vietnam had to choose between the Soviet Union and China following the Sino-Soviet split. Instead, *doi moi* encouraged market-led growth that enabled Vietnam to pursue

[4] For an authoritative overview of this history, see Thayer, 2017b. Also see Vu Tuan Anh, 1994.

international integration on its own terms and to avoid getting locked into one choice (author interview).

Second, and relatedly, the VCP in May 1988 adopted Resolution Number 13—On the Tasks and Foreign Policy in the New Situation, which articulated Hanoi's intent to make "more friends, fewer enemies" by forging a "multidirectional," or, as the Vietnamese also call it, an "omnidirectional" foreign policy. This led to an emphasis on pursuing relations with ASEAN, Japan, Europe, and the United States (though only on a "step-by-step" basis with the last of these).[5] As part of Resolution Number 13, the VCP assessed that "with a strong economy, just enough national defense capability, and expanded international relations, we will be more able to maintain our independence and successfully construct socialism."[6] In 1992, Vietnam's then–Deputy Foreign Minister Tran Quang Co wrote that "at present, the enemies of Vietnam are poverty, famine, and backwardness; and the friends of Vietnam are all those who support us in the fight against these enemies" (Tran Quang Co, 1992). Taken together, the policy changes underscored the extent to which Hanoi was willing to expand international engagement with *any* country that could support Vietnam's economic development and consequently its ability to avoid dependence on a single or small number of foreign actors.

Resolution Number 13 sanctioned the development of these new relationships based on Vietnam's *national* interests—a stark departure from the previous *class*-based view of the country's interests that had largely limited Hanoi's interactions to only other socialist states in the Soviet camp. As it began to move away from an ideologically defined foreign policy and toward a more nationally based view of its interests, the VCP would later, in July 2003, issue Resolution Number 8—On Defense of the Homeland in the New Situation, detailing the need

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5 See Thayer 2017b; Le Hong Hiep, 2013a; Phan Doan Nam, 2006; and Nguyen Manh Hung, 2006.

6 Resolution Number 13, along with many other VCP resolutions, remains classified within Vietnam. However, according to Le Hong Hiep, we know about them as many have been referenced or excerpted by Vietnamese researchers associated with government-affiliated think tanks in *Tap chi Cong san* [*Communist Review*]. In this case, our quotations of Resolution Number 13 were cited in Tung Nguyen Vu, 2010.

for Vietnam to "cooperate and struggle" in world affairs to protect its national interests, a shift driven in substantial measure by the need to strengthen Vietnam's position against threats posed by China.

Geopolitical calculations based on national interest resulted in a dramatic expansion of bilateral relationships from the late 1980s through the early 2000s. Indeed, just in terms of its total number of diplomatic partners, Hanoi expanded its formal ties from 23 in 1989 to 163 by 1995 (Thayer, 2016b). In particular, the period between 1991 and 1995 witnessed Hanoi either establishing or normalizing relations with key countries including China, the United States, India, Japan, numerous European countries, and ASEAN (Thayer, 1996). Since being issued in May 1988, every party congress has reaffirmed Resolution Number 13 in some form or another (Thayer, 2016b). Most recently, the 12th Party Congress in January 2016 stated

> To ensure successful implementation of foreign policy and international integration . . . [the Party will] consistently carry out the foreign policy of independence, autonomy, peace, cooperation, and development . . . [and] diversify and multilateralize external relations. (Nguyen Phu Trong, 2016)

Despite Vietnam's dramatic successes over the last 25 years in significantly growing its diplomatic relations both regionally and globally, one of the major obstacles to deepening substantive cooperation—particularly in the defense domain—is its adherence to a concept known as "the Three Nos."[7] The Three Nos are derived from Hanoi's history of self-reliance and independence and consist of (1) no formal military alliances, (2) no military basing on its territory, and (3) no military activities aimed at a third party country (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Ministry of Defense, 2009). The Three Nos policy has had real-world consequences for Vietnamese defense diplomacy when attempting to respond to China's actions in the South China Sea. For example, according to interviews with retired Vietnamese officials, Vietnam has considered participating in an India-Japan-Vietnam tri-

[7] For an in-depth discussion on the "Three Nos" policy and its implications for U.S. defense policy, see Grossman and Dung Huynh, 2019.

lateral security dialogue, but the Three Nos policy has complicated such an approach, rendering it more difficult for Hanoi to embrace (author interview). Nevertheless, Vietnam in recent months has gone further down the multilateral alignment path than ever before by quietly offering support to the Quad—a group that includes not only India and Japan but also Australia and the United States.[8]

The Three Nos debate aside, Vietnam incorporates "defense and security" as part of many of its deepening bilateral relationships, albeit on a very select basis. One way to get a sense of the closeness of Vietnam's partnership with another country is by looking at whether or not it also includes defense and security components and, if so, how it characterizes these. For instance, Hanoi only maintains "comprehensive strategic partnerships," its highest level of partnership encompassing defense and security collaboration, with three countries: China (2008), Russia (2012), and India (2016).[9] As we will discuss further in the next section, China is a unique member of this elite group in that even though China and Vietnam maintain significant disagreements in the South China Sea, Beijing is still counted, on paper at least, as a socialist and therefore friendly country. It also helps that China is Vietnam's largest trading partner. Regardless, defense cooperation is more controlled with China than with Russia and India.

Even though Japan is not part of Vietnam's comprehensive strategic partnerships, Hanoi nonetheless has maintained an "Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia" with Tokyo since 2014 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2017a). As will be explored further below, Vietnam-Japan defense cooperation is actually quite robust and continues to deepen. However, the public language used to describe this arrangement is probably constrained

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[8] Author discussions with analysts involved in Vietnam's low-key role in the Quad. For an analysis of whether Vietnam fits well within the Quad construct, see Corben, 2018; and Grossman, 2018b.

[9] Technically China is a "comprehensive strategic *cooperative* partner" of Vietnam, underscoring the exceptional closeness of the relationship. In addition, Laos is Vietnam's closest partner of all—above comprehensive strategic partner. Vietnam-Laos relations have been forged from deep cooperation against the United States during the Vietnam War. Vietnam and Laos are bound in "special solidarity."

due to concerns about sending an unnecessarily provocative message to China. Likewise, while Vietnam acknowledges maintaining only a "comprehensive partnership" with the United States (2013), there are clear indications that the partnership has broadened in recent years to include several areas of defense and security. Generally, "strategic partnership" designations appear to be reserved for nonmajor but still important partners of Vietnam. These contacts, however, have minimal defense and security cooperation incorporated into them. Vietnam has designated a number of countries as "strategic partners," including, for this study, Australia (2018), Indonesia (2013), the Philippines (2015), and South Korea (2009).

Regardless of the terminology it uses to describe its interactions with other countries, Hanoi maintains many defense channels of communication with countries across the globe. The last official numbers for these relationships were provided by Vietnam's Ministry of National Defence (MND) in 2009. At that time, the MND stated that Vietnam had established defense relationships with 65 countries (including those mentioned above), had established defense attaché offices in 31 countries, and was hosting 42 defense attaché offices from foreign countries in Vietnam (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Ministry of Defense, 2009). These totals today, ten years later, are almost certainly significantly higher.[10] In short, over the last 25 years, Vietnam has successfully transitioned from maintaining very few bilateral relationships with mostly socialist countries, to engaging with virtually all states that might support its national interests.

Omnidirectional Foreign Policy in the China Context

Although the South China Sea sovereignty dispute is not new to Vietnam-China relations, recent events have significantly ratcheted up

[10] In its review of Vietnam's progress on international integration to date, the VCP at the 12th Party Congress in January 2016 noted that Hanoi had to do more on forging bilateral relationships, including in the area of defense. This is an important indicator of Vietnam's intent to continue pushing forward with defense cooperation. For more, see "Overall Strategy for International Integration to 2020, Vision to 2030," 2016.

bilateral tension and caused serious concern within Vietnamese leadership circles.[11] The seminal moment occurred in May 2014 when China moved the *Haiyang Shiyou (HYSY) 981* oil rig into disputed waters. This decision sparked a months-long maritime standoff, with China sending overwhelming force to the region, including not only China Coast Guard (CCG) and maritime militia but also China's PLA naval and air assets. Although the PLA did not fire shots during the standoff, the CCG rammed a number of Vietnamese vessels until the incident ended when Beijing withdrew the oil rig.

Prior to the oil rig crisis, it is worth noting that Vietnam's public blaming and shaming of China's activities in the South China Sea was kept to a minimum. A good example of this was Vietnam's last defense white paper, which, when issued in 2009, discussed relations with China exclusively in a cooperative context (Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Ministry of Defense, 2009). Since the oil rig incident, however, the VCP at times has been more direct about its concerns. For instance, during Vietnam's 12th Party Congress in January 2016, a permanent member of the party's secretariat, Le Hong Anh, gave an authoritative speech that described the South China Sea as being the most challenging area for Vietnam in recent years (Van Hieu, 2016).

Then, at the Shangri-La Dialogue in June 2016, Senior Lieutenant General and Deputy Defense Minister Nguyen Chi Vinh for the first time used the term *dau tranh*—or "political struggle"—to describe Vietnam's increasingly antagonistic relationship with Beijing.[12] Vinh noted that while Vietnam seeks to strengthen cooperation with China "to find common points in strategic interests," it simultaneously must "struggle openly with a constructive spirit." This characterization reflects the conclusions of Resolution Number 13 and Resolution Number 8 that lay out a vision of defending Vietnam's national

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[11] Bilateral tension in the South China Sea has been a problem for decades. In January 1974, for example, a brief naval skirmish between South Vietnamese and Chinese warships resulted in Vietnam's total loss of its holdings in the Paracel Islands. Another brief encounter in the Spratly Islands in March 1988 resulted in the deaths of dozens of Vietnamese sailors at Johnson South Reef and the loss of the reef itself. For an authoritative analysis, see Hayton, 2015.

[12] For his full statement, see Nguyen Chi Vinh, 2016.

interests through both "cooperation and struggle." He went on to state that China was responsible for "changes to the status quo along with the threat of militarization" (Nguyen Chi Vinh, 2016). Indeed, since the May 2014 oil rig incident, Hanoi has taken to referring to a "new situation" with Beijing, suggesting the advent of a more adversarial dynamic.[13] Vietnamese leaders have continued to speak of China's behavior in the South China Sea, even if through coded language. For example, on his visit to India in March 2018, the late Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang agreed, in a joint statement, to the need to maintain a "peaceful and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region—language associated with Trump's Indo-Pacific strategy, which is widely considered to be aimed at China (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2018a).

According to a prominent international affairs reporter in Vietnam, Beijing's ultimate geopolitical objective is to push the United States out of the Asia-Pacific, implying that such an outcome would not be beneficial to Vietnam as it would eliminate the most significant counterweight to Beijing's growing regional clout. While it continues to develop the military hardware to accomplish this task, Beijing can already leverage its increasingly capable noncombat assets, namely the CCG, to put pressure on smaller countries such as Vietnam, as it did successfully during the May 2014 oil rig standoff (author interview). Retired Vietnamese government officials we interviewed agreed, adding that although China and Vietnam historically have experienced numerous periods of tension, this time is different. They note that the VCP's approach of attempting to maintain cordial ties with Beijing has not been working and that the military capabilities gap between China and Vietnam is "very large," for which reason they favor additional VPA modernization, including the acquisition of advanced missiles to deter Chinese aggression (author interview).[14]

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[13] Vietnamese officials commonly use "new situation" as a code term to describe the growing possibility of an armed conflict with China in the South China Sea. For more information, see Torode, 2015. See, for example, Nguyen Nhat Anh, 2014.

[14] For more on VPA modernization and professionalization to deter China in the South China Sea, see Grossman, 2018a.

This mind-set has reinforced the perceived need for Vietnam to expand and deepen defense cooperation with regional partners as the first line of defense. For example, an editor of a major source of online information on international affairs opined that Vietnam must "make more friends" so as to improve its capacity to deal with bullying by China (author interview). Separately, a government-affiliated researcher recalled an old Vietnamese saying, "One stick is easy to break, but many sticks are hard to break." He likened the expression to Vietnam's need to find more partners to limit the excesses of China's behavior in the South China Sea (author interview).

Indeed, Vietnamese academics have also published on this matter. Le Hong Hiep, for example, has argued that Vietnam is moving toward "alliance politics," or, in his words, "efforts to forge close security and defense ties short of formal, treaty-bound alliances with key partners, to deal with the new situation." Hiep specifically cites the May 2014 oil rig crisis as evidence that Hanoi requires deeper partnerships to contend with China in the South China Sea (Le, 2015).[15] Government-affiliated Vietnamese researchers have also explored the impact that Beijing's assertiveness is having on Hanoi's approach to defense cooperation. For instance, Nguyen Vu Tung, currently the president of DAV, wrote a piece in 2010 highlighting "new threats to national security" in which he prominently highlighted sovereignty disputes with China in the region. From his perspective, an important part of Vietnam's response has been to broaden and deepen "defense diplomacy" to better address the threat from China (Tung Nguyen Vu, 2017). In another case, a fellow at the DAV's Institute for East China Sea Studies, Tran Truong Thuy, argued in 2016 that Vietnam is attempting to use regional forums, namely ASEAN, to influence the South China Sea discussion in a favorable direction. To supplement this approach, Hanoi is "engaging the participation of other major powers in the South China Sea," including the United States, Japan, Australia, India, and several European countries (Tran Truong Thuy, 2016). Tran, along with another DAV fellow, Nguyen Minh Ngoc, argued in 2013 that

[15] For the role that defense diplomacy plays in his broader "hedging strategy," see Le Hong Hiep, 2013b, pp. 333–368.

Vietnam's defense diplomacy must "actively contribute" to the South China Sea issue (Tran Truong Thuy and Nguyen Minh Ngoc, 2013).

In short, the VCP's growing concerns over Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea is one of the most important factors in Vietnam's expanding and deepening defense cooperation efforts. The next section turns to a description of Vietnam's defense cooperation with regional partners in greater depth.

Regional Partnerships with Other Countries in This Study

This section (as well as Table 7.1) explores the defense relationships Vietnam maintains with the other six countries in this study, including Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea. As noted above, the nature of Vietnam's defense cooperation with each of these countries varies significantly, and we will pay particular attention here to whether and to what extent Vietnam maintains the following with each counterpart: high-level defense and security dialogues, training and exercises, arms sales (or purchases) and transfers, co- or joint development, and agreements such as GSOMIA and ASCA that support military cooperation.

Australia—Strengthening Ties with the West

Vietnam engages in annual high-level defense dialogues and a range of military training activities with Australia. The VPA also benefits from the import of light weaponry from Canberra, along with the blueprints for defense industrial development that serves to enhance the VPA's defense industrial output. However, as of March 2019, there have been no joint military exercises between the two nations, no arms sales beyond light weapons, no co-development efforts, and no military agreements such as GSOMIA or ASCA put in place.[16] Moreover, there appears to be a general imbalance in the bilateral defense relation-

[16] On joint exercises, our Australia chapter notes that since 2014, Canberra and Hanoi have annually participated in "Dawn/Dusk Buffalo"—a counterterrorism and special operations exercise. This author, however, has been unable to confirm the existence of, or any further details on, the exercise.

Table 7.1
Vietnam's Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	Australia	India	Indonesia	Japan	Philippines	South Korea
Partnership Type	Strategic	Comprehensive strategic	Strategic	Strategic	Strategic	Strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Arms Sales and Transfers	Yes	Yes	No	No[1]	No	No
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	No	No	No	No	No	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	No	No	No	No	No	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	Yes[2]	No[3]	Yes	No
GSOMIA	No	No	No	No	No	No

SOURCE: RAND interviews and open-source data collection.

NOTES: [1] Vietnam has received maritime coastal patrol craft from Japan, but this is not considered an export of defense hardware by Japan.
[2] Vietnam has agreed to and may have conducted some limited military exchanges with Indonesia. Additionally, Vietnamese forces have participated in the multilateral Komodo exercises hosted by Indonesia.
[3] The Japan Coast Guard has carried out exchanges with the Vietnam Coast Guard, but these are not considered military exchanges in this study.

ship, with the two sides seeking different levels of cooperation. For its part, Vietnam had sought for some time to upgrade relations with Australia to the level of a "comprehensive *strategic* partnership," but Canberra kept relations confined to the level of "enhanced comprehensive partnership" until ultimately upgrading to a "strategic partnership" in March 2018 (Thayer, 2017a).

In November 2018, Vietnam and Australia signed the Joint Vision Statement on Enhancing Defense Cooperation, reaffirming the

MOU on Bilateral Defense Cooperation signed in 2010 (Thu Trang, 2018c). The MOU called for enhanced educational training opportunities, especially in practical areas such as English-language instruction and specialist training for PKOs. Another MOU, signed in 2012, called for ramping up these activities further and established what was intended to be an annual defense ministers' meeting, though the group has only met twice to date (once at its inauguration in 2013 and again in 2017). Nevertheless, Hanoi and Canberra maintain annual defense cooperation talks among senior officials, with the most recent occurring in October 2018, and added a 2 + 2 strategic dialogue in 2012 (Lam Anh, 2018).[17] Hanoi and Canberra completed their sixth annual foreign affairs and defense strategic dialogue at which both sides reiterated their intent to boost defense cooperation and to uphold freedom of navigation in the spirit of the 1982 UNCLOS ("Vietnam, Australia Hold Strategic Dialogue on Foreign Affairs and Defence," 2018). They also agreed to continue working closely within multilateral organizations, such as ASEAN. Australia held dialogue partner status and hosted a special ASEAN-Australia summit in Sydney in 2018.[18] Expressing mutual respect for UNCLOS is typical of past such dialogues and indeed was a prominent feature of Australia's elevation to an enhanced cooperative partner in 2015.[19] Hanoi is looking to Canberra for rhetorical support of its position in the South China Sea. For instance, in August 2017, when Vietnamese Minister of National Defence General Ngo Xuan Lich met with his Australian counterpart, Marise Payne, the two sides highlighted their governments' frequent consultations at multilateral gatherings, including ARF, ASEAN

[17] For a list of high-level defense meetings, see Vietnamese Embassy of Australia, n.d. Also see Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018a, which notes the 2 + 2 strategic dialogue.

[18] While not out of the ordinary for an ASEAN dialogue partner to host a special session of the ASEAN summit, Australia's hosting was probably significant for Vietnam because Canberra is like-minded on one of the key issues for discussion—the South China Sea. For more on the context of special ASEAN sessions, see Parameswaran, 2017a.

[19] In 2015, Vietnam and Australia released a joint statement supporting UNCLOS and stating that "both countries agree on the urgent need to conclude a code of conduct for the South China Sea." For more, see Vietnamese Embassy in Australia, 2015.

defense ministers' meeting, and the East Asia Summit (EAS) ("Vietnam Supports Strengthened Defence Links with Australia," 2017). Vietnamese leaders hope that Australian support in multilateral settings will constrain China's influence and force it to follow regional and international norms of behavior.

Vietnam and Australia conduct a wide range of military training activities. According to the description on the Australian Embassy in Vietnam's website, Canberra's "Defence Cooperation Program" encompasses "long-term professional development courses and short courses for Vietnamese personnel at Defence institutions in Australia, Mobile Training Team visits to Hanoi and Laos, and individual training in Australia" (Australian Embassy, Vietnam, n.d.). Australian training of VPA officers specifically includes English-language instruction, military medical training, counterterrorism, maritime safety, military engineer or "sapper" training, and SAR and PKO specialist training ("Deputy Defence Minister Meets Vice Chief of Australia's Defence Force," 2017). The MOU signed between the two sides in 2010 enabled further, more sensitive training in the naval and special forces domains, typically centered around naval ship visits (Australian Embassy, Vietnam, n.d.; Thayer, 2017a). According to a retired VPA general, cooperation with Australia is important because Australian forces demonstrate strong fighting abilities (author interview). More broadly, he described Vietnam-Australia defense cooperation as "a two-way street," which featured Hanoi seeking technology and training and Canberra seeking military capacity-building. He noted that VPA troops commonly prefer Australian-made light guns and that Vietnam valued Australia's assembly line process for weapons development (author interview).

Going forward, Vietnam is likely to seek ways to expand defense relations with Australia. In particular, broadening the areas of cooperation between the two sides could take the form of co-development or arms sales since Hanoi respects the quality of Canberra's weaponry. However, issues of cost and lack of interoperability with the VPA's primarily Soviet-era military systems will continue to be major obstacles. Regardless, Vietnam has the opportunity to acquire Western tactics, techniques, and procedures by adding new training and exercises. And, significantly, Hanoi probably believes it can do this more quietly with

Australia than with the United States, avoiding unnecessary antagonism of Beijing.

India—Vietnam's "Most Important and Reliable Defense Partner"

India is Vietnam's "most important and reliable defense partner," according to one foreign policy analyst we spoke to for this study, citing the fact that Vietnam and India share a 2,000-year history of interaction, cultural exchange, and political cooperation that includes shared connections such as Buddhism in the distant past, and sympathy for anticolonialism and the need to balance between great powers throughout the Cold War (author interview). Additionally, the researcher notes that Moscow "just sells weapons and does not care much for geopolitics pertaining to Vietnam . . . Russia is a not a 'natural partner,' but Japan and India are because of China" (author interview). Indeed, New Delhi in recent years has demonstrated a clear interest in the geopolitics of the South China Sea. For example, in September 2016, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Hanoi and highlighted Vietnam as critical to India's "Act East" policy to secure its strategic interests in the region. During the same visit, Vietnam and India elevated their relationship to that of a "comprehensive strategic partnership," meaning that defense and security cooperation is set to grow further.

Vietnam's defense cooperation with India spans many different areas. In 2007, the two signed the Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership that arranged for strategic dialogue at the vice-ministerial level, joint training, intelligence exchanges, and technical assistance. It also specified cooperation on joint projects, procurement of defense supplies, and information sharing on maritime security, antipiracy, counterterrorism, and cybersecurity.[20] In 2009, Hanoi and New Delhi signed an MOU that authorized an annual strategic dialogue and high-level defense exchanges, and in 2014, the Modi government pledged to provide four patrol vessels to Vietnam during the Vietnamese defense minister's visit along with an MOU on enhanced coast guard cooperation (Panda, 2015). On a second visit to New Delhi in May 2015, Vietnam and India signed the Joint Vision Statement on Defense Relations

[20] As detailed in Thayer, 2017b.

and Defense Cooperation, which included an annual security dialogue, service-to-service exchanges, professional military education, port visits, ship construction and spare parts provision, defense co-production, maintenance of military equipment, exercises within multilateral constructs, and cooperation in regional forums.[21] During Modi's visit to Hanoi in September 2016, he announced a $500 million line of credit for Hanoi to purchase defense equipment from India ("Vietnam, India Upgrade Ties to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership," 2016).

In March 2018, the late Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang visited India and in a joint statement with Modi pledged to continue deepening defense and security cooperation in many areas, including implementation of an additional $100 million for the procurement of high-speed patrol boats for Vietnam's Border Guards, capacity-building in both the traditional and nontraditional spheres, and cooperation in MDA (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2018a). Most recently, in November 2018, Indian President Ram Nath Kovind visited Vietnam to discuss the overall state of bilateral relations. The topic of New Delhi's $100 million credit package to Vietnam to build high-speed patrol boats came up as part of discussions on maritime security. Kovind also said Vietnam was pivotal to India's "Act East" policy and that "Vietnam and India share a vision for the Indo-Pacific region, of which the South China Sea is a critical component," reiterating New Delhi's commitment to deepening bilateral defense and security cooperation, particularly through joint training opportunities ("Vietnam Pivotal to Act East Policy, Says President Ram Nath Kovind," 2018).

In August 2018, Vietnam's deputy defense minister, Nguyen Chi Vinh, visited India to meet with counterparts and, while there, participated in the 11th annual defense policy dialogue (Parameswaran, 2018h). According to Major General Vu Tien Trong, the director of the MND-connected Institute for Defense and International Relations, the two sides have agreed to hold defense-ministerial-level discussions every two years (Vu, 2017). Service-to-service exchanges are particularly close, and according to a retired colonel who served at

[21] As detailed in Thayer, 2017b.

the MND-affiliated Institute for Defense Strategy, this is seen as particularly relevant for addressing Vietnam's need for assistance with conceptualizing a new navy and air force strategy (author interview).[22] Hanoi likely benefits significantly from outside expertise given its near-exclusive focus on land-centric warfare throughout its history.[23] New Delhi has also offered submarine training using Vietnam's Kilo-class submarines, pilot safety training for the Su-27 Flanker and Su-30, and even ground forces training—underscoring the special and intimate nature of their cooperation (Som, 2016). These training activities, according to one interviewee, are attractive to Vietnam in part because they are significantly less expensive than Russian training (author interview).

Vietnam and India may have quietly held a joint naval exercise in June 2013 that angered Beijing, though few details are available (Mishra, 2014). Regardless, this alleged event has been overshadowed by India and Vietnam's very public decision to conduct joint naval exercises in May 2018 in the South China Sea (Mohanty, 2018). This predictably angered Beijing, with the party-run tabloid *Global Times* scoffing at Hanoi and New Delhi's "futile attempt to flex muscle" (Xu, 2018). Bilateral naval cooperation continues apace, however. In June and September 2018, India sent warships to Da Nang and Ho Chi Minh City respectively on port visits (Parameswaran, 2018l). Later, in December 2018, the VPA Navy's chief, Vice Admiral Pham Hoai Nam, visited his counterparts in India to discuss training and technical maintenance issues and to observe Indian warships and submarines in Mumbai (Parameswaran, 2018q). And in October 2018, for the first time ever, a Vietnamese Coast Guard vessel visited India. While there, the vessel conducted a joint exercise with India off the Chennai coast to practice maritime safety, SAR, and law enforcement tactics (Parameswaran, 2018m). In April 2019, the Indian coast guard returned the favor by sending a vessel to make a port call at Da Nang (PTI, 2019).

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[22] Relations between the two countries' navies and air forces are particularly close. For more, see Vu Tien Trong, 2017.

[23] For more, see Grossman, 2018a.

With respect to arms procurement, New Delhi is a particularly valuable partner for Hanoi because its military inventory is composed primarily of Soviet-era weapon systems, similar to the majority of VPA systems, thereby reducing concerns about maintenance and interoperability. Moreover, as one interviewee asserted, unlike with Russian sales, Vietnam does not have the same counterintelligence concerns when Vietnam receives weapons from India (author interview). It is difficult, however, to identify concrete examples of weapons sales other than systems that have been pledged for the future, such as the four patrol boats in 2014. When a report surfaced in the Indian media in August 2017 that Vietnam had, after years of negotiation, finally secured BrahMos supersonic antiship cruise missiles from India, New Delhi quickly denied the report (Som, 2017). When asked about the deal, Hanoi sidestepped a direct response but pointed out that defense procurement "is consistent with the policy of peace and self-defense and is the normal practice in the national defense," suggesting it would welcome such a sale even if it angered Beijing (Khanh Lynh, 2017). Another system that is commonly mentioned is the *Akash* SAM, which is currently used by the Indian Air Force and Army and has a range of 27 kilometers at Mach 2. *Akash* is also 90 percent indigenously constructed, making it easier for India to sell to Vietnam (without Russian involvement); however, the system does not appear to have been transferred to date (Jha, 2018).

Although defense co-production is listed as an objective in the joint vision statement, we could find no signs that actual co-production has commenced. Shortly after Indian Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's visit to Vietnam in June 2018, it was revealed that New Delhi opened a representative office in Hanoi for the Indian company Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL). However, BEL is a defense electronics company involved in radar, military communications, electronic warfare, and coastal surveillance and is not an armament factory (Parameswaran, 2018f). BEL also is responsible for selling its technologies throughout Southeast Asia and just happens to be based in Hanoi. At least for now, there are no Indian armament production companies in Vietnam. Rather, the bulk of Vietnam-India technical cooperation is in the areas of repair, maintenance, and provision of spare parts to

weapons already in the VPA's inventory. Technical cooperation has also enabled intelligence exchanges. For example, in a unique but mutually beneficial arrangement, Vietnam has allowed India to set up a satellite imaging and tracking center on its soil, and in exchange, it will have access to images covering the region taken by Indian satellites.

Vietnam's defense relationship with India seems likely to expand and deepen in the coming years. Future arms transfers, whether in the form of patrol boats, BrahMos missiles, or other systems, seem probable in light of the two countries' common concerns over China. Co-production may be a more difficult threshold, not because of sensitivities or a mismatch in their military systems (they are actually quite complementary) but more because of bureaucratic barriers preventing such collaboration. If anything, India's defense ties with Vietnam are only made stronger by China's activities in the South China Sea because New Delhi leases oil extraction blocks from Vietnam in the region. This explains, at least in part, India's willingness to conduct joint naval exercises in the South China Sea with Vietnam. Clearly, India, through its "Act East" policy, has a real stake in the outcome of South China Sea disputes. Additionally, India has faced Chinese pressure on maritime routes. For example, according to one Indian general, the Indian warship *Airavat* in September 2012 was harassed by the Chinese navy after having departed from Vietnam (Anand, 2017). Therefore, New Delhi understands the importance of maintaining freedom of navigation in this region and has consistently worked with Vietnam through ASEAN and ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting with the mutual understanding of the need to achieve this objective.

Indonesia—Limited Cooperation but with Prospects for Deepening Partnership

Despite maintaining defense relations with Indonesia since 1964 and designating it a "strategic partner" in 2013, Hanoi has maintained only limited defense ties with its southern neighbor, focusing mainly on occasional high-level delegation exchanges and joint training. Interviews conducted in support of this study suggest that the problem is that Jakarta tends to act unilaterally in the South China Sea to protect its own interests, and those actions do not always align with the inter-

ests of other claimants, such as Vietnam. According to one researcher we spoke with for this study, Indonesia's foreign policy is "like Chinese President Xi Jinping's" in the level of its unilateralism (author interview). Another interlocutor argued that Indonesia "only thinks for itself," asserting that relations are actually quite bad because of disputes over fishing rights in the region, with Indonesia treating captured Vietnamese fishermen poorly (author interview).[24] Nonetheless, a government-affiliated researcher interviewed for this study asserted that Hanoi remains very interested in deepening its defense ties with Jakarta (author interview).

Indeed, in 2010 the two sides signed an MOU to expand their defense policy dialogue. Since 2015, Vietnam and Indonesia have exchanged five high-level defense delegations, with Indonesian Defense Minister General Ryamizard Ryacudu visiting Hanoi in August 2016 ("Vietnam, Indonesia Enhance Defense Cooperation," 2016). During this visit, the two sides agreed to establish mechanisms for defense policy dialogues (the first of which is set to begin sometime in early 2019) and a hotline communication link between defense ministries (Trung Thanh, 2018). They also pledged to continue their joint working group and to conduct joint exercises ("Indonesia, Vietnam Forge Defence Cooperation," 2016). Another outcome of these discussions was that Vietnam and Indonesia agreed to "consult, cooperate, and support" their policy positions within multilateral for a ("Vietnam, Indonesia Enhance Defense Cooperation," 2016).

In August 2017, Vietnamese Deputy Defense Minister Senior Lieutenant General Nguyen Chi Vinh visited Jakarta and met with Indonesian Defense Minister Ryamizard. They agreed to boost the cooperation between their navies, air forces, and coast guards, and to engage in PKO and counterterrorism exchanges ("Vietnam, Indonesia Eye Joint Vision Statement on Defence Cooperation," 2017). Concurrent with Vinh's visit, the Vietnamese Coast Guard (VCG)

[24] Regarding fishing disputes, Vietnam and Indonesia in April 2018 highlighted the need to establish a coordination mechanism to improve the protection of their respective fishermen and fishing vessels in the region. It remains to be seen, however, whether the situation will improve. For more, see Parameswaran, 2018d.

Commander Lt. General Nguyen Quang Dam met with the head of the Indonesian maritime security agency BAKAMLA, Laksdya Tni Ari Soedewo. The two officials signed a letter of intent to improve coordination between coast guards in the spirit of UNCLOS and the code of conduct ("Vietnam, Indonesia Sign Cooperation Agreements," 2017). They agreed that the two sides should respect each other's maritime rights and support their governments' negotiations to delineate respective EEZs. Lt. General Nguyen stressed the importance of communication to prevent fisheries violations, and Soedewo emphasized the need for cooperation in SAR operations ("Vietnam, Indonesia Eye Joint Vision Statement on Defence Cooperation," 2017).

Vinh's visit also paved the way for Vietnamese Minister of National Defense Lich's October 2017 visit to Jakarta during which Lich and Ryamizard signed the Joint Vision Statement on Defense Cooperation for the period of 2017–2022 (Tran, 2017). The joint vision statement looked favorably on the progress reached under the 2010 MOU emphasizing continued defense exchanges; joint activities between their respective air, navy, and coast guard forces; and training. It further called for exploration of a defense policy dialogue between the two sides, defense industry cooperation, and other undisclosed areas of cooperation ("Vietnam, Indonesia Sign Declaration on Joint on Defence Cooperation," 2017).

Recent progress, particularly in the coast guard domain and in high-level visits, could indicate a deepening of Vietnam-Indonesia defense cooperation in the future. Perhaps the most important factor driving this cooperation is Jakarta's hardening of its stance on the Natuna Islands and surrounding waters vis-à-vis China. For years, Indonesia claimed that it was a not a party to the South China Sea dispute. However, in the wake of the election of President Joko Widodo (who has vowed to focus more on the defense of Indonesia's maritime interests) as well as several high-profile Chinese intrusions into the waters around the Natuna Islands, Jakarta has decided to increase its patrols around the Natunas, build a naval base in the Natunas, and rename the part of the sea overlapping with China's nine-dash claim the "North Natuna Sea," angering Beijing (Cochrane, 2017). This could mean that Indonesia will be willing to more vocally and frequently

support a rules-based order in the region in the years ahead, though it is also possible that Jakarta will continue to only seek to unilaterally defend its own claims.

Japan—Strategic Nonlethal Cooperation Aimed at Constraining China

Vietnam and Japan maintain an "Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia," which entails a robust defense component encompassing high-level defense policy discussions, port visits, joint exercises and training, and equipment transfers. According to former senior Vietnamese officials specializing in Japan and Northeast Asia, Hanoi and Tokyo share "a profound and deep partnership," and relations have been particularly positive under Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's leadership (author interview). Hanoi benefits significantly from Tokyo's willingness to stand up to China on territorial disputes, whether in the East China Sea or in South China Sea, and its advocacy of peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law as well as freedom of navigation and overflight. Tokyo's own grievances with Beijing make it an ideal partner for Hanoi.

Both sides reaffirmed their "extensive collaboration and coordination" in regional forums during Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc's visit to Tokyo in June 2017 ("Vietnam, Japan Issue Joint Statement on Deepening Partnership," 2017). To celebrate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of Vietnam-Japan diplomatic relations, then–Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang in May 2018 made an historic five-day visit to Japan and not only met with Abe but was also hosted at a state banquet by then-Emperor Akihito—the highest honor that can be accorded to a visitor. Although Quang's meetings focused on the overall bilateral relationship, he and Abe called out the need to continue working together on ensuring maritime safety in the South China Sea (Associated Press, 2018c).

To be sure, the relationship is not based solely on shared opposition to China's coercive approach to dealing with territorial and maritime disputes; Japan is the second-largest contributor of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Vietnam after South Korea and the largest aid donor. In February 2017, then–Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko visited Vietnam for the first time ever on a well-received tour

to apologize for the actions of Japanese soldiers during World War II—another sign that the relationship, though historically complex, is in excellent health (Pham, 2017).

Defense ties are premised on a series of official statements beginning with an MOU signed in 2011 that directed the establishment of reciprocal defense attaché offices and the commencement of the annual defense policy dialogue (the fifth iteration of which was completed in August 2017). The MOU further authorized the two sides to hold ministerial, chief of staff, and even service-chief-level dialogue channels (Thayer, 2016a). Vietnam and Japan followed up on the MOU with a joint vision statement in September 2015 that codified cooperation on nontraditional security issues such as maritime security, SAR, and PKO (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2015e). Other areas of defense cooperation include military aviation, air defense, submarine rescue, personnel training, counterterrorism, maritime salvage, information technology training, cybersecurity, military medicine, HA/DR, human resources development, antipiracy, unexploded ordnance removal, dioxin contamination removal, and training in how to comply with the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES).[25] Most recently, in March 2019, the Vietnamese deputy defense minister, Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang, visited Japan to meet with military counterparts, including the Japanese defense minister. All leaders reiterated the importance of deepening bilateral defense cooperation (Le Xuan Duc, 2019).

Vietnam and Japan have also conducted joint exercises. In an unprecedented move, Japan in June 2017 sent a Japan Coast Guard patrol ship to Danang to engage in joint exercises aimed at combating illegal fishing. According to a Japanese coast guard officer, the exercise demonstrated that "maritime authorities of the two nations will continue to cooperate to address all kinds of threats to ensure free, stable and open seas and contribute to peace and prosperity of the region" (Panda, 2017). In September 2018, Hanoi followed up on deepening maritime cooperation with Tokyo by allowing a Japanese

[25] Compiled from Thayer, 2016a; Le, 2017a; "Vietnam, Japan Defence Cooperation to Grow Further," 2017; and "Japan-Vietnam Defense Cooperation and Exchanges," 2017.

submarine to make a first-ever port call in Vietnam (Parameswaran, 2018j). Shortly thereafter, Vietnam made a return frigate visit to Japan in a sign of strengthening maritime security ties (Vu Anh, 2018). Japanese training ships also made a port call at Da Nang in March 2019 (Jiji Press, 2019).

Japan has assisted Vietnam in building the capacity of its MLE capabilities in two other key areas. First, Tokyo in August 2014 announced that it would send six used patrol boats to Vietnam. The timing of this announcement was significant as it occurred only days after the end of Vietnam's maritime standoff with China over the *HYSY 981* oil rig (Le Hong Hiep, 2017a). Then, in January 2017, Prime Minister Abe offered an additional six new patrol boats to be delivered to Hanoi. Indeed, as one government-affiliated scholar interviewed for this study characterized it, Japan is providing "strategic assets for non-combat operations" (author interview).

Second, Tokyo is assisting Hanoi in building up its MDA capabilities. On the higher end of the technological spectrum, Vietnam has purchased the Japanese-built ASNARO-2 satellite, an Earth observation satellite that takes pictures in all weather and at any time. Vietnamese media claim the satellite offers the highest quality of resolution available (VNA, 2016). Vietnam also allowed India to set up a satellite imaging and tracking center on its soil, and in exchange, it receives access to images covering the region taken by Indian satellites as well. This gives Vietnam a much-needed capability to observe regional activities and locations of interest (Miglani and Torode, 2016). By leveraging Tokyo's technological expertise, in 2019 and 2022 Vietnam is set to launch new satellites that will help it monitor South China Sea activities more precisely (Salikha, 2017). Separately, there were rumors in 2016 that Vietnam was interested in purchasing used P3-C maritime surveillance aircraft from Japan, though it is unclear where these discussions stand today (Tomiyama, 2016).

Both Japan and Vietnam are pushing to further deepen their defense cooperation in the years ahead so as to align even more closely with the "extensive partnership" concept laid out by top leaders. Following defense consultations in June 2017 co-chaired by Vice Defense Minister Nguyen Chi Vinh and Japanese Deputy Minister

of Defense Ro Manabe, the two nations expressed an interest in achieving a new level of cooperation outlined in the "Vietnam-Japan Defense Cooperation Vision." One component of the new "vision" is likely to be a high-level bilateral diplomacy and defense dialogue in a 2 + 2 format (author interview). This would not be surprising given the closeness and maturity of the relationship. Further forms of technical cooperation, possibly even to include arms transfers, along with more routine joint exercises that increasingly go beyond the less sensitive nontraditional activities such as PKO, SAR, and HA/DR, may also become more commonplace in the future.

The Philippines—Shared Strategic Objectives Called into Question by Duterte

The DRV initially had a strained relationship with Manila as the Philippines served as a base for U.S. military operations during the Vietnam War. Since 1975, however, overall relations have improved incrementally. While still hamstrung by their own disputes over features in the South China Sea, the two sides nonetheless signed a defense MOU in October 2010 and then announced a strategic partnership agreement in 2015 largely motivated by common concerns over China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea. The strategic partnership agreement includes goals of conducting defense exchanges annually at the assistant secretary/director general level as well as establishing the Vietnam-Philippines Defense Strategic Dialogue at the vice minister level (the third and latest meeting was in August 2018), cooperation in traditional and nontraditional security areas, capacity-building, and cooperation in multilateral for a (Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the Philippines, 2015; Parameswaran, 2018i).

Such cooperation has been called into question since mid-2016, however, with the election of Rodrigo Duterte, who apparently does not share his predecessor Benigno Aquino III's perspective on how best to approach the South China Sea. From the outset, Duterte's election seemed to spell disaster for Hanoi. Vietnam had looked to the Philippines to bear the brunt of Beijing's anger in challenging Chinese territorial claims in the South China Sea, and Manila's legal victory in the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in July 2016 was expected

to have positive implications for Vietnam as well. However, on assuming office, Duterte noted his intent to downplay the victory in favor of closer ties to China. According to a government-affiliated researcher at the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, this decision made Vietnam "feel very lonely" in its dispute with China in the South China Sea (author interview).

Irrespective of the change in Manila's position on the PCA ruling, in late September 2016, Duterte visited Hanoi to meet with late Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang, and the two leaders called for continuing their defense policy dialogues and strengthening coast guard and navy mechanisms to improve maritime security. They also sought to share information on issues of mutual concern such as counternarcotics, counterterrorism, PKO experiences, and maritime security and to eventually adopt a code of conduct in the South China Sea ("Joint Statement on Philippine President's Visit to Vietnam," 2016; "Security and Defense Key to Vietnam-Philippine Cooperation," 2016). All of these measures are in line with the MOU on defense cooperation the two sides signed in October 2010.

It is difficult to discern whether these leadership pronouncements of intent have translated into actual, substantive defense interactions in the Duterte era. Nevertheless, the third Philippines-Vietnam DCWG convened in August 2018, coinciding with the Filipino deputy defense minister Lt. General Cardozo Luna's visit to Hanoi (Minh, 2018). In addition, high-level interactions continue, with Filipino Defense Minister Delfin paying a visit to Vietnam in March 2019. Rotations of naval personnel to patrol each other's disputed features at Sand Cay—a confidence-building initiative started under Duterte's predecessor Benigno Aquino III in 2014—have also been held in 2017 and 2018 (Parameswaran, 2017b, 2018p).

Under Duterte, some measure of navy-to-navy cooperation continues to occur. In December 2016, for example, the Philippine ship *Ramon Alcaraz* made a five-day port visit to Vietnam's Cam Ranh Bay, and the two navies conducted a range of joint exercises including SAR, HA/DR, and implementation of CUES (Mangosing, 2016b). This activity builds on their intent to promote navy-to-navy interactions in areas such as intelligence, technology, and training (Thayer, 2015).

Vietnam reciprocated in April 2017 when it docked the *Le Quy Don 286* training ship at Manila South Harbor ("Vietnamese Training Ship Pays Goodwill Visit to the Philippines amid Tensions," 2017). More recently, in November 2018, the two navies in a gesture of goodwill played sports and games against each other on disputed Northeast Cay, under Philippine de facto control but in dispute with Vietnam and other claimants. This was a reciprocal gesture from 2017 when Vietnam invited the Philippines to visit Vietnam-administered Southeast Cay nearby (Fonbuena, 2018d). Vietnam has also sent a coast guard vessel on a port visit to Manila in December 2017 (Defense Military, 2017).

Prior to Duterte's assumption of the Filipino presidency, Vietnam-Philippines defense relations were limited, with exchanges mostly confined to high-level visits and joint training. Today under Duterte it appears that incremental progress continues, particularly on regularizing defense policy dialogues. It will be interesting to see whether training deepens in areas of mutual interest such as medical military, logistics, or antipiracy cooperation ("Vietnam, Philippines Need Mechanism for Anti-Piracy Cooperation," 2017). The relationship might broaden as well. The MOU in 2010, for instance, highlights the need to establish a joint technical working group (Republic of the Philippines, Department of National Defense, 2010a). This could facilitate the exchange of technology and arms in the future. Regardless, for Vietnam, the most important feature of defense relations with the Philippines, vastly overshadowing more technical contacts and cooperation, is the like-minded view of China's negative role in the South China Sea dispute. Manila has assured Hanoi of its support as Vietnam takes over the ASEAN rotating chair in 2020, but Duterte's apparent willingness to forge ahead with closer China ties will necessarily constrain Vietnam-Philippines bilateral defense relations at least for the time Duterte is in office.

South Korea—Significant Potential If North Korea Distractions Minimized

Vietnam normalized diplomatic relations with South Korea in 1992 and designated it a strategic partner in 2009. A critical element of

normalization was moving on from South Korea's participation as a U.S. ally and as an adversary of Hanoi in the Vietnam War.[26] Yet, interestingly, both sides are naturally comfortable with one another because of shared experiences in the horror of civil war and national division. As such, in recent years, Hanoi and Seoul have added defense cooperation to their burgeoning economic relationship. Bilateral activities include annual defense policy dialogues, occasional joint training, and port visits.

In April 2018, Vietnamese defense minister Lich visited South Korea and was hosted by Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon after signing the Joint Vision Statement on Defense Cooperation Towards 2030 with defense minister Song Young-moo (Thu, 2018b). Although details of the joint vision statement are unknown, during Song's return visit to Vietnam in June 2018, the two leaders discussed defense industry, human resource training, and dealing with missing soldiers and post-war explosives removal (Parameswaran, 2018e; Duong Tam, 2018). They also signed an MOU at the meeting, which reportedly focuses on logistics support for PKO and HA/DR operations (Parameswaran, 2018e). Significantly, Hanoi and Seoul agreed in June 2018 on the need for all claimants in the South China Sea to maintain peace and settle disputes through international legal means. South Korea had previously been reluctant to get involved in the issue, offering in 2016 a statement that only stated "freedom of navigation and overflight should be safeguarded" (Clark, 2017).

In September 2017, South Korean Vice-Minister of National Defense Suh Choo-suk visited Hanoi to participate in the fifth iteration of the Defense Strategy Dialogue, with topics of discussion including North Korean provocations, security conditions in Southeast Asia, cybersecurity, and PKO ("S. Korea, Vietnam to Hold Defense Strategy Talks," 2017). Last year, the fourth dialogue was held in December once again at the deputy minister level. A point of emphasis was to step

[26] Interestingly, the issue of the Vietnam War still occasionally arises. Most recently, in June 2017, South Korean President Moon Jae-in praised South Korean war efforts, resulting in anger from the Vietnamese side. See "South Korea Seeks to Calm Vietnam After Controversial Remarks by President," 2017.

up bilateral cooperation in peacekeeping, but the two sides also committed to progressing in defense industry. Seoul reiterated its support of Vietnam in multilateral forums, especially given Vietnam's upcoming chairmanship of ASEAN in 2020 (Parameswaran, 2018r). The defense strategy dialogue runs in tandem with the Vietnam-South Korea Defense Policy Dialogue, the last of which (the seventh iteration) was held in December 2018 in Ho Chi Minh City ("Vietnam, South Korea Cooperate in National Defense," 2018). Although few details came out of this meeting, it follows up on previous installments that have discussed UNPKO, bilateral military logistics, support, network security, de-mining, and foreign language training ("Fifth Vietnam-Republic of Korea Defense Policy Dialogue," 2016). Separately, in a sign that coast guard contacts are strengthening, the Korea Coast Guard Academy sent a training ship to Danang, Vietnam, in September 2017 to conduct joint SAR exercises with the Vietnam Coast Guard (Nguyen Dong, 2017). According to one Vietnamese interviewee, South Korean coast guard cooperation is particularly attractive to Hanoi because Seoul is willing to send patrol boats to Vietnam to police its fisheries for free (author interview).

The growing security threat from North Korea has impacted South Korea-Vietnam relations in a number of ways. On the one hand, the threat has brought the two countries closer together in the area of intelligence sharing. According to one interviewee, Vietnam is receiving current intelligence on North Korean missile launches from Seoul, which probably builds trust between them that might be leveraged in other areas of defense and security relations (author interview). And Vietnam does have some interest in the issue, even if it is not itself under direct threat from Pyongyang, as it has agreed to impose sanctions on the North. On the other hand, North Korean provocations make it more difficult to keep Seoul's attention on Hanoi's interests in the South China Sea (to be sure, Seoul also worries about potential blowback from China if relations become too close with Vietnam).

Relatedly, South Korea may be hoping to leverage Vietnam's relationship with Pyongyang, stemming from its socialist bloc partnership developed during the Cold War, to help resolve the current crisis, but at least one interviewee from a government think tank argued that Viet-

nam has little interest in assisting South Korea on this problem because of Vietnam's nonaligned status (author interview). Notably, Hanoi in February 2019 played host city for the second summit between President Donald Trump and the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. It is unclear, however, whether this was at the request of the South Korean government. Either way, Hanoi is likely relatively disinterested in playing a substantive role in negotiations. This is because Hanoi's relations with Pyongyang, perhaps up until the Trump-Kim summit, had been at an historic nadir. Vietnam's normalization of ties with South Korea in 1992, Pyongyang's refusal to pay Vietnam for a rice shipment in 1996, and more recently North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations along with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's decision to murder his half-brother Kim Jong-nam in Malaysia using a chemical weapon in March 2017 effectively soured ties. As an example, a Vietnamese journalist pointed out that Vietnam, at least as of 2017, had maintained a slimmed down staff of only 11 personnel at its embassy in North Korea, suggesting that relations were largely symbolic as of this time (author interview). To be sure, ties may have improved somewhat since Kim's visit to Hanoi and his warm reception with fellow Communist Party leaders, but much work remains to be done to improve the North Korea-Vietnam relationship.

Overall, Vietnam-South Korea defense relations are unlikely to proceed much beyond the current level of ties in the near term. The primary factor limiting the advancement of defense relations is Seoul's preoccupation with North Korea and lack of strategic interest in the South China Sea. And while maintaining peace on the Korean peninsula is important to Hanoi for the sake of regional stability, it is also not the most pressing issue for Vietnamese leaders, and Hanoi almost certainly does not seek to play a mediator role. Alternatively, if the North Korean crisis becomes less of a distraction in the future, then conceivably it becomes easier to envision deeper South Korean focus on Vietnam and the South China Sea through initiatives such as South Korean President Moon Jae-in's "New Southern Policy." Indeed, Seoul faces the fewest political or bureaucratic constraints in exporting weapons and other technologies to Vietnam. Moreover, South Korea has a high degree of complementarity to Vietnam in defense industrial

production, and Hanoi meets the low- to mid-tier consumer price range Seoul typically targets in Southeast Asia. Finally, Vietnam would benefit significantly from joint training opportunities with South Korea forces, especially in the area of ASW training.

Other Actors

This section briefly reviews Vietnam's defense relationships with other major actors—including ASEAN, Russia, the United States, and China.

ASEAN—Somewhat Useful Pressure Point on China in South China Sea

Vietnam joined ASEAN in 1995 as part of its normalization with major powers. Hanoi has since developed and strengthened defense relations with key ASEAN members not only with Indonesia and the Philippines as detailed above but also with Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, and Thailand.[27] These relationships generally include defense policy dialogues and the sharing of experiences in nontraditional military operations, including HA/DR SAR, and PKO.

The most important aspect of Vietnam's participation in ASEAN, however, is the multilateral coordination that can support Hanoi's pushback against China in the South China Sea. To date, ASEAN has agreed on a Declaration of the Conduct Parties in 2002, which, though nonbinding, sets the tone of discussion on appropriate regional behavior. For years, Vietnam, in concert with the Philippines (prior to the 2016 election of Rodrigo Duterte), had been attempting to advance this discussion to establish a binding code of conduct. Thus far, Vietnam's efforts have not yielded such an agreement, mainly because of sustained opposition from China-dependent ASEAN countries, such

[27] See Van Hieu, 2015; VNA, 2017; Mai Huong, 2017; Mai Huong, 2016; Van Hieu, 2017; Song Anh, 2017; and Trung Thanh, 2017.

as Cambodia and Laos, as well as from states with no interest in supporting Vietnam in the region, like Myanmar and Thailand. However, Vietnam's assumption of the rotating ASEAN chairmanship in 2020 will give Hanoi its best opportunity yet to influence the course of ASEAN discussions on the code of conduct and the need for China to respect international law and norms of behavior in the region.

Russia—Historical Ties but No Geopolitical Support

Russia (especially in its previous incarnation as the Soviet Union) has historically served as Vietnam's most important defense partner. However, as noted above, this may have changed or is currently changing, with some Vietnamese observers characterizing India as Vietnam's "most reliable" defense partner today. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union supported North Vietnam's efforts to defeat the French and the United States, conquer the South, and even resist Chinese coercion post-1978. In March 2001, Moscow and Hanoi signed a strategic partnership agreement and then in July 2012 upgraded their relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership. Vietnam procures approximately 80 percent of its military systems from Russia, enabling Hanoi to modernize the VPA for combat in the air and naval domains. Notable systems include dozens of Su-30MK2 maritime strike aircraft, four *Gepard*-class frigates, six *Kilo*-class submarines, and a range of different air defense missile systems, among other platforms (Abuza and Nguyen Nhat Anh, 2016). Russia has also historically provided training for VPA officers in Moscow and maintenance and repair services for Soviet or Russian systems.

Although Vietnam's defense relationship with Russia predates Hanoi's growing concerns over Chinese coercion in the South China Sea, it nevertheless complicates Beijing's plans there. Beyond Russian-supplied military equipment that furthers VPA modernization, Moscow also supports freedom of navigation in broad terms. This, coupled with bilateral friction between Moscow and Beijing in certain areas of their relationship, could one day result in Russian support for Vietnam's strategic interests in the region. It is important to note, however, that Hanoi does not appear to have publicly sought such support from Russia to date.

The United States—A "Like-Minded Partner"

After having fought on the battlefield from 1954 to 1975 and continued their confrontation as adversaries on opposite sides of the Cold War until 1991, Vietnam and the United States normalized bilateral relations in 1995.[28] Since that time, the two sides have significantly advanced their relationship, including in the defense realm. Defense policy dialogues commenced in August 2010, and the two sides signed an MOU in 2011 that covered information sharing in the conduct of noncombat military operations such as HA/DR, SAR, and PKO. As part of then–U.S. President Barack Obama's meeting in July 2015 with Vietnamese General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong at the White House, the two sides adopted a "Joint Vision Statement" that included plans for a program of U.S. assistance designed to improve Hanoi's MDA capabilities (The White House, 2015b). Subsequently, in May 2016, President Obama visited Vietnam and lifted the decades-long embargo on arms sales to Vietnam.

One year later, in May 2017, President Donald Trump welcomed Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc to the White House—the first Southeast Asian leader to receive such an invitation during the Trump administration. The outcome of this meeting was significant because it reaffirmed the intent of Washington to cooperate with Hanoi on issues of "maritime security"—in other words, managing the challenges posed by China in the South China Sea. A joint statement issued on the conclusion of that visit highlighted the Trump administration's plans to transfer a *Hamilton*-class coast guard cutter to Hanoi to assist Vietnam with maritime security (The White House, 2017). Most importantly, the joint statement reaffirmed Washington's commitment to freedom of navigation and the settlement of all disputes in the South China Sea peacefully and without coercion.

In August 2017, Vietnamese Defense Minister Lich visited the Pentagon in what quietly appears to have been the largest VPA delegation to ever have made the journey for one-on-one meetings with U.S. counterparts. During the talks, the two sides hammered out plans for the first U.S. aircraft carrier to dock in Vietnam since the end of the Vietnam

[28] The quote in the subhead ("Like-Minded Partner") comes from Ferdinando, 2018.

War—a remarkable show of strength in U.S.-Vietnam defense ties, particularly for Hanoi and its usual low-key approach (U.S. Department of Defense, 2017). In January 2018, then–Secretary of Defense James Mattis made a reciprocal visit to Hanoi and referred to the United States and Vietnam as "like-minded partners" on ensuring a FOIP region (Ferdinando, 2018). Then, in March 2018, Washington and Hanoi made good on the carrier visit, with the USS *Carl Vinson* docking at Danang port (Minh Nguyen, 2018). In June 2018, just before the Shangri-La Dialogue (an annual think-tank-hosted event on Indo-Pacific security issues featuring heads of state and top defense officials), Secretary Mattis met with Vietnamese interlocutors. This was his first foreign engagement of the event, once again underscoring the rapidly deepening defense ties between the United States and Vietnam (U.S. Department of Defense, 2017).

Finally, after canceling his trip to China amid deteriorating bilateral relations, Mattis in October 2018 decided to visit Vietnam instead—once again demonstrating just how important Washington believes Hanoi is as a like-minded partner in countering Beijing's assertiveness in the South China Sea (Macias, 2018). While in Vietnam, Mattis sought to diversify defense relations beyond mutual concerns over the South China Sea by touring Bien Hoa Air Base—one of the many sites in Vietnam that have been contaminated with Agent Orange. In wartime, the United States used the chemical to clear thick jungle. Mattis's trip, and the initiation of the largest-ever U.S. cleanup program that followed in early 2019, helps to further build trust between to the one-time adversaries (Stewart, 2018).

To be sure, despite signs of significant progress in U.S.-Vietnam defense ties, enormous hurdles remain. Most notably, many VCP and VPA officers (especially those who have retired but still maintain influence in the system) continue to show lingering suspicions of U.S. intentions stemming from the Vietnam War era. Hanoi also worries about the potential for the United States—or the West more broadly—to foment social unrest in Vietnam to create the conditions for a "peaceful evolution" to democracy. The VCP also seeks to avoid unnecessarily antagonizing China with closer defense ties to Washington, though that sentiment seems to be changing as China's behavior becomes increasingly assertive in the region. In addition, Vietnam is constantly

concerned with properly calibrating relationships between major power relationships—most recently between the United States and China. Indeed, one of the potential explanations for why Vietnam canceled 15 U.S.-Vietnam defense engagements in 2019 is that it wanted to avoid unnecessarily irritating Beijing (Le Hong Hiep, 2018).

Regardless, the VPA remains highly secretive about its doctrine, training, capabilities, and many other details of its operations, which inherently places limitations on Vietnamese receptivity to U.S. overtures. There are two notable exceptions. One area of particular focus has been in enhancing the VPA's MDA capabilities to better track Chinese activities and its own activities in the South China Sea. Another has been in bolstering VCG capabilities, demonstrated by Washington's transfer of a *Hamilton*-class cutter. Outside of these examples, however, it is difficult to find instances of deep substantive defense cooperation beyond the symbolism shown in recent years with high-profile events such as the lifting of the arms embargo, carrier visit, and senior-level dialogues.

China—"Cooperation and Struggle"

While China is a fellow socialist country, Vietnamese also regard China as their country's greatest historical threat and recall over a thousand years of domination by their northern neighbor.[29] Although the two sides cooperated during North Vietnam's subversion and conquest of South Vietnam, today many Vietnamese regard China as having stabbed them in the back by seizing features in the South China Sea from the Republic of Vietnam during the waning days of the war. Many Vietnamese also resent Mao's China for having sought to improve relations with the United States at the expense of Hanoi's quest to reunify the country under communism following negotiations in the early 1970s that opened formal relations between Washington and Beijing. From 1979 until 1988, Vietnam was forced to fend off a Chinese invasion, lost disputed maritime territories, and suffered from China's policy to "bleed Vietnam white" by encouraging Hanoi

[29] The quote in the subhead ("Cooperation and Struggle") is from the Vietnamese Communist Party's Resolution Number 8—On Defense of the Homeland in the New Situation.

to waste more blood and treasure fighting in Cambodia while Beijing offered covert support to its proxy.

One of the primary drivers of Vietnam's 1986 policy of *doi moi* was to prepare the grounds for normalized relations with China, previously the country's largest trading partner, so as to improve Vietnam's economy. Following the realization of normalized relations in 1991, ties gradually began to improve. Over the subsequent two decades, Hanoi and Beijing deepened contacts and expanded trade and investment while also resolving some of the more difficult aspects of their relationship, including demarcating their land border and agreeing on the division of the Gulf of Tonkin (Kardon, 2015). Despite continued tensions over fishing and other maritime disputes, in 2008, the two sides raised the description of their relationship to that of a "comprehensive strategic partnership."

This brief nominal improvement in ties was quickly undone by renewed confrontation in the maritime domain in May 2014 when China placed an oil rig in disputed waters, leading to a prolonged maritime standoff. This incident, however, has not permanently stunted joint fisheries cooperation as a key confidence-building measure, with the CCG and VCG having concluded their 14th round of joint fishery patrols in October 2018 (Parameswaran, 2018o). Hanoi views itself as being engaged in both "cooperation" with and "struggle" against China. Cooperation, in the words of long-time Vietnam watcher Carl Thayer, is comprised of "a dense network" of relationships between the state, party, and militaries of both sides (Thayer, 2017b). However, given its concerns over the status of the South China Sea and Beijing's increasingly assertive behavior there, Hanoi almost certainly assesses that struggle will be more necessary than cooperation in the future.

Beyond China: Other Drivers of Vietnam's Defense Partnerships?

One conclusion from this research and analysis is that China's growing military expansion in the South China Sea plays a leading role in Vietnam's push to strengthen and broaden defense relationships with

countries under consideration in this study. The threat posed by China was consistently characterized as the leading driver of Hanoi's decision-making in every one of the dozen interviews conducted with Vietnamese interlocutors for this study.

Indeed, even when considering the last several decades of VCP ideological discourse, the enactment of *doi moi* followed by the party endorsements of both Resolution Number 13 (national interests) and Resolution Number 8 (cooperation and struggle) demonstrate that Hanoi's partnerships are aimed at improving its geostrategic position vis-à-vis competitors, with China as the foremost competitor. Even though China is formally described as a comprehensive strategic partner, requiring Vietnam to cooperate with it in the economic sphere, Vietnam must also "struggle" with China when the two sides have divergent interests. The two ideas are not mutually exclusive according to VCP pronouncements, and Vietnam, perhaps reflecting its grounding in Marxist dialectics, appears to recognize that it can and must live in the gray area between cooperation and confrontation with China. Although Vietnamese literature is typically less direct on describing the goals, means, and necessity of struggle (particularly in the case of Vietnamese defense and military publications), public VCP calls to deal with China in the South China Sea indicate that the issue is front and center in the minds of leadership these days.

Given the nature of Vietnam's regional defense contacts, many of its defense cooperation activities fall into the category of "capacity-building" and to some extent reflect the desire of external states—particularly Australia, India, and Japan—to bolster the VPA's ability to partner with them on managing collective challenges. Many of these tasks do not involve deterring Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and include PKO, SAR, and HA/DR. Supporting these less sensitive, nontraditional military capabilities nevertheless can also assist the VPA in combating China in the South China Sea one day, if ever necessary.

Interestingly, Vietnam's core belief in self-reliance and independence likely reduces the impact that U.S. foreign policy has on Hanoi's decisionmaking. As noted above, VCP leaders continue to harbor suspicions of Washington's intentions, particularly with respect to the

issues of human rights and whether or not the United States might seek a "peaceful evolution" to liberal democracy within Vietnam (Le, 2014). Moreover, despite its differences with Beijing in the South China Sea, Hanoi is generally cautious not to unnecessarily antagonize China. However, based on recent developments in U.S.-Vietnam bilateral ties, as we have seen above, there are ample indicators that this dynamic is changing in favor of further engagement with the United States across many facets of the relationship—with defense as an important component. Even still, Washington's relative inaction during the *Haiyang Shiyou 981* oil rig incident in May 2014 almost certainly reconfirms for Vietnam that it cannot and should not depend exclusively on the United States to deter China if another such incident occurs in the South China Sea. Widespread perceptions of the Trump administration's apparent disinterest in engagement with the Southeast Asian region—most notably dropping President Obama's "strategic rebalance" or "pivot" to Asia policy and pulling out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership—only reinforces this line of thinking among Vietnamese analysts.

It is worth considering other potential drivers for Vietnam's strengthening of its regional defense relationships beyond the factors of China's rise and relations with the United States. One possibility is that Vietnam is attempting to forge a regional identity as a responsible middle power, particularly in cooperative multilateral groupings such as ASEAN. This explanation finds some support in the data, especially when it comes to becoming more proficient at nontraditional military operations. HA/DR and SAR, for example, allow Hanoi to more effectively contribute to regional crises. However, Vietnam's deepening and broadening defense relationships with countries like Japan and India are generally more reflective of a balancing aspect since both Tokyo and New Delhi share similar concerns as Hanoi about Chinese behavior. Japan's sale of coast guard patrol ships and participation in a joint fisheries exercise, along with India's training of VPA submarine crews and extension of a $500 million line of credit for defense purposes, are activities that go beyond assisting Vietnam to more effectively contribute to regional crises and may assist in resisting gray zone coercion.

Another possibility is that it is important for the VCP to demonstrate a strong national defense capability to its own people so as to

enable it to continue to claim legitimacy as the guardian of Vietnam's territorial sovereignty and integrity. To be sure, there is a fair amount of symbolism in many of Vietnam's defense procurements. The Su-30 MKs and *Kilo*-class submarines, for example, are tangible high-technology military systems that the regime can point to as evidence of their successes to defend the homeland.

But in the case of Hanoi's defense relationships in question for this study, and again, primarily with Japan and India but also with Russia, it is clear that Vietnam is procuring tailored, specific technologies and expertise to deal with the China threat in the South China Sea since China is seen as the most pressing national threat. More broadly, the VPA already maintains a highly privileged position in Vietnamese society, derived not only from its wartime legacy of "fighting against foreign aggression" but also the government's use of the VPA to build goodwill with the people by offering medical treatment, education, and natural disaster relief services. Because the VPA is virtually unassailable in Vietnamese politics, there is little need to impress the Vietnamese people with the products of Hanoi's defense partnerships.

Finally, yet another possibility is that the high costs of defense industrialization requires Vietnam to more aggressively seek external support to sustain its defense base given that its defense budget is quite limited. Although Hanoi's defense budget remains a closely guarded state secret, commonly referenced Western sources assess the 2015 defense budget to be between $4.2 billion and $4.9 billion, with a projection of $6.2 billion by 2020 ("Defence Budget Overview," 2016; Australian Government, Department of Defence, Defence Intelligence Organisation, 2015; SIPRI, 2016). If accurate, then Vietnam's defense budget is dwarfed by that of other countries worried about the threat posed by China. For example, Taiwan—with only 23 million people compared with Vietnam's 93 million—spends approximately $10 billion per year on defense, while Japan spends approximately $45–$50 billion per year. Of necessity, Vietnam's defense relationships probably involve some measure of bargain shopping for arms and expertise, and as seen above, a number of our interviewees highlighted concerns about cost when explaining why training with India or holding coast guard contacts with South Korea were so appealing to Vietnam.

However, this driver does not explain the totality of Hanoi's behavior. If keeping the cost of defense industrialization low was the only or primary imperative, then we would probably expect to observe more limited outreach to comparatively richer countries such as Japan, Australia, and South Korea. And yet, we continue to see high interest in engaging with these countries, suggesting that the VCP either believes that deals can be negotiated or that the strength of Vietnam's economy—consistently hovering at around 6 percent growth per annum over the last decade—is predictable enough that it has inspired confidence in the VCP leadership to pursue such partnerships (The World Bank, 2016). Regardless, none of this alters the objective of using defense industrialization to meet the perceived threat, which remains China's assertiveness in the South China Sea.

Concluding Thoughts and Policy Implications

This chapter has examined the key drivers behind Vietnam's defense relationships with select countries in the Indo-Pacific. It has also presented the broader context for not only Vietnam's regional security environment but also the internal VCP deliberations that led to Hanoi to establish or normalize relations with external powers in the first place. This is essential background to understanding the proliferation of Vietnam's defense partnerships over the last several years.

The most important finding of this chapter is just how pervasive the "China threat" narrative is for Vietnam. Other hypotheses do not have the same level of explanatory value as does the notion that China's growing military expansion and assertiveness in the South China Sea is the key factor in Vietnam's decision to strengthen and broaden its existing defense partnerships in the region. Going forward, there are several policy implications for the United States that might be considered.

First, Vietnam's burgeoning defense relationships with Australia, India, and Japan aligns well with U.S. geostrategic interests as these countries also happen to be Quad participants. This is a unique opportunity for the United States to find creative ways to coordinate—or, even one day, officially integrate—Vietnam in Quad discussions in

support of Washington's Indo-Pacific strategy. Indeed, as mentioned above, Hanoi has already publicly signaled agreement with the objectives of maintaining a FOIP region; at the same time, Hanoi continues to adhere publicly to its Three Nos policy against forming official alliances, which could limit its ability to support the free and open Indo-Pacific approach through substantive actions. Still, the VCP may be willing to bend the rule nearly to the breaking point to join the Quad grouping as a fifth, or even just a dialogue, partner. Even if Vietnam entering the Quad is not in the cards, the United States can still work to coordinate Quad defense cooperation with Hanoi to ensure that these countries' bilateral ties with Vietnam are supportive of and additive to U.S. efforts in the region.

Second, the United States should be alert to Vietnamese perceptions about Indonesia's limited interest in any steps that would be perceived as balancing against China. Such concerns have led Jakarta to a general lack of interest in deepening defense cooperation with Vietnam and appear to be a source of some friction between Hanoi and Jakarta. Other regional actors may feel similarly, which means the United States should exercise caution in premising any Indo-Pacific policy steps on eliciting support from Indonesia. Jakarta's focus has been on defending its interests in the Natuna Islands while avoiding taking a position on the broader South China Sea dispute. If Jakarta were to take a more expansive view of its interests that led it to a more activist regional posture in support of ASEAN and a FOIP and South China Sea, this would be seen as a positive development for Vietnam and possibly for the United States as well.

Third, although the Philippines under Duterte has gone from being a leader on South China Sea issues to being a seemingly disengaged and disinterested party, the limited defense relationship between Manila and Hanoi has more or less remained on track. One important indicator of whether the Philippines remains committed to defense ties with Vietnam is whether or not Manila continues to support the joint Vietnam-Philippine naval exchanges at Sand Cay. U.S. policymakers should recognize that the Philippines' decision to downplay its July 2016 victory in the Permanent Court of Arbitration has also had

consequences for regional defense cooperation and the value of security ties with Manila from Hanoi's perspective.

Fourth, policymakers should not be surprised that Vietnam's defense contacts with South Korea are relatively limited. This will be difficult to change so long as the North Korea threat persists. If North Korea became less of a distraction, however, then U.S. policymakers might expect to see a significant uptick in defense cooperation as part of President Moon's New Southern Policy. As noted above, defense industrial base and training complementarity, along with the lack of bureaucratic constraints Seoul has in exporting weapons and other technologies to Vietnam, suggest the relationship's best days may yet be ahead of it.

Finally, it is important to remember that Vietnam's defense relationships in the region represent only one component of Hanoi's overall strategy. As we have seen, Vietnam has also cultivated ties with other important actors, including ASEAN, Russia, the United States, and China. Relationships with both ASEAN and the United States serve to encourage China to abide by international norms and procedures, while Vietnam's ties to Russia enable the VPA to modernize and thereby potentially deter China from attempting to change the status quo through coercion. Equally important is Vietnam's relationship with China, which Hanoi hopes to use to influence Beijing's decision-making to ultimately prevent it from determining that military action is the only option in the South China Sea.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Philippines: Modernization with a More Diverse Set of Partners

What factors are driving the Philippines' recent expansion in defense cooperation with key partners in the Indo-Pacific? Manila has historically been dependent on the United States for security cooperation, including arms transfers and training; as Secretary of Defense Delfin Lorenzana noted in November 2017, "The Philippines will remain a reliable ally of the U.S. The bonds between our people are too strong to break" (Lorenzana, 2017). But recent years have seen Filipino administrations take nascent steps toward diversifying the country's defense cooperation with partners beyond the United States, including many in the Indo-Pacific region. This is particularly true with respect to Australia and Japan, which the Philippines has looked to as sources of assistance for its military modernization efforts and as partners with which to engage in joint training. In addition, the Philippines has undertaken substantial, if one-sided, engagement with South Korea and is exploring ties with India and fellow members of ASEAN, particularly Indonesia and Vietnam. Those two neighbors are playing a modest but expanding role in joint exercises, defense diplomacy and, in the case of Indonesia, arms sales.

The inauguration of Rodrigo Duterte as the president of the Philippines in June 2016 introduced an important new dynamic into Philippine security relations, driven by his ideological anti-Americanism and a concomitant desire to forge new defense cooperation with China and the Russia. Duterte's war on drugs, which has resulted in thousands of deaths either at the hands of security forces or armed vigilantes, has

sparked widespread criticism from policymakers in the United States as well as other Western security partners, which has in some case led to reviews or cancellations of planned arms transfers and other cooperation. That criticism has, in turn, fueled Duterte's drive to find security partners less concerned with his human rights record. But despite the president's frequent speeches against the United States, the Philippine defense establishment has largely maintained the pre-Duterte level of security cooperation with its traditional partner.

The maintenance of the U.S.-Philippine security relationship has been facilitated on one side by the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) studious refusal to get involved in the drug war, even when urged to by their president, and the military's avoidance of human rights abuses during two years of martial law in Mindanao. In the wake of the months-long siege of Marawi by IS-linked militants and critical support during those operations, the military-to-military relationship has made up any ground lost during the early Duterte administration. On the other side, Duterte continues to sing the praises of Moscow and Beijing, and low-level defense diplomacy along with some modest arms sales have occurred, but there has been far less concrete cooperation than one would expect given the often-breathless tone of announcements and press coverage. There are a number of reasons for this slow pace of implementation, which are explored in greater detail below, but top among them is a rear-guard action by the AFP and defense bureaucracy to stop or at least slow any drastic changes to traditional Philippine defense relations.

This chapter will examine the Philippines' defense cooperation with these regional partners, as well as other minor players in Manila's security engagement like Russia, China, Malaysia, and the countries of Europe.[1] This examination will mainly focus on developments over the last two decades, as that is when the Philippines began to reduce its one-time near-complete dependence on the United States as a security

[1] Since the election of Rodrigo Duterte in 2016, Manila has begun to explore security cooperation with Beijing and Moscow, largely as a consequence of the Filipino president's ideological aversion to the United States. As of mid-2018, it is still too early to tell whether and to what degree these efforts with China and Russia will bear fruit.

partner and commit to its own military modernization and defense diplomacy with third parties. The chapter will identify the extent to which Manila has diversified its defense activities in terms of high-level dialogues (particularly Cabinet-level 2 + 2 meetings), training and exercises, arms purchases and transfers, joint defense industrial development, and ACSAs and GSOMIA. In so doing, it will evaluate the motivations for this diversification, including relative costs of weapons platforms, internal and external threat perceptions, concerns about overreliance on the United States, and popular expectations.

The chapter will first look at the Philippines' military modernization goals and plans to expand defense cooperation with new partners and identify some of the possible explanations for these efforts. Then it will examine the state of bilateral security cooperation with partner nations. It will conclude with a reexamination of the major drivers behind the diversification of Philippine defense cooperation with regional partners. Overall, it finds that the expansion of Philippine security ties with new partners is driven primarily by three factors: a recognition of the need for extensive modernization in the face of dual threats from China and internal insurgencies, the relative cost of weapons platforms needed for that modernization, and a perceived overdependence on the United States. These factors pushing the Philippines to look farther afield for defense cooperation are taking on increasing importance at a time when countries like Australia, Japan, and fellow Southeast Asian states are exhibiting an increased willingness to pursue security engagement due to a shared sense of growing threats from China as well as Islamist actors in the southern Philippines. Anti-American sentiment and doubts about U.S. reliability have led the government of President Rodrigo Duterte to explore nascent cooperation with China and Russia, but these sentiments are not shared widely by the Philippine security establishment or public and play a relatively minor role in the overall effort to expand security cooperation.

The findings in this chapter were gleaned from interviews, usually on background, with officials in the Philippines' Department of National Defense (DND), Department of Foreign Affairs, the Presidential Palace, and the AFP, as well as conversations with academics,

businesspeople, and journalists in both the Philippines and the United States. It also draws on secondary source academic writings, as well as government and media reports.

Background: Factors Motivating and Shaping Expanding Defense Cooperation

The Philippines' defense needs are substantial and wide-ranging. The country is home to one of the weakest armed forces in maritime Southeast Asia and is beset by a host of both internal and external security challenges (Peel and Mallet, 2016). The state continues to grapple with a pair of enduring insurgencies—one by the Communist New People's Army that has operated throughout the archipelago for more than 50 years and the other by an assortment of Muslim, or Moro, separatist groups in Mindanao and other islands in the south. These two insurgencies have a complex interplay with each other as well as with clan conflict in the southern Philippines.

The internal security picture is also complicated by a handful of extremist groups whose goals go beyond Moro autonomy and maintain links with global jihadist organizations. The Abu Sayyaf Group is the oldest and best known of these. Abu Sayyaf's numbers and ability to strike beyond its jungle strongholds were severely degraded by a decade and a half of counterinsurgency operations backed by U.S. Special Forces post-9/11 under the umbrella of Operation Enduring Freedom—Philippines. The group was largely transformed into a criminal enterprise, engaging in kidnap-for-ransom schemes, until the emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Factions of Abu Sayyaf have since pledged allegiance to ISIS and one of its leaders, Isnilon Hapilon, was named ISIS's emir for Southeast Asia prior to his death during the liberation of the city of Marawi by Philippine forces in October 2017 ("Philippines Military 'Kills Islamist Isnilon Hapilon,'" 2017). Another half-dozen or so newer extremist groups, including the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, have joined Hapilon's Abu Sayyaf outfit in pledging allegiance to ISIS. One of these, the Maute Group, has rapidly gained prominence, first with the bombing of a market in the

southern city of Davao in 2016 and then by taking the lead in the months-long siege of the city of Marawi.

Given the dual threats of the communist insurgency and Moro separatism in the south, the Philippine military has traditionally focused inward. But since the mid-1990s, Manila has had to recognize a new external threat in the South China Sea, where it has competing territorial and maritime claims with China, Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam. China moved into the disputed Spratly Islands in force in 1988 with the occupation of six small reefs, resulting in a skirmish with Vietnam that left dozens of Vietnamese soldiers dead. In 1995, China occupied Mischief Reef, an underwater feature within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. This led to a diplomatic crisis and, in 1999, the intentional grounding of the Philippine Navy's BRP *Sierra Madre* on Second Thomas Shoal 20 nautical miles away to serve as an outpost.

Tensions cooled with the signing of the China-ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in 2002 but returned with a vengeance in 2009–2010. Malaysia and Vietnam, under a UN deadline, submitted claims to portions of their extended continental shelves in the South China Sea, sparking Beijing's ire. China began harassing Southeast Asian fishers and oil exploration ships, as well as foreign navies and coast guards, in greater numbers. In May 2012, China seized control of Scarborough Shoal, previously under Philippine administration. Two years later, the CCG blockaded the Filipino troops on the *Sierra Madre* for months, forcing Manila to air drop in supplies. And most worryingly, starting in late 2013, China added more than 3,200 acres of new land to the seven reefs and rocks it occupies in the Spratlys and turned the three largest—Fiery Cross, Subi, and Mischief Reefs—into substantial air and naval bases.

Modernization on a Budget

Under former president Benigno Aquino, Manila sought to actively shift its defense posture from one focused on combating internal insurgencies to external defense in the face of growing Chinese coercion over disputed maritime territories and waters. Recognizing the low level of Philippine capabilities and its unbridgeable military disparity

with China, former foreign secretary Albert Del Rosario described the Philippines' goal as the creation of a "minimum credible defense posture" (Carmichael, 2012). In concrete terms, this would require two things: to develop "24/7 awareness of what is happening in the disputed area [of the South China Sea] and . . . to respond quicker to any contingency in our own exclusive economic zone" (Mogato, 2015), paired with the ability to ensure that China or any other aggressor "would end up with a bloodied nose" (Mogato, 2015).

In other words, Manila recognized that while it could not develop the capabilities needed to stand toe-to-toe with the PLA, it could nonetheless modernize its naval and air forces enough to keep an eye on Chinese encroachments in Philippine waters and ensure that any use of force by Beijing would carry sufficient costs to hopefully deter China from overt aggression. This is a page taken from the playbook of another South China Sea claimant, Vietnam, which has developed a somewhat effective deterrent against Chinese aggression by ensuring that it can inflict significant damage on Chinese assets even if it cannot hope to win a naval conflict (Grossman, 2018a).

In pursuit of this goal, the Aquino government launched a 15-year AFP Modernization Program—a sequel to an earlier 15-year plan undertaken in 1995 that failed spectacularly (Congress of the Philippines, 2012). Less than 10 percent of the $8 billion allocated under the original program was actually spent (Congress of the Philippines, 2012). The current AFP Modernization Program also got off to a rocky start; it officially launched in 2013 but the government took two years to approve the budget for the first five-year phase (Romero, 2015a). Nonetheless, the plan did make progress under Aquino, with nearly $1.6 billion allocated for the first five-year phase (Forrest Green, 2017). Several major projects were held up by unrealistic expectations, pricing disagreements, and concerns about corruption (Romero, 2015b; Dinglasan, 2015). Still, other deals were concluded, and more procurement projects are in the works.

The Philippines has little domestic defense industry to speak of—local producers make some small arms and ammunition. Philippine companies and local subsidiaries of foreign firms also produce some automobiles and small ships but not major platforms. As a result,

co-production and joint defense industrial development have played little role in Philippine security engagements with partner nations. Manila has traditionally relied on the transfer of excess defense articles, loans, and grants to help fund its military procurement, while purchasing largely secondhand or outdated equipment given its constrained defense budgets.

With its security needs growing, the drive to modernize the military and meet both internal security and external defense needs at a cost that is affordable for the Philippines' meager defense budget is in large part responsible for the diversification of Philippine security ties in recent years. During the first phase of the AFP Modernization Program, the focus was clearly on MDA, patrol capabilities, and coastal defense. Air Force Major General Raul del Rosario said in 2015 that the AFP wanted to acquire better radars and sensors, submarines, frigates, fighters, surveillance aircraft, and missile systems (Mogato, 2015). Despite this stated goal, the Philippine Army, with its primary focus on internal security, continued to receive the lion's share of all new appropriations by the AFP—nearly 50 percent more than the Navy and Air Force combined. From 2013 to 2018, all three services saw their budgets grow at about 10 percent annually (Mangahas, 2017).

At the start of the Duterte administration, the new president made clear that he wanted to see the AFP's modernization efforts steer away from maritime capabilities and external defense back toward internal security. The AFP and the DND have steadily pushed back on that directive, insisting on the need for continued naval and air force upgrades, and have succeeded in partially bringing Duterte around. Now, the AFP is focused on stretching its modernization budgets to encompass both mission sets. According to Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana,

> We need more fast craft to be deployed in the southern part of the Philippines and also in the southern part of Palawan, drones and more helicopters that could help our troops in the field. . . . Maybe we need to improve our communications, *yung radars natin* (our radars) so that we will be aware of our maritime domain in the South China Sea, Sulu and Celebes seas and also on the eastern side of the Philippines. (Mangosing, 2017)

In May 2018, Duterte approved an initial five-year budget of about $5.6 billion for procurements as part of the second phase of the AFP Modernization Program, which will stretch from 2018 to 2022 (Reuters, 2018b). That is slightly more than what was initially allocated during the first phase from 2013 to 2017 (Reuters, 2018b). How much of that will be allocated to the AFP each year by the Congress and then actually spent remain open questions. But early indicators are positive, with about $500 million allocated to the modernization program in the 2018 budget, according to AFP deputy chief of staff Major General Restituto Padilla (Cal, 2018).

The second phase of the AFP Modernization Program is expected to further shift acquisitions from internal security to external defense, which marks a significant victory by the AFP in convincing Duterte to look beyond his initial position that the military should focus almost exclusively on counterterrorism and counterinsurgency. Major procurements under the second phase are expected to include new frigates, amphibious assault vehicles, antisubmarine helicopters, submarines, and two squadrons of multirole fighters (Cruz de Castro, 2018).

As part of the modernization drive, the Philippines hopes to explore defense industry cooperation with third country partners. The Philippines has no modern defense industry to speak of, with its domestic arms industry mainly producing ammunition. But Manila hopes to change that with foreign assistance. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), which has had considerable success luring foreign investors to set up manufacturing facilities in special economic zones via tax, visa, and regulatory incentives, is making plans to expand into arms manufacturing. PEZA Director General Charito Plaza said in November 2016 that her agency planned to invite foreign investors from "Russia, China, Israel, Japan and everybody" to locate production of "equipment, drones, hardware and software, arms and ammunition needed by the Philippines" in new defense industrial zones (Mercurio, 2016). The first such complex is planned in Bataan, but PEZA hopes to establish several others spread throughout the country (Mercurio, 2016). The plan is ambitious—probably more than the Philippines can realistically achieve in the near term—but it reflects Manila's desire to be creative in boosting capacity and diversifying supply.

Reducing Dependence on the United States

Philippine citizens express much less concern about potential U.S. decline or abandonment than others in Asia. As of 2017, the United States remained the most trusted country among Filipinos surveyed by both of the Philippines' largest polling firms, and those numbers were not significantly altered by the elections of either Donald Trump or Rodrigo Duterte ("Fourth Quarter 2017 Social Weather Survey," 2018; Pulse Asia Research, 2017). While the 2017 Pew Global Attitudes survey showed a measurable drop in support from the Obama to the Trump era, a large majority of Filipinos nonetheless still expressed support for the U.S. president and in the United States to do the "right thing." About half of Filipinos told Pew that the United States was the world's leading economic power, three-quarters supported a U.S. military presence in their country, and 68 percent believed the United States would use military force to defend the Philippines from China (Poushter and Bishop, 2017).

But more than U.S. abandonment or decline, the Philippines has long worried about its overreliance on the United States for security. Philippine officials, experts, and ordinary citizens frequently grumble about a perception that the United States treats the Philippines as a second-class security partner, providing outdated equipment and condescending to Filipino troops when they interact. President Duterte has often complained about the quality of U.S. arms transfers. While speaking to troops in Mindanao in early May 2017, the president said, "I will no longer accept second-hand military equipment. I do not want those given by the Americans. During my time, I will not have second-hand ships. It has to be brand new . . . even if I have to spend double the money" (Reuters, 2017a). Such rhetoric is easy to dismiss as bravado given the limited Philippine defense budget and the big-ticket items it receives secondhand from other, non-U.S., partners like South Korea, but it speaks to the frustration the president and like-minded Filipinos have with the perceived U.S. treatment of the Philippines as a junior partner in the alliance.

In addition to problems of price and perceived quality, Philippine officials chafe at the speed and conditionality of U.S. arms sales. In early December 2016, Reuters reported that U.S. Senator Benjamin

Cardin would block the sale of 26,000 M4 assault rifles to the Philippine National Police because of concerns over the mounting death toll in Duterte's war on drugs, sparking outrage from the president and suggestions that Manila might turn to Beijing or Moscow instead (Romero, 2016b). In explaining why Manila was exploring arms purchases from China and Russia, Defense Secretary Lorenzana in May 2017 echoed this frustration, saying, "That's why we are discouraged from getting from them [the United States]—because of these conditions" (Romero, 2016b). Much of the concern over poor quality and the conditions imposed on U.S. arms transfers is hyped by the media and anti-American politicians, but some is derived from legitimate grievances.

The Philippines receives the highest share of U.S. security assistance in Southeast Asia, especially in recent years, but that is still a fraction of what the United States provides partners in other areas like the Middle East. What the United States does provide is generally secondhand and sometimes antiquated. For instance, the United States sold the Philippines two refurbished C-130 transport aircraft for a discounted $35 million in 2016 (Zambrano, 2016), and over the last several years transferred three decommissioned U.S. Coast Guard cutters—two *Hamilton*-class and one *Cyclone*-class—to the Philippines as excess defense articles ("PH Buys 2 New Frigates from South Korean Firm," 2016). Those ships, which were built half a century ago, are now the flagships of the Philippine Navy. They certainly bolster the capacity of the Philippines to patrol offshore, which was virtually nonexistent before the transfers, but some in the Philippines saw them as no more than token gestures given the threats faced from China. Even then, Manila was generally ecstatic with the transfers when they happened, but controversy quickly followed when the Philippine press learned that all weapons systems and most modern electronics were removed from the vessels before the transfer. Nor is this type of grumbling only heard from the man on the street—top AFP officials frequently complain, especially behind closed doors, about the condition of equipment transfers from the United States (author interview).

Another frequent complaint of Philippine officials and citizens has been Washington's ambiguity regarding the application of the

U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty in disputed areas of the South China Sea. The Obama administration consistently refused to state explicitly that the treaty's obligations to jointly meet external threats to either party included Chinese attacks on Filipino assets in the South China Sea, despite readily telling Tokyo that the U.S.-Japan alliance covers the disputed Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. During his campaign for the presidency, Duterte frequently used this ambiguity to argue that the United States would not defend its ally in the face of Chinese aggression, and therefore Manila's best option would be to reduce its reliance on the Americans and seek a détente with Beijing (Lacorte, 2015).

Early in his tenure Duterte threatened to nix the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) signed by Washington and Manila in 2014, under which the United States agreed to construct facilities at Philippine military bases and rotate troops and platforms through them to better meet threats in the South China Sea as well as from terrorist groups in Mindanao, respond to natural disasters, and contribute to the modernization of the AFP (which would eventually take possession of the facilities) (Republic of Philippines and Government of the United States of America, 2014). The defense establishment in the Philippines managed to talk Duterte down from that position, but implementation of EDCA has limped forward with only a modest storage facility and command-and-control center built at a single location—Basa Air Base in Luzon (Mangosing, 2019).

In February 2019, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Manila and, after discussions with Duterte and Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin, announced to the press that the United States has a clear obligation to respond to any Chinese attacks on Filipino armed forces, planes, or ships in the South China Sea (Ranada, 2019). Duterte and Locsin hailed this statement. Philippine and U.S. defense officials are expected to undertake a review of the alliance to determine how to strengthen it and best meet potential contingencies, including in the South China Sea. Whether that will result in kickstarting EDCA implementation and other efforts is still murky, but it does seem clear that the danger of a serious rupture in the alliance, which seemed very real in the first year of the Duterte government, has passed.

Nevertheless, Secretary of National Defense Lorenzana laid out another reason for diversifying Philippine security relations in a December 2016 interview with the *Financial Times*, noting that difficulties sourcing spare parts after the departure of U.S. military bases from the Philippines in the early 1990s "left a mark in our psyche that it's not good to rely on one country for your defense" (Forrest Green, 2017). He said, "We will maintain our relationship with the United States and maybe develop some more defence relationships with the ASEAN neighbours" (Peel and Mallet, 2016). But he insisted that even while exploring other relationships, the country would not become a pawn of China or sever ties with the United States (Peel and Mallet, 2016).

With the armed forces committed to boosting both internal security and external defense capabilities on a relatively shoestring budget, Manila is likely to continue seeking defense ties with a diverse range of external partners.

Philippines Security Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partner Nations

This section describes and explores the Philippines defense ties with the six Indo-Pacific countries under consideration in this study. The overall picture of Manila's defense ties is laid out in Table 8.1 (below). The section begins by emphasizing the cooperation the Philippines enjoys with major defense partners Australia, Japan, and South Korea before turning to its less developed cooperative ties with Vietnam, Indonesia, and India.

Australia

Australia is the Philippines' most important security partner after the United States, and defense cooperation between Manila and Canberra has deepened considerably in recent years. Australian and Filipino troops fought on the same side in World War II and the conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq. They both signed mutual defense treaties with the United States in 1951 (the Philippines first by two days) and have helped maintain stability in Asia since as important spokes in the

Table 8.1
Philippines' Defense Cooperation with Select Indo-Pacific Partners

Category	Australia	India	Indonesia	Japan	South Korea	Vietnam
Partnership Type	Comprehensive	None	None	Strategic	None	Strategic
High-Level Defense/ Foreign Policy Dialogues	No	No	No	No	No	No
Arms Sales and Transfers	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements	No	No	No	No	No	No
Defense Co-Production and Co-Development	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
Training and Military Exercises	Yes	Yes	Yes[1]	Yes	Yes	Yes
GSOMIA	No	No	No	No	No	No

SOURCE: RAND interviews and open-source data collection.

NOTES: [1] The Philippines has conducted training and exercises with Indonesia and Malaysia via the trilateral Indomalphi joint patrols since 2017.

U.S.-led security architecture in the region. That shared membership in the U.S.-led alliance system, as well as their relatively close geography, have led to a decades-long security relationship focused mainly on joint training and intelligence sharing.

Helping the Philippines confront its two primary security threats—Islamist insurgency in the country's south and potential Chinese aggression at sea—are both in Australia's national interests. Australia has been hit by low-level terrorist attacks in recent years and contributes to the fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. It is deeply concerned by the potential for ungoverned spaces in the southern Philippines to become havens for Islamic State– (IS-)-aligned groups. In addition, Australia sees Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea

as a threat to immediate Australian interests in freedom of navigation, as well as regional stability and global maritime law more generally. In both these cases, Canberra is eager to assist the Philippines, including with intelligence sharing, training and capacity-building, and arms transfers. It is also legally able to provide such assistance in a way other regional states cannot.

Australia is the only other country besides the United States to have a SOVFA with the Philippines. The SOVFA was signed in 2007 and ratified by the Philippine Senate in 2012 (Australian Embassy, The Philippines, 2012). Along with an MOU on defense cooperation signed in 1995, the SOVFA allows Australia to engage in joint training and exercises on Philippine soil, which is impossible for other non-U.S. partners ("Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of the Philippines and Australia on Cooperative Defense Activities," 1995). Cooperation under the MOU and SOVFA are coordinated by a Joint Defense Cooperation Committee, which meets annually (Australian Embassy, The Philippines, n.d.) In March 2017, the deputy chief of the RAN and vice commander of the Philippine Navy co-chaired the inaugural Navy-to-Navy strategy talks between the two sides (Australian Embassy, The Philippines, n.d.). Australian forces participate in the bilateral Army exercise Dawn Caracha and Navy exercise Lumbas in the Philippines, and Filipino troops take part in Australia's exercise Kakadu and Air Force exercise Pitch Black (Forrest Green, 2017; Cruz de Castro, 2017).

Australian troops have also participated in the annual U.S.-led exercise Balikatan since 2014 (to which Japan can only send observers). About 60 Australian Defence Force personnel, including special forces, took part in the May 2018 Balikatan exercises, while 80 took part in 2017 and 86 in 2016 (Fonbuena, 2018c; Murdoch, 2017; Kimmorley, 2016). During Balikatan 2018, Australian Defence Force Chief of Joint Operations Admiral David Johnston said,

> The United States, the Philippines and Australia have a long-standing relationship dating back to World War II resulting in a significant, ongoing contribution to regional security. . . . Exercise Balikatan 18 is a valuable opportunity for participating nations to prepare for real world challenges. (Fonbuena, 2018c)

After Typhoon Haiyan devastated parts of the Philippines in November 2013, Australian forces along with their U.S. counterparts were on the ground in many affected areas even before the AFP, which had substantial difficulty accessing areas where roads and airstrips were severely damaged. The HMAS *Tobruk* and roughly 500 Australian troops, including Army engineers, provided assistance at Manila's request (Forrest Green, 2017). In 2015 the two countries signed a comprehensive partnership, raising the bilateral relationship to the level of those Manila shares with strategic partners Japan and Vietnam. The partnership aims to strengthen all parts of the relationship, including defense and security cooperation. Australia provided $567 million in grants to the Philippines in 2015, second only to the United States, to assist in a broad range of programs, from education to peace and security in Mindanao (Manhit, 2017).

The threat of ISIS-linked fighters using the southern Philippines as a toehold in Southeast Asia is of shared concern to both Canberra and Manila. In June 2017, Australia deployed two P-3C Orion patrol aircraft to provide surveillance support to the AFP during its months-long effort to oust the Maute group and affiliated fighters from Marawi. Australia was just the second country after the United States to provide on-the-ground assistance to the Philippine effort in Marawi, highlighting the value of the SOVFA to both countries. The AFP has expressed interest in seeing the Australian operation in Marawi expanded to other parts of the southern Philippines, with Eastern Mindanao Command Deputy Commander Brigadier General Gilbert Gapay telling the press, "These capabilities, it could be used in any military operation, not just Marawai, but of course in all other operations in Mindanao" (Flores, 2017). In a meeting with President Duterte in August 2017, Australian Secret Intelligence Service Director-General Nick Warner offered technical assistance, training, and information gathering help in the fight against ISIS-linked fighters (Cruz de Castro, 2017).

Canberra is also assisting the Philippines with boosting its maritime capabilities, including support for the National Coast Watch Center (an interagency body established with U.S. support to boost cooperation among various government stakeholders involved in maritime security) and the Coast Watch South program (Manhit, 2017). Australia gifted two decommissioned landing craft heavy vessels to

the Philippines in 2015 and delivered three others in March 2016 for the bargain price of $5.8 million (Cruz de Castro, 2017). These ships are intended to replace aging logistics and landing tank ships of the Philippine Navy that have become too expensive to maintain (Forrest Green, 2017). In March 2018, the RAN sent two patrol ships to Zamboanga in Mindanao for joint exercises with the Philippine Navy to boost interoperability and training to combat the spate of kidnappings and other maritime crimes by ISIS-linked groups in the southern Philippines (Rosalado, 2018). Two more RAN ships took part in ten days of joint maritime exercises with Philippine Navy counterparts around Puerto Princesa, Palawan, in July 2018.

Australia engages in substantial education and skills training of troops as well as coast guard and police in the Philippines, in many ways complementing U.S. programs geared overwhelmingly toward officer training. Australia's desire to send military trainers to the Philippines to help combat extremists in Mindanao was a driving force behind the negotiation of the 2007 SOVFA (Reuters, 2006). The Philippines sends a substantial number of military personnel to study in Australian military and civilian schools under grants from the Australian Defense Force. Philippine Defense Secretary Lorenzana even completed a degree in strategic studies at the Australian National University (Forrest Green, 2017). About 100 AFP, DND, and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) personnel travel to Australia for education and training each year, and hundreds more receive training from an Australian Defence Force Mobile Training Team in the Philippines (Australian Embassy, The Philippines, n.d.).

In the wake of the months-long siege of Marawi in 2017, the Philippines has turned to Australia (in addition to the United States) for training in military operations in urban terrain (MOUT). In October of that year, Defense Secretary Lorenzana and Australia's Defense Minister Marise Payne signed an agreement for the Australian Defence Force to send mobile training teams of about 80 personnel to AFP bases to provide MOUT and counterterrorism training. The two sides also agreed to increase RAN ship visits and boost cooperation on ISR in the southern Philippines, information sharing, and maritime security cooperation (Cheng, 2017). The Philippine and Australian navies

held drills along the Philippines' southern border in November and have discussed launching joint patrols in the area (Pareño, 2017).

In summary, the combination of shared interests, including concern about both Chinese coercion in the South China Sea and the rise of ISIS-linked threats in Southeast Asia, a high degree of interoperability, and the legal and political ability to operate on Philippine soil means that Canberra will remain Manila's foremost regional security partner for the foreseeable future.

Japan

The Philippines-Japan relationship underwent a remarkable evolution over the course of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Japan occupied the whole of the Philippines for about two and a half years, from the fall of Manila and Corregidor in early 1942 until the U.S.-led campaign to retake the islands in 1944–1945. The relatively brief occupation was, and still is, viewed with greater ambiguity in the Philippines than in Northeast Asian countries where Japanese control was longer lived. Some prominent Filipinos endorsed the Japanese-led government that took power in 1943, including former president and veteran of the Philippine war for independence Emilio Aguinaldo, who saw incorporation into Japan's Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere as liberation from Western colonialism. Most Filipinos still welcomed Japan's ouster from the country, but it is notable that those who joined the occupation government were not punished as they were elsewhere in Southeast Asia. In fact, the speaker of the legislature under Japanese control, Benigno Aquino, would have a son, Benigno Aquino Jr., who would become a senator and national martyr, and a grandson, Benigno Aquino III, who would ascend to the presidency.

Like the Philippines, Japan signed a mutual defense treaty with the United States in 1951, and both spent the Cold War as important components of the "hub-and-spokes" system of regional alliances that underpinned U.S. preeminence in the region. Japan's constitutional pacifism limited opportunities for direct security cooperation for most of that time, but Japan emerged as a major investor and trading partner for the Philippines, which helped further mend historical animosities from World War II. This trend continues to the present day, with

Japan being the top source of foreign direct investment in the Philippines in 2017 by a wide margin (Heydarian, 2016).

In recent years, and especially under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Japan has begun to emerge as a bigger player in Asian defense cooperation. This shift has been driven on one side by Manila's desire to diversify its security partnerships in the face of an external threat from China and a perceived overdependence on the United States and on the other by Tokyo's rising perception of China as a threat to regional stability and Japan's immediate security. Japan is in many ways an ideal partner from the Philippines' perspective—it shares much of the same regional threat perceptions, most Filipinos express a high degree of trust in Tokyo according to surveys (which reduces the risks of negative public backlash), and as a fellow U.S. ally Japanese equipment and doctrines tend toward a high degree of interoperability with those of the Philippines ("Fourth Quarter 2017 Social Weather Survey," 2018).

From Tokyo's perspective, Chinese behavior in Southeast Asia, and the South China Sea in particular, directly affects the security environment in Northeast Asia. By supporting the ability of the Philippines and other regional states to confront Chinese assertiveness, Japan hopes to modify Chinese behavior throughout the region, including in the East China Sea. When these shared interests are combined with the very generous terms Tokyo has offered for arms transfers and the high degree of interoperability with a fellow American ally, it is easy to see why defense cooperation with Manila has expanded rapidly.

Under the Aquino government, the Philippines welcomed Japanese efforts to play a larger security role in the region. As Tokyo grew increasingly alarmed at Chinese activities in the South China Sea, it found itself pushing on an open door when it began offering to assist the Philippines with training and equipment transfers. The two countries began by signing a statement of intent on defense cooperation exchanges in 2012. In January 2015, the Japanese Ministry of Defense and Philippine DND signed a Memorandum of Defense Cooperation and Exchanges, an agreement that provided the legal framework for a Japanese P-3C Orion surveillance plane to operate from a Philippine air base for the first time in June 2015. The plane joined a U.S. P-3 in a

SAR training exercise with the Philippine Navy over the South China Sea (Fonbuena, 2015).

In February 2016, Philippine defense secretary Voltaire Gazmin and Japanese ambassador Kazuhide Ishikawa signed a landmark agreement on defense industrial cooperation, allowing Japan to transfer defense equipment and technology to the Philippines as well as conduct joint research and development and, in the future, joint production. The two sides also established a joint committee to oversee implementation of the agreement (Cruz de Castro, 2016). That agreement was made possible by the Japanese government's establishment of its new Three Principles of Defense Equipment Transfer in 2014. According to Yuki Tatsumi, director of the Japan Program at the Stimson Center,

> Prior to the [issuance of the revisions to the] Three Principles . . . the focus of such capacity-building [in Southeast Asia] was on personnel training, transfer of non-defense equipment that can be useful in maritime security, and financial assistance that would allow the recipient countries to purchase necessary equipment. With the new guidelines for defense exports, Japan overcame an important domestic hurdle to including the transfer of defense equipment on the list of capacity-building activities. (Tatsumi, 2016)

Japan inked similar agreements with Australia, India, and the United Kingdom after 2014, but the accord with the Philippines was its first with a Southeast Asian nation. It was also negotiated with a unique sense of urgency in response to a specific perceived threat—Chinese activities in the South China Sea (Tatsumi, 2016).

President Duterte appears happy to continue that trend. During an October 2016 visit to Tokyo, Duterte and Prime Minister Abe agreed to deepen security cooperation to promote regional stability, and Abe even convinced the usually anti-American Duterte to publicly acknowledge the important role played by both countries' alliances with the United States (Salaverria, 2017).

While bilateral security cooperation includes issues like counterterrorism and disaster relief, maritime security and China's actions in

the South China Sea are the animating forces behind the boom in recent cooperation. This was obvious from the joint statement issued during Duterte's visit: seven of the 15 points in the document referenced the South China Sea or maritime issues (Ranada, 2016). The two sides reiterated this commitment to enhance security cooperation when Abe made a reciprocal visit to Manila and Davao in January 2017. During that trip, then–Foreign Secretary of the Philippines Perfecto Yasay noted, "Japan is one of our strongest friends and ally and partner in this part of the world and we value that friendship" (Cerojano, 2017).

Japan has played an increasingly active role in joint training and exercises with the Philippines in recent years, though such cooperation remains far less robust than the efforts of the United States or Australia. This is due to legal restrictions on the Philippines' side—Japanese forces, like those from almost every other country, are barred from operating on Philippine soil because Manila and Tokyo do not have a SOVFA. As such, joint training must be restricted to waters offshore or in third countries. Although they cannot take part in most operations, Japanese forces now join the U.S.-led Exercise Balikatan as observers, sending about 20 troops to the 2018 iteration (Fonbuena, 2018c). Foreign Press Secretary Yasuhisa Kawamura in January 2017 said that Tokyo would continue its security cooperation with Manila in capacity-building, provision of defense equipment, and joint training and exercises (Macatuno, 2017a).

In January 2017, two JMSDF ships returning form counterpiracy operations in the Gulf of Aden made a port call to Subic Bay, during which Philippine Navy personnel were invited on board the ships, and engaged in brief joint exercises at sea. The JMSDF and Philippine Navy engaged in communication training and practiced executing the CUES. The JMSDF said at the time that it would carry out future port calls at Subic Bay, Manila Bay, and other areas, with similar low-level joint training and exchanges (Macatuno, 2017a).

Japan's newly built 27,000-ton helicopter carrier *Izumo*, the largest ship in its fleet, and the guided-missile destroyer *Sazanami* made a four-day port visit to the Philippines in June 2017 as part of a multimonth deployment in the South China Sea. During that visit, the

roughly 800 Japanese sailors aboard and their Filipino counterparts took part in confidence-building engagements and sporting events. Lued Lincuna, director of the Philippines' Naval Public Affairs Office told the press that "the visit is expected to enhance the maritime cooperation the two countries [*sic*] to help maintain peace and stability in the region" (Macatuno, 2017b). Later in its deployment, Philippine Navy officers embarked on the *Izumo* alongside ASEAN counterparts for a four-day tour of the South China Sea (Reuters, 2017b). Then in February 2018, the Japanese destroyer *Amagiri* made a two-day port call to Manila to engage in a range of activities, including a passing exercise (Parameswaran, 2018b). The destroyer *Akizuki* visited Subic Bay in April 2018, the same week that two RAN ships and the U.S. Navy's *Theodore Roosevelt* Carrier Strike Group made port calls, and the destroyer *Akebono* pulled into Manila in September (Mangosing, 2018a).

In 2016, Tokyo agreed to provide a $145 million official development assistance loan to the PCG for the purchase of ten patrol vessels built by Japan Marine United Corp. The 40-meter vessels were delivered between October 2016 and August 2018 (Kyodo News, 2018). Following Duterte's October visit to Tokyo, Philippine and Japanese officials signed another agreement for Japan to provide a $157 million loan for two new 90-meter vessels (Remo and Salaverria, 2016). During Abe's January 2017 visit to Manila, he and President Duterte discussed maritime security and finalized an agreement for Japan to provide a $5.2 million grant to the PCG for speedboats and anti-terrorism equipment (Jennings, 2017). Japan handed over ten 7-meter rigid hull inflatable boats and two 12-meter high-speed vessels to the PCG between November 2017 and February 2019 (Unite, 2019).

In October 2016, Tokyo and Manila signed an agreement under which Japan would lease five surplus Beechcraft TC-90 trainer aircraft to the Philippines to boost the country's maritime patrol capabilities. The deal marks the first time Japan has ever leased military aircraft to another country (Kyodo News, 2016). The Philippines had originally looked to acquire four refurbished P-3C Orion maritime patrol craft from Japan, which would have required U.S. approval (Grevatt, 2015a). The TC-90s represent a compromise between Manila's need for

upgraded patrol capabilities in the short term and concerns in Washington and Tokyo that the AFP is unprepared to operate P-3Cs. A deal for the Orions could, however, be in the cards in the future.

Japan handed over the first two TC-90s in March 2017 and the other three in March 2018 (Reuters, 2018a). The JMSDF also trained groups of Philippine naval pilots on how to fly the TC-90s at Tokushima Air Base in Japan from November 2016 until March 2018 (Yeo, 2017).

Japanese State Minister of Defense Kenji Wakamiya made clear during the handing-over ceremony of the TC-90s that, while the planes can also help support counterterrorism operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, the primary motivation for the lease was to help the Philippines keep an eye on Chinese activities in disputed waters: "As we are faced with many security-related issues in the Asia-Pacific, including those in the South China Sea, our cooperation with the Philippines for the regional security and stability is now even more significant" (Agence France-Presse, 2017).

The Philippine Navy allocated about $1.7 million for the operation and maintenance of the TC-90s during FY 2018. It reported that they would be used to patrol three areas: the South China Sea, the Sulu Sea as part of coordinated counterterror/counterpiracy operations with Malaysia and Indonesia, and Benham Rise (recently renamed Philippine Rise) off the country's east coast (where Chinese survey activity starting in early 2017 sparked outrage) (Mangahas, 2017). On January 31, 2018, one of the TC-90s flew low over Scarborough Shoal, taking photos of the CCG and Filipino fishing vessels in the area (Associated Press, 2018b). It was the first mission by any of the newly acquired planes. In May 2018, two JMSDF Kawasaki P-1 Patrol aircraft joined one of the TC-90s for a joint exercise "in the waters and air around Palawan" (Mangosing, 2018b).

Japan has also begun to provide assistance geared directly at the Philippines' goal of halting piracy and terrorism around the Sulu and Celebes seas in the south. In November 2017, Japan agreed to fund the construction of four coast guard radar stations on islands in the area through its overseas development assistance budget and to provide training for PCG personnel. The radar stations were part of a larger

aid package that included funding for AFP helicopter parts, infrastructure projects, and support for the rebuilding effort in Marawi (Reuters, 2017d).

It is telling that even as the Duterte government has rhetorically distanced itself from the United States and downplayed tensions over the South China Sea, its defense cooperation with Japan, which is focused primarily on the maritime domain, continues to expand. Duterte has expressed a personal affinity for Japan, and Prime Minster Abe has proven adept at courting the mercurial Filipino president, even as the creative financing arrangements offered by Tokyo (such as the extremely generous lease terms for the TC-90s) have helped ensure Japan's profile as an attractive security partner. This confluence of interests and value propositions appears set to continue in the future.

South Korea

As with Australia and Japan, the Philippines' defense cooperation and overall bilateral relationship with South Korea have benefited from both countries being members of the network of U.S. alliances in the region (South Korea having signed a security treaty with the United States in 1954). The Philippines contributed troops to the UN force that helped avert North Korea's conquest of the south during the Korean War, and Filipino and South Korean troops also fought on the same side in Vietnam and in Iraq (though the Philippines sent only a small contingent of support personnel to Iraq from 2003 to 2004).

On the economic front, South Korea has emerged as a major source of investment in the Philippines. South Korea does not factor much in public discourse in the Philippines, however; so little in fact that opinions about South Korea are not surveyed by either of the major Philippine polling firms ("Fourth Quarter 2017 Social Weather Survey," 2018; Pulse Asia Research, 2017). But while the United States, Japan, or Australia might rank higher in the estimation of most Filipinos, they also poll very poorly among a small, vocal minority. The more neutral attitude of Filipinos toward South Korea means that closer ties with the country, whether in the security or economic spheres, elicit little controversy in the Philippines. This, combined with the relative affordability and high interoperability of South

Korean defense equipment within the AFP's existing force structure, and a notable lack of concern in Seoul for Manila's human rights, governance, or corruption record, makes South Korea an attractive security partner to Manila.

Unlike Australia and Japan, South Korea's defense relationship with the Philippines is driven almost entirely by economics. Seoul certainly has shared interests with Manila, including on maritime security, counterterrorism, and ensuring regional stability, but there is little appetite in South Korea to play a role as a direct security provider in Southeast Asia the way Australia and Japan have. South Korea does, however, have an interest in boosting its profile as a major arms supplier to the region, and the Philippines is a prime market thanks to its long reliance on U.S. equipment. South Korea can provide top-notch materiel, including U.S. platforms produced under license, at a competitive price. As such, Seoul has emerged as the second most important provider of arms to the Philippines after the United States, and in early 2019 broke ground on Korean-invested factories in the Philippines aimed at co-production of ammunition and body armor (Grevatt, 2019).

The Philippines and South Korea signed an MOU on logistics and defense industry cooperation as far back as 1994 ("Memorandum of Understanding on Logistics and Defense Industry Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines," 1994). During an October 2013 visit to Seoul, President Aquino and his South Korean counterpart Park Geun-hye signed another MOU to enhance defense cooperation, though it remained quite vague. Department of Foreign Affairs Under Secretary Raul Hernandez said it would cover "a wide range of cooperation from exchange of visits by military personnel and experts to humanitarian assistance and international peacekeeping activities" (Gutierrez, 2013). He also said it would serve as a basis for "detailed agreements or activities later" (Gutierrez, 2013). To date, however, while South Korea is a major arms supplier for the Philippines, it has not been particularly active in training, exchanges, or other activities that typically go along with after sales support and a broader defense cooperation relationship.

President Duterte made a three-day visit to Seoul in June 2018, during which he and President Moon Jae-in highlighted the growing security ties between their two countries. Duterte noted the "importance of friends like South Korea" to his "independent foreign policy," which seeks to move the Philippines away from overreliance on the United States. Following their meeting, Duterte said the leaders had

> reaffirmed the need to work closer together to address traditional and emerging threats, again (including) terrorism, transnational crimes and piracy at sea. . . . To do this, we will count on South Korea as a steady partner in modernizing our key assets in defense, security and law enforcement. (Heydarian, 2018)

The burgeoning defense relationship was underscored in October 2018 when, following its first-ever visit to Russia, a Philippine Navy vessel made an equally historic port call at Jeju Island, South Korea (Wakefield, 2018).

In recent years, South Korea has become the second-largest source of major military hardware for the Philippines, behind only the United States ("South Korea Gives Anti-Submarine Warship to Philippines," 2017). The largest procurement project under former president Aquino's tenure involved the purchase of 12 FA-50 light attack and trainer jets from KAI for about $400 million (Parameswaran, 2015f). South Korea delivered the last of the jets in July 2017, three months ahead of schedule ("S. Korea Delivers 12 FA-50PH Light Attack Aircraft to Philippines," 2017). Before their arrival, the Philippines had not had a fighter jet in service since retiring the last of its 40-year-old U.S.-made F-5s in 2005, making the FA-50 procurement a source of considerable importance (Sapnu and Cervantes, 2005). Chief of staff of the PAF, Major General Rozzano Briguez, went so far as to declare that the purchase of the planes had helped "[bring] back the prestige of the PAF" ("Philippines Air Force Receives 2 South Korean Jets, More to Come," 2017).

But the purchase also sparked controversy among some, including President Rodrigo Duterte, who questioned whether they were just an expensive boondoggle when the AFP had more immediate, and cheaper, needs. As president-elect, Duterte told a business forum in

June 2016, "*Sayang ang pera dun* [Money was wasted there]. You cannot use them for anti-insurgency, which is the problem at the moment. You can only use these for ceremonial fly-by" (Romero, 2016a). The AFP has subsequently gone to some lengths to prove the FA-50s' worth to the new president and his focus on internal security. In January 2017, they were used in a counterinsurgency operation against Abu Sayyaf—their only use so far aside from training and fly-bys ("Philippines Air Force Receives 2 South Korean Jets, More to Come," 2017).

In that operation, the jets, among other aircraft, were used to bomb insurgents in what the Philippine press described as an "unconventional first combat mission for the newly acquired FA-50s from South Korea that were brought in to defend the country's maritime territories in the West Philippine Sea" ("PH Military Deploys New Fighter Jets vs Local Terrorists," 2017). AFP Chief General Eduardo Año said the jets were "efficient" in counterinsurgency operations and would continue to be used in that role. The general also described the operation as "a good justification for its procurement," suggesting that the assignment was at least partially a response to criticism from Duterte and others ("PH Military Deploys New Fighter Jets vs Local Terrorists," 2017). Secretary Lorenzana said in June 2018 that the president had been impressed with the jets' performance in Marawi and ordered the AFP to study possible acquisition of 12 more (Laude, 2018).

South Korea is also responsible for the second-largest procurement project to date under the AFP Modernization Program. In October 2016, the Philippines signed a contract with Hyundai Heavy Industries to build two new frigates for the Philippine Navy at a cost of $314 million. The frigates will be delivered starting in 2020. The deal was negotiated by the Aquino administration but approved by the new Duterte government ("PH Buys 2 New Frigates from South Korean Firm," 2016). In winning the contract, South Korea beat out competing bids from India, Spain, and France (Mogato, 2014).

The frigate purchase has not come in for the same criticism from the president as the FA-50 acquisition, perhaps because they can more easily be adapted to missions in the Sulu and Celebes seas, in addition to the South China Sea. The Philippine Navy has described the frigate

purchase with the same pride used by the Air Force on delivery of the FA-50s. According to the Naval Public Affairs Office,

> Most importantly, this marks the entry of the PN [Philippine Navy] into its quest to be a strong and credible navy by year 2020. The acquisition of the two brand new and modern Frigates serves as a "Big Step" in realizing . . . a dream of a world class and well equipped Philippine Navy, capable and credible in protecting its people, and the sovereignty of the land and the interest of its national territory. (Mogato, 2014)

The frigate acquisition has, however, been clouded by accusations of improper political interference in the procurement process for the combat management system to be installed on the warships. The DND and the Navy spent 2017 debating which company should get the contract for the system, with the former endorsing South Korea's Hanwha Thales (which was Hyundai's preference) while the Navy backed Tacticos Thales of the Netherlands. The dispute resulted in the unprecedented removal of Philippine Navy Chief Vice Admiral Ronald Mercado from his post for insubordination in December 2017 and accusations that an assistant to the president, Christopher "Bong" Go, had pressured DND to ensure Hanwha was chosen (Fonbuena, 2018b). As a result, prominent voices including opposition lawmakers called for the acquisition to be canceled (Fonbuena, 2018a). In April 2018, Secretary Lorenzana announced that the AFP and Hyundai had approved the critical design review for the ships after a six-month delay and expected no further hurdles (Acosta, 2018a). Such scandals delaying or derailing major procurement projects have become a common feature of the AFP's modernization effort.

In addition, the South Korean Ministry of Defense announced in April 2017 that it would transfer an aging *Pohang*-class antisubmarine corvette to the Philippines for the symbolic price of $100. Though the ship was effectively donated by South Korea, the Philippines will still need to foot the bill to refurbish it ("South Korea Gives Anti-Submarine Warship to Philippines, for $100," 2017). A Philippine Navy crew was sent to South Korea in February 2018 to train on the ship's systems in preparation for sailing it to the Philippines. The ship is undergoing

dry-docking and repairs in South Korea and is expected to be transferred to the Philippines in June 2019 (Nepomuceno, 2019). The transfer is expected to cost the Philippines about $4.7 million (Mangosing, 2018c). After the gift was announced, a Philippine DND spokesperson said that Manila would consider acquiring up to three such ships from Seoul, which is retiring them from service in favor of newer vessels. Like the FA-50s, the spokesperson said the ship would be used for both maritime and internal security: "They may be an old ship but it will definitely enhance our capability to patrol our waters and perform counter-terrorism measures" (Mangosing, 2018c).

South Korea's Kia Motors, meanwhile, is a major supplier of ground vehicles for the AFP. A company official told *IHS Jane's Defence Industry* in September 2016 that Kia had delivered more than 2,000 military trucks to the Philippines over the past decade (Grevatt, 2016c). These included 717 new 1.25-ton KM450 military trucks delivered between December 2015 and January 2016 for use by all four branches of the AFP. At a cost of about $38 million, they were earmarked for use in both combat operations and disaster relief (Mangosing, 2016a). The Philippines earlier acquired 137 KM450s in December 2010, at the tail end of the first 15-year AFP Modernization Program, along with 250 2.5-ton KM250 trucks, delivery of which began in late 2010 ("South Korea Donates 157 Military Trucks to PH," 2010). The Philippine Army has also purchased around 20 5.0-ton KM500 trucks (Grevatt, 2016c).

Kia next hopes to sell the AFP its new 5.7-ton light tactical vehicle (LTV), which began production in 2016 for the Korean army. The 4×4 vehicle comes in armored and unarmored configurations and is designed to be both maneuverable and survivable, which could prove well suited to the AFP's counterinsurgency and disaster relief needs. Kia has even floated the possibility of producing the LTV locally in collaboration with Philippine industry (Grevatt, 2016c). Another Korean company, Hanwha, won a $50 million contract in 2016 to supply the Philippine Marine Corps with eight of its AAV7A1 amphibious assault vehicles (Grevatt, 2016a).

South Korea donated a landing craft utility (LCU) ship to the Philippines in 2015 ("Philippines Gets Canadian Helicopters, Korean

Landing Craft," 2015). Manila paid only for its shipping and refurbishment costs, expected to total about $800,000. The ship significantly boosted the AFP's troop transport capabilities; prior to the transfer the Philippine Navy had only six LCUs, just three of which were operational at any given time (Acosta, 2015). South Korea also donated 16 rubber boats to the military, to be used for operations in Mindanao and for disaster response (Acosta, 2015).

From Manila's perspective, South Korea is in many ways the ideal partner for arms transfers to the Philippines. It produces high-quality equipment that is relatively easy for the AFP to incorporate into its force and does so at a competitive price without the political baggage or conditionality of U.S. or even European arms transfers. This "no-strings-attached" approach was on display in May 2018 when the Korean Police National Agency donated 130 patrol cars to the Philippine National Police in a move that drew flak from human rights groups who saw it as turning a blind eye to Manila's bloody war on drugs, which had recently led to the death of a South Korean businessman at the hands of the Philippine police and had been blamed for a sharp drop in new Korean investment in the Philippines (Kine, 2018).

South Korea engages in a small amount of military education and training for Filipino troops—for instance in training pilots for the FA-50s—but an expansion of joint exercises, military training, or high-level defense diplomacy between Manila and Seoul is unlikely. Nonetheless, with the second phase of the AFP Modernization Program in full swing, the pace of South Korea's arms transfers to the Philippines should remain strong, even with the scandal surrounding the frigate purchase from Hyundai.

The Rest: Ties with Vietnam, Indonesia, and India Remain Nascent

Shared security concerns are slowly driving a renaissance in defense cooperation between the Philippines and its other neighbors, though they remain minor players compared with the United States, Australia, Japan, and South Korea. Vietnam and Indonesia share the Philippines'

concerns about Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea. This is combined in the case of Jakarta, with the growing fear that Islamist militants in the southern Philippines could emerge as a regional threat. India also shares the perception of a rising China as a potential threat, especially in the maritime domain. And less sensitive areas of shared concern, like humanitarian assistance and maritime SAR, are providing space for cooperation among all regional states.

These shared concerns are leading to low-level engagements in defense diplomacy, education and training, intelligence sharing, joint exercises, and in the case of Indonesia, arms transfers. The web of security cooperation between the Philippines and its South and Southeast Asian neighbors will likely remain weak for the foreseeable future, however, thanks to lingering distrust, concerns over sparking China's ire, low capacity, and poor interoperability. But cooperation is likely to grow, even if at a slow rate and focused primarily on less sensitive areas.

Vietnam

The Philippines had a bumpy relationship with Vietnam for much of the twentieth century, but the two have rapidly grown closer in the last two decades. As a U.S. ally, founding member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and home to the major American bases at Clark and Subic, Manila was an important node in the U.S.-led strategy of containing communism in Asia during the Cold War. Filipino soldiers served in Vietnam, mainly in noncombat roles. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, the Philippines welcomed a large influx of Vietnamese "boat people," who fled across the South China Sea. Most eventually emigrated to the United States. At the same time, Manila moved to quickly normalize relations with the newly unified Vietnam. But like the other four founding members of ASEAN, the Philippines was alarmed by Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in 1978, which served to limit closer relations for the next decade. Then, with Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia in 1989 and its accession to ASEAN in 1995, diplomatic relations quickly warmed.

Security relations with Vietnam remain relatively low level but have increased steadily in recent years, driven by a shared concern over Chinese bullying in the South China Sea. The two countries signed

an MOU on defense cooperation in October 2010. In 2011, Vietnam's President Truong Tan Sang visited Manila and reached agreements with President Aquino to boost navy-to-navy information sharing and cooperation and set up a hotline between their coast guards. Defense Minister Phung Quang Thanh visited the Philippines in August 2013—the first time a minister of national defense of Vietnam had done so. And in March 2014, the two countries held their first navy-to-navy staff talks, agreeing to increase intelligence, technology, and training exchanges (Thayer, 2015).

The Philippines and Vietnam inked a strategic partnership agreement on the sidelines of the November 2015 APEC Leaders Meeting in Manila (Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the Philippines, 2015). It remains the Philippines' only such partnership with a fellow Southeast Asian country, and it was clear from the start that concern over the South China Sea was "one of the moving forces" behind the effort, as noted by Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Charles Jose (Thayer, 2015). Under the strategic partnership agreement, the Philippines and Vietnam established a DCWG that meets annually at the assistant secretary/director general level and a defense strategic dialogue at the vice-ministerial level. They also agreed that "joint confidence- and capacity-building activities will be conducted leading to the eventual holding of actual joint activities between the two navies" (Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the Philippines, 2015). In addition to defense cooperation in general, the two countries also committed to maintain a hotline and capacity-building activities between their respective coast guards, convene a joint commission on maritime and ocean cooperation at the vice-minister level every two years and conduct "appropriate joint activities in mutually agreed areas in the SCS [South China Sea]" (Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the Philippines, 2015).

In early December 2016, the Philippine Navy deployed one of its flagships, the *Ramon Alcaraz*, to Vietnam for a five-day port visit to Cam Ranh Bay. During the visit, the ship took part in joint exercises with the Vietnamese Navy that were focused on implementation of the CUES, maneuvers and communication, SAR, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (Mangosing, 2016b). In April 2017, the

Vietnamese Navy's *Le Quy Don* 286 paid a reciprocal goodwill visit to Manila ("Vietnamese Training Ship Pays Goodwill Visit to the Philippines amid Tensions," 2017). In November 2018, Philippine Navy personnel and their Vietnamese counterparts took part in a series of goodwill soccer, volleyball, and tug-of-war games on Northeast Cay in the Spratly Islands, which is occupied by the Philippines but claimed by both countries along with China and Taiwan (Mangosing, 2018e). It was the fourth such event in recent years, with the last taking place on Vietnam-occupied Southwest Cay in June 2017 (Kelly and Kubo, 2017b). In March 2019, Secretary Lorenzana paid a visit to Hanoi and, though there were few concrete outcomes, he and Vietnamese Defense Minster Ngo Xuan Lich agreed to boost engagement on defense industry, nontraditional security, air force cooperation, and military medicine (Parameswaran, 2019).

Even under President Duterte and his more pro-China foreign policy, Manila and Hanoi continue to strengthen low-level security cooperation driven by shared concerns over the South China Sea. There are clear brakes on how far and how fast that relationship can grow in the near term, including the two sides' relatively incompatible military systems and doctrines, the fact that neither is an arms exporter or net security provider (and therefore cannot do much to bolster capacity for the other), and Vietnam's explicit policy of avoiding foreign military alliances. But as long as their respective positions in the South China Sea remain threatened by Beijing, which is unlikely to change anytime soon, the Philippines and Vietnam will likely continue seeking avenues for security cooperation, especially in MDA and maritime security.

Indonesia

The Philippines and Indonesia have enjoyed generally positive relations in the postcolonial era. Those ties have been driven, among other things, by geography, shared culture, and the colonial experience, along with a similar opposition to communism during most of the Cold War. The Philippines and Indonesia both initially opposed the creation of Malaysia as the successor state to the Federation of Malaya, leading them to cooperate on the 1963 Manila Accord and establishment of the short-lived "Maphilindo" community. When Indonesia's

first president Sukarno turned instead toward a policy of *Konfrontasi* (confrontation) with Malaysia and began to move toward an accommodation with the Soviet bloc, relations briefly soured. But Sukarno's ouster in a military coup by the doggedly anti-Communist Suharto in 1967 brought the two countries back into concert.

The Philippines and Indonesia were two of the five founding members of ASEAN in 1967. The organization did not provide for much direct security cooperation, but it did tie the five (six, once Brunei joined) anti-Communist members of the region together in a loose political accord. And for the first two decades after its founding, the Philippines' Ferdinand Marcos and Indonesia's Suharto, along with Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, provided continuity and direction as the longest-serving of its strongman founders.

Shortly after the end of the Cold War, the Philippines and Indonesia signed an agreement on defense cooperation in 1997 (Republic of the Philippines and Republic of Indonesia, 1997). Following Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, the Philippines purchased two strategic sealift vessels (SSVs) from Indonesia, with the second delivered in May 2017, to ensure that the AFP will be better able to lead future disaster relief efforts rather than being so reliant on U.S. and Australian assistance. The new SSV can serve as a hospital ship, with capacity for 500 people, two helicopters, and the ability to launch small boasts (Forrest Green, 2017).

In 2014, the Philippines ordered two C-212 medium transport aircraft from state-owned Indonesian Aerospace (PT Dusantara Indonesia), which produces them under license from the Spanish aviation firm CASA as the NC212. During an inspection of the planes at the company's Bandung aircraft factory in November 2016, Philippine Under Secretary of Defense for Finance and Material Raymundo Elefante said cost was the driving factor in Manila's decision to purchase the C-212s, which would be used for "natural disaster, medical evacuation, and other conditions" ("Philippines Inspect Plane Order at PT Dirgantara Indonesia," 2016). Indonesian Aerospace also bid on a contract in 2014 to provide the Philippines with two ASW helicopters but lost out to Italian arms manufacturer Finmeccanica (Mogato, 2014).

Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines agreed in May 2016 to launch coordinated patrols along their maritime boarders in the Sulu

and Celebes seas and set up a hotline to combat piracy and kidnappings by Abu Sayyaf, which have surged in recent years. During a bilateral meeting in late April 2017, Duterte and President Joko Widodo of Indonesia vowed closer coordination against "terrorism, violent extremism, piracy at sea, and transnational crimes including the trade of illicit drugs" and also agreed to set up a joint working group on counterterrorism later in the year (Cancel, 2017). With the Marawi siege as a catalyst, the long-mooted trilateral "Indomalphi" patrols officially launched in June 2017. Renamed the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement to Address Security Issues in the Maritime Areas of Common Concern, or TCA, the agreement involves each of the three nations establishing transit corridors for shipping, which are being kept safe by coordinated patrols (Batongbacal, 2017). The defense ministers and armed forces chiefs of all three nations attended the official launch of the patrols aboard an Indonesian naval vessel in North Kalimantan Province and issued a joint statement noting that the patrols would tackle "piracy, kidnapping, terrorism and other transnational crimes in regional waters" (McKirdy, Quiano, and Watson, 2017). The three countries have also launched a series of trilateral port visits and training activities under the banner of the TCA. The fourth of these saw the Indonesian Navy's KRI Sura-802 and Malaysia's KD Pari fast attack boat visit Zamboanga City in Mindanao for three days of exercises and goodwill games in November 2018 (Pareño, 2018).

In addition to naval patrols, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines launched coordinated air patrols over the Sulu Sea in October 2017. The patrols occur monthly and rotate among the three participating countries (Leong, 2017). Each country has also agreed to establish a maritime command center to coordinate patrols and intelligence sharing with the other two (Leong, 2017). The Philippine Navy has announced plans to use its new TC-90s over the Sulu Sea and allocated $100,000 to establish a maritime surveillance network to counter piracy in the area (Mangahas, 2017).

Efforts to boost intelligence sharing with Indonesia and other regional partners to counter terrorism is also on the rise. In June 2017, military intelligence officials from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines met to discuss the extremist threat. According to Philippine

presidential spokesperson, Ernesto Abella, they had a "fruitful and productive discussion on a trilateral cooperation aimed at preventing extremists and terrorists from establishing operational bases in Southeast Asia" and "agreed to work together to jointly develop and implement counterterrorism measures and strategies" (Flores, 2017). In January 2018, the Philippines joined Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, and Thailand to launch a new "Our Eyes" intelligence sharing agreement. Under the arrangement, inspired by the "Five Eyes" intelligence sharing network of the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, defense officials from the participating countries will meet every two weeks to share information on terrorist groups and develop a shared database of extremists (Allard, 2018).

Indonesia is not going to emerge as a top-tier security partner for the Philippines anytime soon, given political and logistical constraints. Indonesia is famously nonaligned and will not step up to take the Philippines' side on issues like the South China Sea or even engage in much joint training or exercises that might be seen by Beijing as sensitive. Indonesia's indigenous defense industry will continue to provide some arms and occasionally larger platforms, particularly naval vessels, for the Philippines, but not at the level of partners like the United States or South Korea, due to both its limited interoperability and lack of competitiveness in producing higher-end equipment. In addition to remaining a mid-tier arms-provider, Indonesia will likely continue to be seen primarily as a nonsensitive joint military activities partner by the Philippines, with most of the focus of the two sides' cooperation centering on counterterrorism and maritime piracy operations along their shared maritime borders and multilateral activities under the aegis of ASEAN.

India

India historically has not played much role in Philippine strategic thinking, foreign policy, economics, or security cooperation. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, religious and cultural linkages, shared British colonial legacies, and a large Indian diaspora helped maintain ties to the subcontinent throughout the twentieth century, even as New Delhi

lacked an effective diplomatic or economic presence in the region. But none of those are major factors in Philippine society. Moreover, while India was a leading proponent of nonalignment throughout the twentieth century, its close ties to the Soviet Union and strained relations with the United States effectively put it on the opposite side of the Cold War from the Philippines, a close U.S. ally.

New Delhi announced a "Look East" policy in 1992 to strengthen its diplomatic and economic ties to Southeast Asia, but the effort was underresourced and made little headway. Similarly, while India has long been a dialogue partner of ASEAN and a member of multilateral bodies including ARF established in 1994 and the EAS setup in 2006, it has played only a marginal role in the evolution of regional architecture. This situation began to change in the last decade with growing Indian alarm over Chinese revisionism, including fears that its assertiveness in the South China Sea would eventually spill over into the Indian Ocean, and with New Delhi's desire to play a larger role on the world stage. In the Philippines, this has resulted in some low-level security engagements that could expand in the future. When Narendra Modi became India's prime minister in 2014, he declared a revitalized "Act East" policy toward Southeast Asia, which has resulted in a moderate increase in India's profile in the region, including in low-level defense diplomacy.

Manila and Delhi signed an MOU on defense cooperation in 2006, but implementation remains embryonic (Villaruel, 2015). Under this framework, the two sides have exchanged visits by defense officials, coordinated Indian Navy visits to the Philippines—including a stop by two ships in the Philippines in November 2017 as part of a 12-port tour of the region—and undertaken low-level joint training and education (Villaruel, 2015; Parameswaran, 2017f). The Philippines and India have also begun nascent coast guard cooperation, with an Indian Coast Guard patrol vessel visiting the Philippines in December 2017 for joint SAREX with the PCG (Parameswaran, 2017f).

India and the Philippines have established a joint defense cooperation committee which met for the first time in Manila in January 2012 (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2013a). Discussions have focused on MDA, among other issues. India and the

Philippines also hold intelligence exchange, or INTELLEX, meetings covering "sensitive areas" (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, 2013a).

In May 2016, India's state-owned Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) emerged as the lowest bidder for a contract to build two light frigates for the Philippine Navy. But in its postqualification assessment of GRSE's bid, the Philippine Navy found that the company lacked sufficient funds to build the ships. There was hope that the Indian government could step in to save the deal, but in the end GRSE was disqualified and the contract went to South Korea's Hyundai Heavy Industries (Saberwal, 2016).

India's increasingly active role in Asian diplomacy and regional architecture under the "Act East" policy and its desire to sell more defense equipment in Southeast Asia are creating opportunities for greater security cooperation with the Philippines. New Delhi's desire to see Beijing's revisionist ambitions in the South China Sea thwarted, thereby heading off future bad behavior in the Indian Ocean, likely plays a role in this outreach. From the Philippines' perspective, India remains a largely unknown quantity in the security sphere, but if it can provide cost-competitive equipment and assistance without the strings attached to Western arms sales and training, India could carve out a modest but expanding roles as a security partner for the Philippines.

Other Defense Cooperation Partners: China, Russia, ASEAN, Canada, Israel, and Europe

To provide comparative context, this section provides brief sketches of the security cooperation that the Philippines engages in with countries other than the United States and those described above.

China

China and the Philippines spent most of the twentieth century on opposite sides of the Cold War, with Manila deeply distrustful of Beijing and fearful of Chinese support for the long-running insurgency of

the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army. China's expansion into the Spratly Islands in 1988, and especially its occupation of Mischief Reef within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone in 1995, introduced a new point of contention in the relationship. Nevertheless, the two sides were largely successful in managing tensions over the South China Sea via diplomatic channels, especially through ASEAN, during the 2000s.

The Philippine DND and the Chinese Ministry of Defense signed an MOU on military cooperation in 2004, but progress in implementation has been extremely limited ("Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation between the Department of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of National Defense of the People's Republic of China," 2004). In the years following, the two governments held four defense and security talks; China donated some engineering equipment to the AFP; and five Filipino students attended the Chinese National Defense College. These limited security engagements, however, were cut off entirely after the Aquino administration filed an arbitral case against China under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in 2013 in retaliation for China's seizure a year earlier of Scarborough Shoal, which had been under effective Philippine control for decades (Forrest Green, 2017).

Under orders from Aquino's pro-Beijing successor Duterte, the Philippines has again begun to explore security cooperation with China, though wariness from the public and bureaucracy act as a brake on warming relations with Beijing (Heydarian, 2017). Public opinion in the Philippines also consistently hostile to China, seeing Beijing as a potential economic partner but also a security threat. That hostility has been consistent across administrations and is widespread in the AFP and DND, which makes it difficult to get the bureaucracy excited about potential defense cooperation. For instance, despite multiple announcements regarding potential joint exercises, the Philippines has only ever engaged in military exercises with China under a multilateral umbrella, most recently during October 2018 China-ASEAN naval exercises off Zhanjiang, China (Acosta, 2018b). Nonetheless, President Duterte's early popularity, combined with the Philippines' considerable procurement needs, limited budgets, and reduced visibility of South

China Sea tensions since late 2016 have provided a window for defense diplomacy with Beijing.

Defense Secretary Lorenzana accompanied Duterte on his first trip to Beijing in October 2016 and met with then–Defense Minister Chang Wanquan. The two reportedly agreed to renew security ties but offered no details on what that would entail (Perlez, 2016). In May 2017, a Chinese naval fleet made a three-day visit to Davao, the southern Philippine city that Duterte led as mayor for two decades, at the invitation of the Philippine government ("Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte Visits Chinese Warships in His Home Town," 2017). It marked the first Chinese naval visit to the Philippines in seven years (Romero, 2017). The decision to visit Davao was widely seen as a personal gesture to the president, especially after the Chinese Embassy in the Philippines originally said the three-ship fleet would visit Manila (Lee-Brago, 2017). It was little surprise, then, that Duterte went aboard one of the ships—the missile destroyer *Chang Chun* ("Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte Visits Chinese Warships in His Home Town," 2017). This was something he had previously done during a Russian naval visit to Manila but had pointedly refused to do during port calls by U.S. vessels (Placido, 2017).

Another Chinese vessel, the research ship *Yuan Wang* 3, docked in Davao for replenishment in July 2018. And a Chinese Il-76 military transport plane landed in Davao for refueling on June 8 and again on June 23 en route to and from New Zealand. Philippine officials took great pains to frame these as "routine" refueling and refurbishment visits by Chinese ships and planes, but they have stirred controversy in the Philippine press and among opposition lawmakers, who have questioned, among other things, why they all took place in Duterte's hometown of Davao (Bulosan, 2018). Perhaps in response to that criticism, the Chinese navy chose Manila for the site of its second official port call when three warships paid a goodwill visit in January 2019 (Viray, 2019).

During the May 2017 ship visit, Duterte suggested to reporters that he had accepted an offer for joint exercises with Chinese forces "in Mindanao, maybe in the Sulu Sea" (Romero, 2017). This surprised not only the press but also the Philippine defense establishment, which the

president did not appear to have consulted on the idea. Defense Secretary Lorenzana walked back the statement the very next day, saying that before any such exercises could take place, the two sides would need "a framework that will determine where (the exercises would be held), what units (would be involved), duration of patrol, purpose of patrol, and communications between forces" and if Chinese forces were to undertake exercises on Philippine soil, "there may be a need for a visiting forces agreement" ratified by the Philippine Senate (Tubeza, 2017). AFP Chief Año was even clearer:

> The AFP is . . . open to joint naval exercises not only with China but also with other countries. But before we can embark on these activities, both countries *must* enter into [a] defense agreement, like a visiting forces agreement, to define the terms of reference or protocol and must adhere to existing agreements with other allied countries. (Tubeza, 2017; emphasis added)

This was not the first time Duterte's statements on future defense relations with China have been contradicted, either by other officials or the president himself. During his visit to Beijing, Duterte made what seemed to be an unambiguous announcement that Manila would be looking to China as its primary security partner:

> I announce my separation from the United States . . . both in military, but also economics. . . . I will be dependent on you [China]. . . . I've realigned myself in your ideological flow and maybe I will also go to Russia to talk to Putin and tell him that there are three of us against the world. (Demick and Wilkinson, 2016)

But just two days later, in response to a predictable outcry from the Philippine press, experts, and members of the Congress and bureaucracy, Duterte said he never meant to sever ties with the United States (Rauhala, 2016a). And during a visit to Japan a week later, he insisted that his China trip was all about economics: "We did not talk about arms. We avoided talking about alliances" (Takenaka and Sieg, 2016). The Philippine president has also mused about the possibility of large arms purchases from China, but results have so far been modest.

In early December 2016, shortly after Reuters reported that U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin would block the sale of 26,000 M4 assault rifles to the Philippine National Police because of concerns over the mounting death toll in Duterte's war on drugs, the Philippine president announced that China would provide the country with small arms (Romero, 2016b). The terms of the deal were murky, but it was clear that Duterte saw it as a rebuke to Washington: "The firearms are already available and they [China] are asking me to accept them. . . . We don't need to ask from someone else because they're willing to give it. They are not free but it's a grant actually. If it's a grant payable in 25 years that is really practically giving" (Romero, 2016b).

Reuters later reported that China's ambassador to the Philippines, Zhao Jianhua, had offered $14.4 million in small arms to the Philippines during a meeting with President Duterte (Mogato, 2016). Defense Secretary Lorenzana later reported that the grant would provide the Philippines with two to three fast boasts, two drones, sniper rifles, and a bomb disposal robot, to be used against Abu Sayyaf militants in the southern Philippines. According to Lorenzana, "If these are quality equipment, we will probably buy more" (Mogato, 2017a). On June 28, 2017, Ambassador Zhao turned over the first tranche of weapons, consisting of about 3,000 rifles (an unlicensed variant of the M16) and 6 million rounds of ammunition worth $7.3 million in a ceremony at Clark Air Base attended by Duterte. Zhao also gave the Philippine government about $300,000 for the rehabilitation of Marawi (Parameswaran, 2017c). Though Zhao himself admitted that these transfers were "not that big, they have been highly symbolic for Duterte" (Parameswaran, 2017c).

China also donated 90 sniper rifles to the Philippines. President Duterte has repeatedly said that one of these Chinese sniper rifles fired the shot that killed Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon in the waning days of the Marawi siege, even though reports from the scout rangers company credited with the kill have disputed it and Lorenzana has insisted that all of the guns donated by China have gone to the Philippine National Police and not the AFP (Lema and Petty, 2017). And in July 2018 Beijing donated to the AFP 30 rocket-propelled grenade

launchers and four 12-meter patrol boats, which Lorenzana had earlier said would be used in the Sulu Sea (Reuters, 2018c; Viray, 2017).

Lorenzana also said in December 2017 that Beijing had offered to provide the Philippines with $500 million in long-term soft loans to purchase equipment, but to date no such deal has been finalized (Mogato, 2016). In May, Lorenzana caveated that Manila would only make use of the Chinese loans if its own budget for the current phase of the AFP Modernization Program proved insufficient. On the sidelines of the Belt and Road Summit in Beijing in May 2017, Duterte met and signed a letter of intent with Chinese state-owned defense contractors Poly Group Corporation and Poly Technologies (Parameswaran, 2017c). Lorenzana afterward said the DND would send a technical team to look at equipment offered by the two companies.

In addition to recent arms transfers, China has begun to host small numbers of AFP personnel for visits and training. During a November speech, Lorenzana noted,

> We have to deepen military-to-military cooperation and exchange with both the United States and China. We would welcome more military-to-military dialogue with China. We have been sending our military officers to China for visits and will continue to do so in the future. (Lorenzana, 2017)

Nevertheless, the AFP reportedly remains wary of this cooperation with Beijing. A prominent Philippine official claims that many AFP officers do not find these exchanges with China productive due to a language barrier, lack of interoperability, technical issues, and differences in doctrine. He also says that most have difficulty reconciling Chinese activities in the South China Sea with the president's call for cooperation (author interview).

The PCG has been a bit more forward-leaning than the AFP in opening channels with its Chinese counterparts. PCG officers met with their CCG counterparts in December 2016 and February 2017 to explore areas of potential cooperation (Cabato, 2017). Following those meetings, the two coast guards signed agreements on joint SAR operations and made progress on an eventual agreement on combat-

ing illegal drugs and piracy. The PCG sent 20 personnel to China in May 2017 for law enforcement training. The two sides held the first meeting of a new joint coast guard committee in Beijing in October 2017, with the second meeting in Guangzhou in October 2018. At each of these meetings, officials have announced plans for reciprocal ship visits and joint exercises, but those efforts have been repeatedly delayed (Xinhua, 2017). This low-level coast guard cooperation could easily be dashed by a return to tensions disputed waters and might have already been strained by the CCG harassing Filipino fishers at Scarborough Shoal in mid-2018 and deploying around Thitu Island in response to Philippine construction at that disputed feature ("Philippines Asks China to Stop Coast Guard from Taking Fishermen's Catch in Scarborough," 2018).

The combination of hostile public opinion, low interoperability, a deeply skeptical defense establishment, and simmering maritime tensions would appear to create a low ceiling for potential cooperation between Beijing and Manila. President Duterte has pushed up against the bounds of what the AFP, DND, and the public are willing to accept and has grown more measured in his outreach to China over the course of his first year and a half as president. But that does not mean that China cannot make inroads. For instance, the fight against ISIS-linked insurgents in the southern Philippines provides an opportunity for low-level defense diplomacy, small arms transfers, and potentially even intelligence sharing. But such advances will likely continue to be slow and small scale for the foreseeable future.

Russia

Like China, Russia spent most of the twentieth century on the opposite side of the Cold War from the Philippines and as a result security ties were effectively off the table until recent years. Even then, Philippines relations with Russia have largely been calibrated to those of its ally the United States, especially under traditionally pro-U.S. leaders like Aquino. That close coordination has, however, been severed by President Duterte, who is happy to seek closer relations with Moscow despite misgivings from Washington or other Western capitals.

The recent interest in exploring security cooperation with Russia has in large part been driven by Duterte's personal affinity for Moscow and his desire to include Russia among the countries to whom the Philippines will turn to reduce what the president sees as an overdependence on the United States. As is the case with China, the Philippine public and defense establishment remain skeptical of closer relations with Russia, and poor interoperability puts a natural brake on arms transfers, exercises, and joint training. But Russia is not seen as a direct external threat the way China is, and that opens opportunities for cooperation that are closed to Beijing.

Defense Secretary Lorenzana and Foreign Secretary Perfecto Yasay kicked off the effort to explore a security relationship with a December 2016 visit to Russia. Lorenzana's was the first visit by a Philippine defense secretary to Moscow in 40 years of official diplomatic relations (Lee-Brago, 2016). During that trip, Lorenzana met with Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov and reportedly agreed to negotiate an MOU on "future military engagements, including joint military exercises" (Associated Press, 2017). Those engagements were to include "exchange of high-level visits, military education and training, intelligence exchange in the field of counterterrorism and capacity building in demining and military medicine, among others" (Lee-Brago, 2016).

A month later, scaling back expectations, Lorenzana said the deal, which was still being finalized, would allow the two sides to exchange visits and for Filipino officers to observe Russian military drills ("Philippines Says Finalizing Deal to Observe Russian Military Drills," 2017). Secretary of Foreign Affairs Alan Peter Cayetano signed the Agreement on Defense Cooperation in Moscow on May 24, 2017—stepping in for Duterte, who had cut short his planned trip to Russia amid the escalating crisis in Marawi (Ranada, 2017). Antonov also invited Lorenzana to participate in events organized by the Russian Ministry of Defense in 2017, including the Moscow Conference on International Security, International Army Games, and Military-Technical Forum "Army 2017" (Lee-Brago, 2016).

Moscow has been eager to reciprocate Manila's outreach, likely seeing an opportunity to weaken the U.S. position in the region while

possibly opening a new market for Russian military sales. Russia's ambassador to the Philippines, Igor Anatolyevich Khovaev, said in early January 2017:

> We are ready to supply small arms and light weapons, some aeroplanes, helicopters, submarines and many, many other weapons. Sophisticated weapons. Not . . . second-hand ones. ("Russia Offers Philippines Arms and Close Friendship," 2017)

The reference to secondhand weapons reflects a frequent gripe of Philippine officials and one often echoed by Duterte himself that the United States is only willing to provide the AFP with outdated equipment. It was also well timed, as Lorenzana and Yasay's trip to Moscow came on the heels of Senator Cardin's move to block the sale of rifles to the Philippines ("Russia Offers Philippines Arms and Close Friendship," 2017). Enraged, Duterte had scoffed that Manila could easily look to other partners like Russia for replacements (Rauhala, 2016b).

In addition to playing on such sensitivities about the U.S. defense relationship, Russia has also proven adept at tailoring its discussion of security cooperation to Duterte's stated priorities. This was clear in early April when Ambassador Khovaev described the rationale for closer Russo-Philippine ties:

> The two countries have to deal with specific threats such as terrorism, extremism, piracy, illegal drug trafficking so it is natural to combine efforts. . . . That is why we are ready to share our experience, arms, weapons and other necessary equipment. Also, training and joint military exercises, but we don't seek military alliance and we will not send our troops. (Gonzales, 2017)

In an interview in late June 2017, Khovaev said Moscow stood ready to provide assistance to the AFP in the fight to retake Marawi should Manila request it (Flores, 2017). But given political and constitutional restrictions on foreign operations on Philippine soil, that request did not result in any concrete cooperation between the two sides.

Two Russian warships made a port call in Manila Bay in January 2017, just the third time that Russian navy ships had visited the

Philippines. President Duterte and several Cabinet officials toured one of the vessels, an ASW ship, alongside the deputy commander of Russia's Pacific Fleet, Rear Admiral Aduard Mikhailov (Associated Press, 2017). Three months later, two more Russian ships, including the flagship of the Pacific Fleet, the guided-missile cruiser *Varyag*, made a four-day visit to the Philippines. The Russian crews reportedly engaged in joint training activities with Philippines counterparts and provided demonstrations of advanced equipment and weapons systems (Mogato, 2017b). Russian ships made another port call in the Philippines in May 2018, and in January 2019 the chief of staff of the Russian Submarine Forces of the Pacific Fleet made a visit to the Philippine Navy base at Cavite, which was hailed as "a first in the 80 years of the Philippine fleet" (Ropero, 2019). In October 2018, the Philippine Navy's BRP *Tarlac* made the country's first-ever port visit to Russia, pulling into Vladivostok for a series of facility tours, goodwill activities, and a joint exercise (Parameswaran, 2018n).

Philippine officials, following Duterte's lead, have expressed high hopes for the possibility of acquiring Russian-made weapons systems in the future. Defense Secretary Lorenzana in January 2017 said that Russia was offering the Philippines ships, submarines, planes, and helicopters, but to date such major procurements remain unrealized (Mogato, 2017a). Following his December visit to Russia, Lorenzana also said the Philippines was considering the purchase of sniper rifles from Russia (Associated Press, 2017). In October 2017, Moscow gifted 5,000 Kalashnikov rifles, 5,000 steel helmets, about a million rounds of ammunition, and 20 army trucks to the Philippines in a ceremony that accompanied the visit of five Russian navy ships to Manila. At that time, Russia and the Philippines also signed two military agreements, including a contract with state-owned Rosoboronexport signaling Manila's intent to purchase small arms, vehicles, and disaster relief equipment (Mogato, 2017c). That reportedly includes a $7.5 million purchase of 750 RPG-7B rocket-propelled grenade launchers which, if completed, risks violating U.S. sanctions imposed on Rosoboronexport and other Russian entities in April 2018 (Mogato, 2018b). Secretary Lorenzana also announced in December 2018 that the Philippines had passed on the opportunity to purchase Russia's Mi-171 helicopters due

to U.S. sanctions, despite their being cheaper than Western alternatives (Mogato, 2018c).

The AFP has specifically said it is considering procuring Russia's *Kilo*-class diesel-electric submarines, likely influenced by fellow South China Sea claimant Vietnam's recent deployment of six Kilos, giving Hanoi the most advanced sub fleet in Southeast Asia. But according to Lorenzana, Manila must still decide "whether these specialized ships are essential for the modernization needs of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and whether the country can afford to acquire and maintain such an expensive weapons platform" (Grevatt, 2017). In August 2018, Lorenzana visited Moscow for discussions with Russian counterparts which included talks about the Kilos. The secretary said that, despite Russia offering the Philippines soft loans to help with the procurement, Manila was still debating cheaper alternatives, including from South Korea (Reyes, 2018). Given other pressing needs and an extremely limited budget, the issue is likely to be contentious domestically and could result in other priorities taking precedence.

Overall, statements from Lorenzana and other members of the Philippine security establishment have been far more cautious than their president about the prospects for future defense relations with Moscow. After announcing the planned MOU in January, Lorenzana was quick to caution that outreach to Moscow would not affect the security relationship with Washington ("Philippines Says Finalizing Deal to Observe Russian Military Drills," 2017). Given the scope of needs under the AFP Modernization Program, the Philippines will likely be open to small arms transfers from Russia, though larger platforms would be difficult to integrate. Low-level joint training and exercises also seem likely in the future. But overall Russia should be expected to remain a minor player in Philippine security relations.

The Rest of Asia

The Philippines has signed MOUs on defense cooperation with Malaysia ("Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation between Philippines and Malaysia," 1994), Thailand ("Memorandum of Understanding on Military Cooperation between the Republic of the Philippines and the Kingdom of Thailand," 1997), Brunei ("Memorandum

of Understanding on Defense Cooperation between the Philippines and Brunei," 2001), and New Zealand ("Memorandum of Arrangement between the Department of National Defense of the Republic of the Philippines and the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Ministry of Defence of New Zealand and the New Zealand Defence Force Concerning Defence Cooperation," 2012), but ties remain low level. The Indomalphi trilateral patrols with Malaysia in the Sulu and Celebes seas and nascent discussions on counterterrorism cooperation and intelligence sharing present important opportunities for a closer defense relationship in the future. Indeed, the Philippine and Malaysian navies held joint training exercises in the waters off Cavite in September 2018 (Mangosing, 2018d). During a December 2016 visit to Singapore, President Duterte told his Singaporean counterpart Tony Tan that he would like to see their two nations deepen security cooperation to better combat terrorism and other transnational threats in Southeast Asia (Mendez, 2016). In December 2017, 40 members of the Philippine Army's Special Operations Command attended a two-week MOUT training course in Singapore ("Philippine Army's Elite Troops in Singapore for Urban Warfare Training," 2017). Taiwan, meanwhile, was among six competitors to bid for a contract to supply the AFP with three missile-capable multi-purpose attack craft in 2014 (Mogato, 2014).

Canada, Israel, and Europe

Beyond the United States, Australia, Japan, and South Korea, the Philippines' most robust security relationships are with non-Asian partners. Thanks to its historical reliance on the United States for arms and training, the Philippines has found it easier and ultimately more cost-effective to acquire and integrate weapons platforms and other materiel from Canada, Israel, and European nations than from arms producers like Russia, China, or India. It has also been politically easier, thanks to the relatively high regard in which the public and the defense establishment hold these partners.

For example, in 2014 the PAF ordered eight 412EP utility helicopters from Canada's Bell Helicopter for $100 million, taking delivery of them the next year. The 412s augment the PAF's existing fleet

of nearly 60 Bell UH-1 Iroquois utility helicopters, which were purchased decades ago. A Bell spokesperson said in 2016 that the company considered the Philippines a key market and would be increasing the number of its engineers based in the country to service both the UH-1s and 412s (Grevatt, 2016b). But the Philippines in February 2018 canceled a newly concluded $233 million deal for another 16 412EPs after two years of negotiations. President Duterte ordered the cancellation in anger after Ottawa announced it would review the deal over human rights concerns following suggestions the helicopters would be used for internal security operations in Mindanao. Ironically, the AFP instead decided to purchase 16 Black Hawk helicopters from U.S.-based Sikorsky Aircraft for $240 million (Mogato, 2018c).

The Philippines has signed MOUs and other low-level defense agreements with France, Germany, Italy, and the Czech Republic (Republic of the Philippines, Department of Foreign Affairs, Office of Legal Affairs, n.d.). In 2016, the Philippine Navy acquired two AgustaWestland AW159 Lynx Wildcat helicopters from Anglo-Italian manufacturer Finmeccanica (now known as Leonardo) for $114 million. The two were acquired to provide the navy with ASW capabilities for the first time, though they can serve in a diverse range of missions, including surveillance and antisurface warfare (Gady, 2016a). The contract also includes training and multiyear support for the helicopters (Leonardo, 2016).

The PAF took delivery in early 2016 of the last of three C-295 medium transport aircraft purchased from European manufacturer Airbus (Chuter, 2016). Airbus is hopeful that the Philippines will purchase more of the C-295s and is offering a variant of the plane to fill the long-delayed $120 million contract for two LRPAs ("PH Continues Acquisition of 2 Long-Range Patrol Aircraft," 2016). Industry analysts Forecast International told *Defense News* in early 2016 that the C-295 is a leading contender for the project (Chuter, 2016). In 2016, the Philippines awarded an Israeli company with a contract to provide three aerial radars for 52 million ("PH Buys 2 New Frigates from South Korean Firm," 2016). Finally, in April 2018, the Philippine Navy took delivery of the Spike extended range missile system from Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense System, which has been installed on its 16.5-meter

MK3 multipurpose attack craft ("Philippine Navy Shows Off Integrated Spike ER Missile," 2018).

Despite these robust, and in several cases long-standing, procurement relationships, security cooperation between the Philippines and Canada, Israel, and Europe has been largely limited to arms sales, with relatively little training, joint exercises, or high-level defense diplomacy. This can be attributed to both limited capacity in the Philippines as well as a much lower perception of shared threats on the part of these outside countries, which is unlikely to change anytime soon.

Conclusion

Like most of Asia, the Philippines is looking to its regional neighbors as well as partners farther afield to deepen existing security ties and explore new avenues of cooperation beyond the United States. But Manila is quite constrained in this effort thanks to history, politics, and constitutional and budgetary limitations. The AFP remains heavily dependent on U.S. assistance for training and equipment. Under Duterte, the Philippines is trying to reduce its dependence on the United States, but this situation is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The AFP remains one of the weakest armed forces in Asia, yet it must meet a rapidly expanding set of missions focused on both external defense, especially against possible Chinese aggression in the South China Sea, and internal security. The considerable modernization needs of the AFP combined with very limited defense budgets are pushing the Philippines to seek the best deals available for military procurement. These three factors—a need to modernize in the face of growing internal and external threats, limited funds, and a perceived overdependence on the United States—are the prime drivers behind diversifying Philippine security ties.

The Philippines has established its most robust defense relationships with fellow U.S. treaty allies in the Asia-Pacific: Australia, Japan, and South Korea. They are the three largest suppliers of military assistance and platforms beyond the United States, and Australia (likely to be joined by Japan in the near future) has overcome the strict limitations

placed on foreign troop activities on Philippine soil. Australia, Japan, and South Korea all enjoy high levels of interoperability with both Philippine and U.S. troops thanks to shared platforms and doctrine, along with closely aligned security interests and shared values. Best of all, from Manila's perspective, they can often provide equipment more cheaply and with fewer restrictions than the United States.

Beyond Australia, Japan, and South Korea, the Philippines is increasingly engaging with other partners. Vietnam and Indonesia outpace the rest of Southeast Asia in defense cooperation with the Philippines, while partners in Canada, Israel, and Europe are playing important roles in filling procurement needs under the 15-year AFP Modernization Program.

But while needs and cost are the main drivers in expanding Manila's defense relations, the election of Rodrigo Duterte as president has introduced a new factor that cannot be ignored: an ideological distaste for the United States and a desire for a radically new foreign policy. This is driving a nascent outreach to China and Russia. To date, those efforts have yielded little beyond press releases and spectacle, in large part because of bureaucratic intransigence from the widely pro-U.S. defense establishment and popular opinion that remains firmly pro-American. But whether the new president's wishes will eventually force more robust engagement with these two countries, over the heel-dragging of his defense establishment, will bear watching.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusions: The Future of a Densely Networked Indo-Pacific Defense Community

Key nations in the Indo-Pacific are broadening and deepening their defense cooperation. In most cases, this networking is drawing new connections within and across the traditional "hub-and-spokes" model that for decades characterized the region's security architecture; in other cases, countries that were never part of the region's U.S.-centric alliance architecture are being linked to it both directly and indirectly. Similarly, "ASEAN centrality," or the notion that the region's security centers around and should be shaped by or in ways commensurate with a leading role for the ASEAN, is being supplemented by developments that are knitting the broader Indo-Pacific region together across a span of countries broader than even just those in Southeast Asia but who generally subscribe to a key role for ASEAN. Spurred by the rise of China; concerns about the reliability of (or, alternatively, overreliance on) the United States; and the growing costs of relying exclusively on national development and procurement to support a defense industrial base—like economically and technologically advanced countries such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia—are increasingly cooperating with rising middle and great powers such as Indonesia and India while also finding new ways to pursue cooperation with less developed but growing powers such as Vietnam and the Philippines. As the study demonstrates, considerations associated with national identity, status, and economic development have also shaped and incentivized the countries of the Indo-Pacific to cooperate in broader and deeper ways on security ties in recent years. Moreover, such cooperation is by

no means top-down; smaller and poorer countries, as well as middle powers, are taking on growing defense profiles too by cooperating more with states like India that are farther away and have not traditionally played as substantial a role in East or Southeast Asia. These countries are not merely waiting for great powers to reach out to them.

This concluding chapter reviews some of the key insights and takeaways offered up in the preceding chapters and explores their implications for U.S. and regional security in the years ahead.

History, Identity, and Norms Shape Defense Cooperation

A starting point for each of the country study chapters was to highlight the impact that history, identity, and norms had on the various actors' security cooperation. For many of the countries, including India, Indonesia, and Vietnam, prior experience with colonization has left a legacy of sensitivity to alliance or any perceived loss of autonomy and/or dependence on a foreign power; some scholars have suggested that such experiences are so consequential for explaining foreign policy behavior that countries with such histories may be worth conceptualizing as a subset of all actors in international affairs (Miller, 2014). Even the Philippines, long one of the most pro-U.S. countries in the world, has experienced concerns over and resentment at perceived dependence or overreliance on the United States. Similarly, Indonesia, while not a U.S. treaty ally, nevertheless worries about the prospect of being cut off from arms sales and training; this occurred after human rights abuses by the regime in the 1990s and 2000s led to cutoffs in access, an experience that Manila has experienced in recent years in response to the state's sponsorship of widespread extrajudicial killings targeting alleged drug dealers.

History and identity also shape how Japan and South Korea handle security cooperation. Japan's experience of World War II and its postwar identity premised on acting as a civilian power that has tended to seriously restrain its international security commitments faces major constraints from a variety of constitutional, legal, and public opinion factors. And as some Japanese leaders have sought to move the country

beyond its postwar pacificism, they have leveraged expanded security cooperation with the region as a key validating tool on which to construct a new identity as a responsible regional power with an important leading role to play. For its part, the ROK, colonized by Japan and preoccupied with the question of its status as a divided nation facing an existential threat from North Korea, fears being distracted and finds cooperation with Japan difficult or politically challenging.

Norms matter greatly for most of these countries though, whether in terms of their desire to support a liberal, democratic, rule of law-based international order premised on respect for universal human rights or simply a more regular and routinized order where power is constrained by commonly agreed-on and respected principles such as the peaceful settlement of international disputes free from coercion. While the former is more characteristic of Australia, Japan, Korea and India, there are certainly those in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam who sympathize with the broader goals of promoting liberal norms both internationally and domestically. In other cases, some countries may be more comfortable with the more basic focus on unimpeded access to the global commons free from coercion. These differences in perspective are reflected in the current debate in Japan about whether to describe Tokyo's approach as oriented toward achieving a "free and open Indo-Pacific" or a "free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific," with the latter representing a somewhat less ambitious but perhaps regionally more acceptable approach (at least with the more authoritarian leaders of some Southeast Asian countries).

Another issue that comes through clearly in the case study chapters is the importance of identity as a great or rising power. For Japan, led by a prime minister who sees his country's identity as closely tied to retaining status as a "first-tier" nation and supported by elites who similarly feel a desire to continue to define the region apart from control by China, identity forms a powerful motivator to do more internationally. Similarly, for India, a nation that senses its fortunes and influence as rising, doing more on the international stage holds great appeal. Australia, long motivated by a closely cherished alliance with the United States, seeks to support a regional order within which it has thrived. Korea, under the presidency of Lee Myung-bak, similarly

sought to support its U.S. ally and made efforts to define its foreign policy agenda as that suited to a "middle power."

By contrast, even though they are large and growing rapidly, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines have been much more cautious about taking on external commitments at times when internal security challenges, a continued focus on economic development, and persistent weaknesses in the foreign policy and military domains still hamper their influence. ASEAN centrality remains attractive for these Southeast Asian nations inasmuch as it can assist them in exercising greater influence without needing to expend scarce material resources to do so.

State Capacity and Military Capabilities Are Key Drivers

As the immediately preceding paragraph highlights, the resources a state has to devote to external military cooperation can substantially empower or constrain its defense ties with its regional partners. Even for a wealthy and militarily strong country like South Korea, if it feels that its defense capabilities are needed for urgent tasks such as deterring North Korea, it can find it difficult to focus on external military cooperation; this is all the more true for a weak state like the Philippines. At the same time, as the chapters focusing on Japan, Korea, and Australia have highlighted, military weakness in some states such as Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines has proven to be an area where more powerful actors are increasingly finding ways to cooperate through assistance programs designed to train counterparts; exercise with them; and transfer, sell, or even co-develop military hardware. South Korea is the leading exemplar of arms sales, having sold airframes to the Philippines and submarines to Indonesia while also co-developing a next-generation fighter with Jakarta. Japan has been the leading actor in transferring nonlethal hardware such as surveillance planes and coastal patrol craft to Vietnam and the Philippines as well as funding dual-use infrastructure improvements. Others, such as India and Australia, have also gotten involved in providing hardware or training too, and across the region intelligence sharing and ship visits or exercises have widely been used to help build partner capacity, either bilaterally or in tandem

with the United States. Such training, exercises, and exchanges can serve to build critically important personal relationships among current and rising defense and political leaders and represent promising, often low-cost investments that two or more actors make in each other.

Counterterrorism and Intelligence Sharing Pave the Way

As many of the case studies showed, there is often substantial sensitivity in the region to being perceived as cooperating more deeply in the military and security domains when framed as a reaction to China's growing power and assertiveness. Beijing's willingness to give voice to real or feigned offense over regional security initiatives, describing these as evidence of anti-China sentiment or covert efforts at containment, can substantially disincentivize regional actors to pursue closer defense ties. However, in numerous cases, especially those involving Australia, India, Indonesia, and the Philippines, countries have deepened security links by starting with or building up from counterterrorism cooperation. In another case, that of Japan and the ROK, North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and their associated ballistic missile delivery systems effectively stand in for and serve the same function as the counterterrorism challenge in spurring and legitimating defense intelligence cooperation (though China has clearly sought to criticize and oppose any deeper trilateral ballistic missile defense cooperation initiatives that might emerge in Northeast Asia). In Southeast Asia, counterpiracy efforts and cooperative efforts to counter illegal fishing, drug trafficking, and human smuggling provide additional routes for initiating or deepening security cooperation, especially with more distant powers such as India or Japan.

Cyber, Maritime Law Enforcement Key Areas for Expanded Cooperation

For substantially all of the countries examined in this study, cybersecurity is a major issue (and often the one area where the China threat

bulks largest). Even wealthy and technologically advanced countries long exposed to cyber threats such as Japan and South Korea have major gaps to fill, to say nothing of countries with less funding for cyber defenses such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Creation of a common and regularly updated database of threat vectors, best cyber-hygiene practices, and exercises aimed at testing defenses can be one way to track and help regional partners cooperate on cybersecurity (Harold et al., 2016). U.S. support for intelligence sharing, military exchanges that incorporate cyber exchanges, and establishment of common standards, building on efforts by regional partners to expand cooperation in this and other spaces, would help facilitate such ties.

Similarly, all of the countries examined in this volume suffer from problems associated with illegal Chinese maritime poaching, smuggling, piracy, and human trafficking, making MLE cooperation an area of broad appeal. Only Australia, Japan, and South Korea come close to having the resources needed to patrol their waters, and no nation in the region suffers from having too many ISR assets or a surfeit of coastal patrol craft and trained MLE personnel. For some countries—Japan most notably—the transfer of used (and in some cases, new) MLE platforms and training, logistics, and maintenance support has been a key dimension of expanding security cooperation. Building on the 2016 Maritime Security Initiative, the United States might consider networking its efforts to build partner capacity through closer coordination with allies and partners to create a regional strategy for helping address gaps in partner countries' ISR and MLE architectures.

The United States Is Indispensable—But So Are U.S. Allies

As the discussion of the Japan-ROK intelligence-sharing agreement showed, trilateralism (or, more generally, multilateralism) is a useful, sometimes critical pathway for facilitating and deepening regional defense cooperation. U.S. participation has helped to pave the way for trilateral cooperation among the United States, Japan, and Australia as well as among the United States, Japan, and India, as well as the revival

of the Quadrilateral grouping bringing together the United States, Japan, India and Australia. Moreover, multinational events such as the Rim of the Pacific, Cobra Gold, or the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercises can provide useful entrees to establish or deepen regional security cooperation and partnerships. Shared defense architectures and hardware can help facilitate greater cooperation across virtually every category of security ties by ensuring that technological compatibility and the ability to communicate effectively do not act as obstacles to engagement.

At the same time, sometimes the United States can become an issue in a given country's politics, making it difficult for Washington to take the lead on a given policy topic. While a natural disaster such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami or a man-made crisis such as the siege of Marawi in the Philippines can provide an opportunity for Washington to work with a partner who is otherwise frustrated with the United States over some issue, such events are both unpredictable and unfortunate and cannot be relied on as a pathway to restore cooperative ties. When ties do break down, U.S. allies and partners can step in to help smooth over differences and reinforce the value of cooperation to all sides. In cases such as the aftermath of the 2014 Thai coup or the 2016 election of Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, U.S. allies and partners like Australia, Korea, and Japan that share America's interests and values as well as its military hardware and training have proven valuable by helping work to keep key partners from slipping too far toward China. Beijing has cleverly sought to woo U.S. partners who have turned away from liberal democracy by offering military hardware and investment to Thailand and counterterrorism assistance and investment to the Philippines. Timely assistance from Tokyo and Canberra have made clear to Bangkok and Manila that they have friends and options other than reliance on China if they are at a difficult point in their relations with Washington. U.S. allies can, in this way, provide some diplomatic "cushion" via security cooperation that can help keep such partners on the same geostrategic side.

The United States and its allies are more likely to succeed in these efforts when they share common platforms, and these are embedded in routine training and exercise relationships, since such ties are "sticky"

and are not easily changed through changes resulting from coups or elections. The U.S.-led F-35 coalition, common maritime or air platforms, and intelligence sharing and fusion agreements as well as joint exercises thereby serve to bind partners together in ways that further insulate them from the bumps that can accompany disjunctive political events.

Indonesia Merits Particular Attention

Australia, Japan, and Korea are clearly highly active in the growing defense cooperative networks of the Indo-Pacific. India and Vietnam are also increasingly tied into security cooperation efforts with their neighbors, and even the Philippines, despite its overall weakness and the rise of a U.S.-skeptical administration under President Duterte, has been actively receiving security assistance and support from partners such as Australia, Japan, and South Korea.

Indonesia, however, despite its geostrategic position and its democratic orientation, has been relatively disconnected from the overall pattern of broadening and deepening security linkages with partner nations in the region. The country is geographically distant from China and as a consequence is relatively less exposed to the threat China poses to the region. Additionally, its historical identity as a nonaligned state and the fact that it does not have a direct territorial dispute with China make Jakarta less interested than some analysts might expect in strengthening its defense cooperation with regional partners. Indonesia's primary security concerns remain domestic and its leadership's focus largely oriented toward domestic economic development.

To be sure, South Korea's sales of defense hardware, and efforts to co-develop a next-generation fighter with Indonesian support, stand out as among the most consequential arms sales and co-development efforts of any in the study. However, at the broader level, Jakarta's size, geostrategic importance, and persistent weaknesses in air and MDA and coastal patrol capabilities stand out and represent a key area where partner nations could usefully continue to work to improve security cooperation with positive effects for the whole region (Morris and

Paoli, 2018). Insofar as Jakarta houses the ASEAN Secretariat and has tended to regard itself as the most important country for ensuring an active institutional ASEAN role in regional affairs, continued cooperative efforts by the United States, in tandem with Australia, Japan, India, and South Korea—countries with the capacity and influence to help bolster Indonesian partner capabilities—should be a high priority.

Deepening Ties with Nonaligned Partners a Worthy Goal

For countries like India, Indonesia, and Vietnam that have experienced decades of nonalignment that are incorporated into their state and foreign policy identities, it may help to facilitate the transition to greater alignment with the United States if other Asian countries like Japan, South Korea, or the Philippines take the lead in deepening ties. Even more meaningful, however, could be the political legitimation that would stem from an important country such as India, Indonesia, or Vietnam announcing that it was moving to embrace a more fulsome relationship with U.S. partners or even the United States itself. Such a shift need not amount to a formal alliance or include stationing troops but could be facilitated through growing participation conducted through the FOIP initiative or expansion of the Quadrilateral Initiative into a Five Power arrangement (for example, if Indonesia or Vietnam were to join, as India is already a participant). This could signal to other Indo-Pacific actors that may feel reluctant to take such a step that it is okay to embrace these initiatives.

Additionally, countries such as India and Vietnam rely substantially on legacy Soviet hardware as well as more recent Russian arms sales. American defense hardware often sits at the technological forefront of military capabilities and can exceed the purchasing capabilities of these nations (as well as even U.S. ally the Philippines). For some countries, purchasing U.S. defense articles may also appear undesirable due to issues of history and identity or out of fears of dependency. This highlights another area where the U.S.-ROK alliance provides substantial value inasmuch as Seoul's arms sales and co-development with partners in Southeast Asia help undercut continuing Russian influence

in that region while also representing an obstacle to Chinese efforts to build influence through arms sales (which Beijing has pursued in recent years with Cambodia, the Philippines, and Thailand, among others).

Other Important Partners Merit Attention, Too

While the chapters above have focused on seven of the most active and critically important U.S. allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific, several other deeply important regional partners had to be left out of the study for reasons of resources and scoping but deserve mention here. Most notable among these are Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand. Most of these actors are less deeply integrated in regional defense cooperation initiatives, but all participate on some level. For example, Malaysia has engaged in intelligence sharing and counterterrorism with Indonesia and the Philippines; New Zealand and Australia jointly offer aid and assistance to partner nations in the South Pacific; Singapore is a leading hub for intelligence sharing and logistics; Taiwan is a front-line state confronting the China threat; and Thailand is a U.S. ally that has deepened its own defense links and contacts with numerous regional partners in recent years.

While the trends and motivations identified in the seven country cases examined in this study are farther along or more strongly exemplified in the cases of Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam, these trends are increasingly regionalized due to the growing networks in the region, the rise of China, concerns about the U.S. role, and expectations among populations of countries whose leaderships are presiding over richer and more globally integrated populations. Finding ways to leverage interest in greater defense contacts and cooperation with these countries should be a focus of attention for U.S. and regional policymakers interested in combating transnational threats as well as reinforcing regional stability against great power challengers. This will not necessarily be easy, since there are greater political sensitivities in some of these cases, most notably with respect to Taiwan due to China's opposition to Taipei having any

official (or, in many cases, even meaningful unofficial) contacts with other countries. They may also be difficult for other countries like Malaysia or Singapore, which may share some of the features of India, Indonesia, and Vietnam in terms of worries about undercutting traditional nonalignment identities. Policymakers from the United States and other countries as well will need to treat these concerns seriously and find ways to expand ties wherever possible while respecting local actors' sensitivities.

An additional point that merits mentioning here is the growing role and importance of what might overly simplistically be seen as extraregional actors, most notably NATO and the European Union, or alternatively Canada and leading European powers such as France and the United Kingdom. As China's rise has increasingly posed a threat to freedom of navigation, international law, and the peaceful settlement of territorial and maritime disputes free from coercion, Western countries have increasingly found their voice on and recognized and articulated ever more clearly their interest in the South China Sea and the Indo-Pacific. Ottawa is attempting its own "pivot to Asia" while London and Paris have both undertaken long-range naval deployments to the South China Sea and Japan in 2017–2018. This highlights another way in which U.S. allies help magnify and reinforce U.S. interests and values in regional order, stability, and security.

Conclusions and Implications

The growing defense contacts and cooperation between Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam detailed and examined in this study represent an extremely important and previously largely underexplored aspect of the evolving Indo-Pacific regional order. An important takeaway from this study is that virtually all such contacts and cooperative activities are compatible with U.S. regional security approaches such as the pivot/rebalance to the Asia-Pacific or the FOIP. Indeed, for some nations, such as Australia and Japan (and under Lee Myung-bak, South Korea), their efforts are (or were) explicitly framed as intended to support, openly or tacitly,

these broad U.S. initiatives and help open space or keep the United States engaged in the region. Even for countries like the Philippines under Duterte after mid-2016, defense cooperation with U.S. allies and partners offers opportunities to increase Manila's bargaining power without being forced to choose Beijing (or Moscow) if relations with Washington grow tense.

At the same time, virtually all of the initiatives countries in this study have undertaken are net negatives from the perspective of China, which tends to regard efforts to tighten defense cooperation, share intelligence, build partner capacity, and reinforce the free and open nature of the region's architecture as undesirable. As some previous studies have explored, such efforts raise the cost to China of attempting to leverage its size, economic weight, and military advantages over its smaller neighbors. Over the past decade, Beijing has shown a penchant for using its civilian capabilities to intimidate smaller nearby powers through using gray zone tactics intended to stay below the threshold that would provoke a military response, leveraging its commercial fishing fleet, maritime militia, and coast guard assets backed by the power of the PLA Navy and other national assets to menace and intimidate neighbors whose territory or maritime spaces it covets (Harold et al., 2017; Morris, 2017, 2018; Funakoshi, 2017; Roy, 2015; Gady, 2015; Erickson and Kennedy, 2016; Cheng Lai Ki, 2016; Cavas, 2016; Pajon, 2017). This phenomenon finds additional support on land with India, in the air with Japan and South Korea, in cyberspace, and in the political and diplomatic domain. As countries in the Indo-Pacific cooperate more closely on defense, they reinforce collective norms and build shared incentives in showing resolve to stand up to such coercion.

Indeed, of all the explanations for growing elite defense dialogues, training and exercises, arms sales and transfers, defense industrial co-development, and shared intelligence and ACSA arrangements, the rise of China looms larger than any of the other explanations, serving as one of or the main driver for Australia, India, Japan, South Korea (at times), the Philippines (pre-2016), and Vietnam; only South Korea (post–Lee Myung-bak), the Philippines (post-2016), and Indonesia (throughout the period of study) evince little interest in expand-

ing or deepening their security ties, in part due to concerns over an increasingly capable and aggressive China.

By contrast, most countries were not worried about U.S. decline so much as eager to support a more collective response to China's rise. Concerns about overdependence on the United States, while not entirely absent (most notably in the Philippines and Indonesia), were far less important than those focused on bolstering U.S. ability to collaboratively meet the challenge posed by China. Cost issues of maintaining a defense industrial base were a lesser (though by no means irrelevant) factor; indeed, few of these explanations are mutually exclusive, and in some cases (such as India, Japan, and South Korea) there are substantial areas of mutually overlapping and reinforcing incentives or motivations behind countries' actions. And in all instances, questions of history, felt and politically salable identity frames, and normative values at the elite and popular levels dramatically shape and motivate nations to expand or deepen their security ties with other regional partners as they gain a broader conception of their own interests and shared beliefs.

How do the defense ties and relationships described above matter, if indeed they do at all? Interviewees and analysis laid out above have highlighted how these kinds of cooperative defense efforts take cheap or low-cost coercion off the table or make it less likely to succeed, improve regional diplomacy, facilitate potential further defense ties in the future, and could be laying the groundwork for broader regional norms and shared identity constructs. While it is premature to say that, in the worst-case scenario, an attack on one would be met by a response by all (or even, any), it is not incorrect to say that any such attack would potentially be less likely to succeed and that regional partners may be more likely to step up in imposing costs (even if not through direct military action) should one of the partner countries studied above be exposed to an attempted coercion effort. Additionally, by preparing weaker powers better for military operations while enhancing the ability of more capable countries to collaborate on higher-end operations, such defense cooperation tacitly facilitates any hypothetical U.S. military operations that might be undertaken in support of a partner in a contingency, especially if such

an effort proved to be multilateral (i.e., the United States and Australia responding to an attack on Japan or the United States and Japan responding to a contingency engulfing Korea or the Philippines).

In short, the growing defense cooperative ties of these key Indo-Pacific nations, all partners or allies of the United States, are additive to U.S. security interests and serve as constraints on any potential Chinese efforts to exert coercion against the region. As such, they merit close attention by scholars, policy analysts, and policymakers alike who should understand their dimensions, causes, and implications, and, wherever possible, find ways to further bolster them so as to reinforce the value of an Indo-Pacific order that is free, open, democratic and governed in ways that constrain arbitrary and unaccountable authority and power politics.

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