

U.S.–Japan Alliance Conference

Regional Perspectives on the Quadrilateral
Dialogue and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific

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NATIONAL SECURITY RESEARCH DIVISION

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Preface

Since late 2017, the United States and Japan, together with Australia and India, have resumed meeting in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). The forum is designed to enable the four countries—prospectively with other future partners to join later—to explore opportunities for security and defense dialogue and cooperation. Around the same time, Japan’s vision of a “free and open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) regional order was embraced by the Trump administration, which began articulating a FOIP strategy as the successor to the Obama administration’s “pivot” or “rebalance” to the Asia-Pacific.

Given the importance of these broad foreign and defense policy initiatives, on March 5, 2019, the RAND Corporation convened a public conference at its office in Santa Monica, California, that brought together leading experts on American, Australian, Indian, and Japanese foreign policies to explore the issues raised by these developments. Former Deputy National Security Advisor Avril Haines gave the keynote speech about how the United States viewed the evolving regional order during the Obama years and her perspectives on the evolution of U.S. policy and the region’s security environment since, noting some areas of substantial continuity across the past two administrations, both of which view Asia as key to American national security, interests, and values. Naoko Funatsu of the Japan Institute for International Affairs shared how Japanese policymakers and analysts view the regional security situation, the value of the FOIP vision, and the Quad construct, noting that Japan, after pioneering the idea of FOIP, has sought to tailor it in ways that are regionally acceptable to the broadest number of prospective partner nations. Tanvi Madan of the Brookings Institution shared her insights into the views of Indian policymakers and intellectuals on the evolving regional dynamic and the roles of FOIP and the revived Quad in it. And Natalie Sambhi of Verve Research and the Perth USAsia Centre offered perspectives on how this key conceptual framework and multilateral grouping are seen in Australia and Indonesia. After, Madan and Sambhi submitted conference papers capturing their insights and further elaborating their assessments with references and sources.

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Contents

Preface	iii
Abbreviations	vii
 CHAPTER ONE	
Introduction	1
 CHAPTER TWO	
India, the Indo-Pacific, and the Quad	5
Background: India's Indo-Pacific	6
Origins of the Quad	9
Rebirth of the Quad	10
India's Step-by-Step Approach to Enhancing the Quad	12
In the Shadow of the Quad	14
The Road Ahead	19
Conclusion	21
 CHAPTER THREE	
The Free and Open Indo-Pacific and the Quad as Seen from Australia and Indonesia	23
Australia's Approach to the Indo-Pacific	24
Australia's Response to FOIP and the Quad	29
Indonesia's View of the Indo-Pacific	32
Conclusion	35
 CHAPTER FOUR	
Conclusion	37
 References	 39

Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
FOIP	Free and Open Indo-Pacific
JAI	Japan-America-India
PLA	People's Liberation Army

Introduction

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Eight months after Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific Susan Thornton's March 2017 declaration that the Obama administration's "pivot" or rebalance to the Asia-Pacific would be discontinued, the Trump administration articulated its regional policy, described as a "free and open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP).¹ The Trump administration has since used the FOIP construct as a guiding principle for its new era of great power competition with China, incorporating language about FOIP into the 2017 *National Security Strategy of the United States* and the 2018 *National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*.² Perhaps more importantly, DoD's 2019 *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report* describes a prospective pathway to realizing the goal of a FOIP by leveraging "preparedness" (U.S. capabilities), "partners" (U.S. allies), and a "promotion of a networked region."³ Additionally, alongside these policy statements, the U.S. Department of State and DoD have been holding renewed meetings with allies Japan and Australia and partner India in a renewed version of the Quad, which was first initiated in the late 2000s. With U.S. Indo-Pacific policy evolving rapidly and premised in substantial part on contributions from close allies and partners such as Japan, Australia, and India, while at the broadest level striving to win growing acceptance for norms focused on regional freedom and openness, the perspectives of allies and partners have taken on increased prominence and importance in U.S. strategy toward the region.

For its part, Japan's foreign and defense policies, described as making "proactive contributions to peace," ground Tokyo's approach to security on a similar tripartite focus on domestic self-strengthening, a tighter and increasingly interoperable military relationship with the United States, and a "FOIP vision" that supports international law, multilateral institutions, and an increasingly networked set of regional partnerships supported through efforts to promote development, build partner capability, and enhance interactions between friendly defense

¹ Aaron Mehta, "'Pivot to the Pacific' Is Over, Senior U.S. Diplomat Says," *Defense News*, March 14, 2017; The White House, "Remarks by President Trump on His Trip to Asia," Washington, D.C., November 15, 2017a.

² The White House, *The National Security Strategy of the United States*, Washington, D.C., December 2017b; U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), *Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, Washington, D.C., January 2018.

³ DoD, *The Department of Defense Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region*, Washington, D.C., June 1, 2019.

establishments.⁴ As one recent study noted, Japan's strategy reflects an approach premised on responding to China's rise and doubling down on the U.S. alliance to keep Washington committed and engaged; it also seeks to confirm Japan's status as a first-tier power and expand its ability to leverage security cooperation to preserve a free and open regional order.⁵ And for both the United States and Japan, the two countries see each other clearly as the key partner with which to engage the rest of the region, especially fellow democracies Australia and India, as well as members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), such as Indonesia.

How do India, Australia, and Indonesia—the first two as participants in the Quad and the third a prospective regional security partner and important voice of Southeast Asian nations with respect to FOIP—view these initiatives and the approaches to regional order and security adopted by Washington and Tokyo? Do they see them as promising or problematic? To what extent do they regard them as useful for reinforcing a regional order resistant to coercion, and to what extent do they see them as potential provocations of China aimed at fomenting or deepening a regional divide?

To answer these questions, the RAND Corporation organized a conference at its office in Santa Monica, California, on March 5, 2019, that brought together American, Australian, Indian, and Japanese scholars and practitioners to explore the implications of the FOIP concept and the renewed Quad initiative. Former Deputy National Security Advisor Avril Haines gave the keynote speech about how the United States viewed the evolving regional order during the Obama years and her perspectives on the evolution of U.S. policy and the region's security environment in the years since, noting some areas of substantial continuity across the past two administrations, both of which view Asia as key to American national security, interests, and values. Naoko Funatsu of the Japan Institute for International Affairs shared how Japanese policymakers and analysts view the regional security situation, the value of the FOIP vision, and the Quad construct, noting that Japan, after pioneering the idea of FOIP, has sought to tailor it in ways that are regionally acceptable to the broadest number of prospective partner nations. Tanvi Madan of the Brookings Institution shared her insights about the views of Indian policymakers and intellectuals on the evolving regional dynamic and the roles of FOIP and the revived Quad in it. And Natalie Sambhi of Verve Research and the Perth USAsia Centre offered perspectives on how this key conceptual framework and multilateral grouping are seen in Australia and Indonesia. After, Madan and Sambhi submitted conference papers capturing their insights and further elaborating their assessments with references and sources.

Madan, in Chapter Two, argues that Indian policymakers see the Quad as one tool or approach, but not necessarily the only or even the best one, by which Delhi can achieve its own preferred version of a regional order. Like other regional actors, India also sees the rapid growth in both Chinese capabilities and assertive or even aggressive foreign and military policies as the preeminent threat to regional order. But Delhi feels it has been burned in the past, most specifically by Australia, and is cautious about alienating China too much and is generally

⁴ Ministry of Defense of Japan, *Medium Term Defense Program*, webpage, December 18, 2018a; Ministry of Defense of Japan, *National Defense Program Guidelines for FY2019 and Beyond*, webpage, December 18, 2018b; Ministry of Defense of Japan, *Defense of Japan 2019*, webpage, 2019; Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan's Security Policy: Overview," webpage, June 12, 2019.

⁵ Scott W. Harold, Derek Grossman, Brian Harding, Jeffrey W. Hornung, Greg B. Poling, Jeff Smith, and Meagan Smith, *The Thickening Network of Asian Security Cooperation: Deepening Defense Ties Among U.S. Allies and Partners in the Indo-Pacific*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-3125-MCF, 2019.

most comfortable taking matters step-by-step and avoiding premising its security too much on any one partner or even partners. Moreover, India's foreign-policy decisionmakers are also alert to the prospect that regional parties in Southeast Asia may be put off by talk of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue if it is seen as a mechanism by which great powers organize regional affairs over and above Southeast Asians' heads but also at their expense. Still, as the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy appears more frequently in the Indian Ocean, Delhi is increasingly finding that it makes sense to find common cause with Washington, Tokyo, and Canberra. Indeed, Delhi may, in some ways, make India a more attractive partner that can offer the Quad framework an element of legitimacy to other nonaligned nations in the region, while also reinforcing that the free and open values pursued by the United States and Japan enjoy widespread appeal.

In Chapter Three, Sambhi explores the perspectives that Australian and Indonesian observers have on the Quad and FOIP. Looking first at Canberra, she finds that Australian policymakers (1) have long accepted the notion of the "Indo-Pacific" given the continent's geostrategic location at the nexus of those two bodies of water, (2) are committed to the "free and open" construct, (3) worry about the Trump administration's commitment to the region, and (4) are particularly comfortable with the democratic nature of the Quad (however, some worry that efforts built around the Quad mechanism or the FOIP values framework might be seen as overly provocative to China). Recent controversies associated with Chinese interference and influence operations inside Australia have, however, undercut those who might have sought to downplay support for regional frameworks built on liberal values and undergirded by support from democratic great and middle powers. By contrast, when the perspective shifts to Jakarta, Sambhi finds that, despite a similar geostrategic location and degree of comfort with the idea of the "Indo-Pacific" as a region, the nonaligned nature of Indonesia leads the archipelago to adopt a more skeptical attitude toward the Quad and FOIP. Even with Indonesian President Joko Widodo's approach to building Indonesia up as a "maritime fulcrum" for the region, Jakarta is still cautious about conveying any impression that it is ready to serve as a handmaiden to U.S. or other powers' foreign policy interests and prefers to build up preexisting institutions rather than create new forums that might marginalize ASEAN. As a consequence, Jakarta has tended to speak about values that it espouses, many of which are the same as or highly similar to FOIP, such as cooperation, not rivalry; inclusiveness; and transparency and openness. In seeking to articulate its own views of the desirable qualities of regional order, Jakarta may not be adopting an exact replica of the preferred frameworks of the United States, Japan, or even India or Australia. Jakarta is nonetheless giving voice to a perspective that demands attention and respect and one that ultimately Washington, Tokyo, Delhi, and Canberra can likely live and work with.

To be sure, even Washington and Tokyo have some areas of divergence in their views of the Indo-Pacific region: whether they should pursue a "strategy" (United States) or a "vision" (Japan) and whether to interpret "free" as relating to values behind borders (United States) or merely in international spaces (Japan).⁶ As the United States and Japan increasingly seek additional partners to help balance China's rise (including, potentially, Southeast Asian partners⁷), sustain a liberal international order, and address changes and challenges in the

⁶ Brad Glosserman, "FOIP Has a Problem with 'Free,'" *PacNet* #9, Honolulu, Hawaii, January 29, 2019.

⁷ Derek Grossman, "The Quad Needs Broadening to Balance China—And Now's the Time to Do It," *The RAND Blog*, October 22, 2018b.

months and years ahead, understanding the perspectives of actors in India, Australia, and Indonesia will be increasingly important. This conference proceeding serves as an initial down payment in support of such an approach.

India, the Indo-Pacific, and the Quad

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Over the past few years, Japan and the United States have outlined Indo-Pacific concepts, which envision a key role for India. Delhi, for its part, has also embraced the idea of the Indo-Pacific, outlining its own vision of and approach to the region. Its concept, driven in no small part by concerns about challenges to the rules-based order and the behavior of a rising China in the region, is similar in some ways to the American and Japanese FOIP concepts. However, there are also key differences. One element on which there has been convergence is the revival of the Quad consultations, which Canberra, Delhi, Tokyo, and Washington had initially explored in 2007.

Step by step, the Indian government has been enhancing its participation in the Quad grouping, even as some in the country continue to have questions and concerns about the nature of the Quad, the commitment of the other participants to it, and the reaction in the region. How these elements play out, as well as geopolitical developments—including how China approaches Indian sensitivities and interests—will shape how India approaches the Quad in the future.

This chapter outlines India's evolving vision of the Indo-Pacific, including where it converges and diverges with those of the other Quad countries. It then considers India's historical view of the Quad dialogue, briefly outlining the origin of the idea and obstacles to its first iteration. In addition, it explores India's reasons for agreeing to revive the Quad, its current view of the Quad dialogue, and its gradual step-by-step approach to upgrading the Quad and its reluctance thus far to add a significant military dimension.

I argue that India sees the Quad as *a* platform—one in which it has been deepening its involvement—but not *the only* platform for cooperation in the region. I outline the progress in bilateral and trilateral cooperation between India and the other Quad countries, making the case that this is significant not just in its own right. Indeed, it could also pave the way for broader or deeper Quad cooperation. The chapter concludes by suggesting some ways that the four countries can enhance their collaboration and coordination.

Background: India's Indo-Pacific

In 2007, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared in the Indian parliament that the “[c]onfluence of the Two Seas” was “coming into being. The Pacific and the Indian Oceans are now bringing about a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and of prosperity.”¹ But, like the United States, India was not an early adopter of the idea of the Indo-Pacific. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh used the term in a speech in 2012, as did some other officials. But it did not gain broad resonance at that time. In 2013, India’s national security adviser, Shivshankar Menon, outlined why he believed the Indo-Pacific was “not one geopolitical unit,” arguing that, in terms of geopolitics, capabilities, and various navies’ areas of operation, the region “still consists of three distinct areas: the Indian Ocean, the western Pacific, and the seas near China, (namely, the South China Sea, the East Sea, and the Sea of Japan).”² Some in India had broader concerns about China’s exclusion from the concept, as well as using a one-size-fits-all approach across the region. More recently, however, the government of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has embraced the term.³ It is routinely used in official remarks, and the foreign ministry has even established an Indo-Pacific division.⁴

What has caused India’s recent embrace of the Indo-Pacific concept and its greater acknowledgment of the link between the two oceanic regions? A significant reason is China’s growing diplomatic, economic, and military activities in the Indian Ocean region, including the PLA Navy’s increasing forays into the Indian Ocean. Moreover, such countries as Japan and India are taking more interest and becoming more active in their nontraditional areas of operation (the Indian and Pacific Oceans, respectively). And Australia and the United States—and, to some extent, Britain and France—have already been operating in both oceans. Overall, there is a growing sense that what happens in one oceanic region will not stay in that region.

Modi’s keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2018 reflected the official acceptance of the Indo-Pacific concept and outlined India’s vision for the broader region. His speech envisioned a free and open region that was also inclusive—of “all nations in this geography as also others beyond who have a stake in it.”⁵ This was a nod not just to ASEAN concerns about Southeast Asian countries’ place in the major powers’ Indo-Pacific concepts but also a pushback against the “Asia for Asians” idea articulated by Chinese leader Xi Jinping at the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia in 2014. It was furthermore intended to signal that a China that followed the rules could be part of the vision.

Modi emphasized the significance of a rules-based order and laid out key principles for it:

sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as equality of all nations, irrespective of size and strength . . . rules and norms should be based on the consent of all, not on the power of the

¹ Shinzo Abe, “Confluence of the Two Seas,” speech by Prime Minister of Japan at the Parliament of India, New Delhi, India, August 22, 2007.

² David Scott, “India and the Allure of the ‘Indo-Pacific,’” *International Studies*, Vol. 49, Nos. 3 and 4, July–October 2012, pp. 1–24.

³ Scott, 2012.

⁴ Indrani Bagchi, “In a Show of Intent, External Affairs Ministry Sets Up Indo-Pacific Wing,” *Times of India*, April 15, 2019.

⁵ Narendra Modi, “Prime Minister’s Keynote Address at Shangri La Dialogue,” Singapore, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, website, June 1, 2018b.

few . . . faith in dialogue, and not dependence on force . . . when nations make international commitments, they must uphold them.

He also mentioned the importance of “freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce, and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law” and a “rule-based, open, balanced, and stable trade environment.”⁶

The speech also laid out principles that connectivity initiatives should follow—a particular concern of India, which had been one of the few countries that declined to attend China’s first Belt and Road Forum in 2017. Modi’s speech did not directly target Beijing’s approach—unlike recent U.S. remarks, official Indian remarks rarely, if ever, criticize China by name—but it was clear that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was in the crosshairs. Delhi has concerns not just about China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects in territory that it claims, but also the terms as well as the strategic, political, and economic implications of China’s BRI projects in Bangladesh, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the broader Indian Ocean region. The prime minister asserted that connectivity projects must be based on “respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, consultation, good governance, transparency, viability and sustainability” and should not lead to debt burdens or strategic competition. But he alluded to the fact that Delhi’s concern was about specific approaches, not specific actors, noting India’s participation in the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.⁷ In the past, senior Indian policymakers have made the distinction between BRI and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, stating that the latter concept involved consultation with other participants from the start, including on rule making.⁸

In his speech, Modi was keen to clarify that Delhi did not conceive of the Indo-Pacific in terms of a “strategy.” Indeed, multiple Indian regional policies cover the broader region, including “Neighborhood First,” “Act East,” and now “Act Far East.” They have involved greater diplomatic attention and focused on increasing economic ties, including through regional connectivity projects, maintaining and enhancing defense and security partnerships, expanding defense diplomacy, deploying soft power tools, and being a first responder in case of humanitarian crises or natural disasters.⁹ This engagement has taken place in bilateral and trilateral formats, in regional organizations, and, more recently, via quadrilateral consultations with Australia, Japan, and the United States.

Many of India’s ideas about the Indo-Pacific converge with those of the other Quad countries. Delhi’s approach involves many of the same partners, including in South and Southeast Asia. It also embraces similar principles, including the importance of a rules-based order; a free, open, and inclusive region where there is respect for international law; freedom of navigation and overflight; good governance; sustainable development; and the safeguarding of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

India’s approach is also driven by a shared concern: India, too, sees China’s behavior as a—if not *the*—major challenge to a free, open, and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. It is

⁶ Modi, 2018b.

⁷ Modi, 2018b.

⁸ Tanvi Madan, “What India Thinks About China’s One Belt, One Road Initiative (but Doesn’t Explicitly Say),” *Order from Chaos*, Brookings Institution website, March 14, 2016.

⁹ For details of how this approach plays out in the context of India’s Act East policy, see Dhruva Jaishankar, *Acting East: India in the Indo-Pacific*, New Delhi, India: Brookings Institution India Center, October 2019.

wary of the nature and extent of Chinese involvement and influence in the region. And Delhi shares with the Quad countries many specific concerns about China's approach, including its uncertain intentions, unilateral changes to the status quo with the threat or use of force in the South China Sea or in the Bhutan-China-India tri-junction, economic practices that lead to trade deficits, limited market access, intellectual property theft, preference for state-owned enterprises and the blurring of public-private sector lines, forced technology transfer, economic coercion, the nature and effect of Chinese economic engagement in the region (resulting in, among other things, unsustainable debt burdens), and Beijing's use of sharp power for strategic and political ends.¹⁰

Other countries' focus on the Indo-Pacific has benefited Delhi, as they have seen India as key to their strategies. Canberra's foreign policy white paper, for example, declared that India was important as a bilateral partner and a country "that will influence the shape of the regional order" and thus "now sits in the front rank of Australia's international partnerships."¹¹ Washington's FOIP concept envisions India as one of the four critical democratic "anchors" in the region.¹² And Japanese Prime Minister Abe has repeatedly stated that he sees India as central to Japan's foreign policy strategy. A crucial role in these Indo-Pacific strategies has come with high-level attention and support for India from these countries, as well as deepening cooperation and a willingness to manage differences better. Moreover, Delhi, which has capacity constraints, is also pleased that the other Quad countries are bringing more resources to bear in the region, including in the terms of development finance, security assistance, and capacity building.

But there are also divergences between India's vision and those of the other Quad countries that have contributed to it outlining its own version of FOIP—perhaps more accurately labeled FOIIP, since Delhi talks of a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.¹³ For instance, there are different regions of priority: For India, it is the Indian Ocean Region; for Australia and the United States, it has traditionally been the Pacific. Then, there is the scope of concerns—for Delhi, unlike the others, these are not just maritime, as continental challenges loom in Asia too. And this results in different prioritization of issues—for example, unlike the other three, India cares far more about the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and far less about China's relations with Vanuatu, the East China Sea, or North Korea.

There are differences, too, on certain principles. India, for example, has a more restrictive view of freedom of navigation than the United States.¹⁴ It also defines the *free* in India's FOIIP

¹⁰ For India's concerns about China, see Jeff M. Smith, *Cold Peace: China-India Rivalry in the Twenty-First Century*, Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2014; Tanvi Madan, "Dancing with the Dragon? Deciphering India's China 'Reset,'" *War on the Rocks*, April 26, 2018; S. Jaishankar, "IISS Fullerton Lecture—India, the United States, and China," International Institute for Strategic Studies YouTube channel, July 19, 2015.

¹¹ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, Barton, Australia: Commonwealth of Australia, November 2017, p. 42.

¹² Rex W. Tillerson, "Remarks on 'Defining Our Relationship with India for the Next Century,'" Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, October 18, 2017.

¹³ For a more detailed discussion of convergences and divergences, see Tanvi Madan, "The U.S., India, and the Indo-Pacific," *Seminar*, Issue 715, March 2019a; and Tanvi Madan, "India, the U.S. and the Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Confluence over the Two Seas?" in *Trump and Modi: Prospects for US-India Burden Sharing*, San Francisco, Calif., and Singapore: The Asia Foundation and the Institute of South Asian Studies, South Asia Discussion Papers, June 2019b.

¹⁴ Iskander Rehman, *India, China, and Differing Conceptions of the Maritime Order*, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, June 2017.

vision as signifying countries' freedom to make decisions rather than the nature of their political regimes. Another divergence is on partners—like Japan, albeit to an even greater extent, India sees Russia as part of its strategy for balancing China. However, the Trump administration's strategy documents see Moscow as an adversary and a disruptor in the Indo-Pacific. The other Quad countries, in turn, see India as a disruptor in the economic realm, believing that it needs to be more free and open when it comes to trade and investment.¹⁵ India was not a signatory to the Trans-Pacific Partnership and has, for now, declined to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Finally, the four countries are not always on the same page on the question of how far and fast—or how visibly—to compete with or confront China.¹⁶ And this, in turn, has contributed to their views of the revived Quad.

Origins of the Quad

So much has been written about the Quad that it is easy to forget that it was not the result of a government plan but arose organically as a coalition of the capable in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004. The four countries formed a Tsunami Core Group in 2004–2005, through which they coordinated relief efforts. The group was then shelved, but, at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, there was a flurry of discussions among senior leadership in the four countries about a quadrilateral dialogue. That led in May 2007 to an exploratory quadrilateral meeting and subsequently in September a maritime Quad (plus Singapore) exercise, which was an expanded version of the annual U.S.-India MALABAR exercise.

After that meeting between midlevel officials, there was pushback in the four countries, as well as from Beijing, which had also officially protested ahead of the meeting. Chinese analysts and some critics in India labeled the grouping as a prospective “Asian NATO” (North Atlantic Treaty Organization).¹⁷ Indian policymakers defended their participation, denying that the Quad was an alliance or designed to contain China. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reportedly told Chinese President Hu Jintao that the group was not “ganging up” on China but “exchang[ing] views on development from our experiences as democracies.”¹⁸

¹⁵ See Aditi Shah, “India’s Proposed Investment Treaty Terms Leave Foreign Partners Cold,” Reuters, January 19, 2018; T. C. A. Sharad Raghavan and Suhasini Haidar, “ASEAN Member Countries of RCEP Offer India Concession,” *The Hindu*, November 8, 2018; Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, “United States Will Terminate GSP Designation of India and Turkey,” webpage, March 4, 2019.

¹⁶ For a more detailed look at the convergences and divergences between the American and Indian approaches to the Indo-Pacific, see Madan, 2019a.

¹⁷ Emma Chanlett-Avery and Bruce Vaughn, *Emerging Trends in the Security Architecture in Asia: Bilateral and Multilateral Ties Among the United States, Japan, Australia, and India*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RL34312, January 7, 2008; Praful Bidwai, cited in C. Raja Mohan, *Samudra Manthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012, p. 99. For details on the pushback, see Tanvi Madan, “The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of the ‘Quad,’” *War on the Rocks*, November 16, 2017.

¹⁸ See the White House, Office of the Press Secretary, “President Discusses Support for Earthquake and Tsunami Victims,” Crawford, Tex., December 29, 2004; Marc Grossman, “The Tsunami Core Group: A Step Toward a Transformed Diplomacy in Asia and Beyond,” *Security Challenges*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2005, pp. 11–14; Nilanthi Samaranayake, Catherine Lea, and Dmitry Gorenburg, *Improving U.S.-India HA/DR Coordination in the Indian Ocean*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Naval Analyses, DRM-2013-U-004941-Final2, July 2014.

The reasons for Quad 1.0's demise are still debated today. Australian policymakers are particularly sensitive to criticism that they killed the Quad when the Labor Party government pulled the plug on it publicly in early 2008.¹⁹ Canberra's concerns about China's reaction were indeed the first to be publicly evident. In July 2007, Australian Defence Minister Brendan Nelson stated that he had "reassured" Chinese officials that the Quad "is not something that we are pursuing."²⁰ Subsequently, in Delhi, Nelson downplayed the dialogue. But Australia was not alone responsible for the death of the Quad. There were other contributing factors: Japanese disinterest after Abe's departure from office, American equities with China and desire to focus on the Australia-Japan-U.S. trilateral, and Indian concerns.²¹

Delhi's hesitation stemmed from internal and external reasons. Domestically, Prime Minister Singh faced protests against the Quad-plus-one maritime exercise, particularly from the communist parties on whose support his government depended. Externally, Delhi was sensitive to China's reaction at the time. It needed Beijing's buy-in to get a Nuclear Suppliers' Group waiver after it had signed a landmark civil nuclear deal with the United States.²² Moreover, Indian officials felt that post-Abe Japan was reluctant about the Quad, and U.S. interest was declining because of its need for Beijing and Moscow on the Iran and North Korea issues. But as then-Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran put it, from Delhi's perspective, the "coup de grâce" ending the Quad was the stance of Australia's Labor Party government.²³ Kevin Rudd had made clear even in opposition that he did not support the Quad because it aroused Chinese suspicions. Once he came to power in February 2008, Australia's foreign minister stated at a joint press conference with his Chinese counterpart that he had told Tokyo that Australia would "not be proposing" a Quad meeting again.²⁴

Rebirth of the Quad

Each country's equities with China contributed to the demise of the Quad; a decade later, concern about China's behavior caused the Quad's resurrection. After the 2008 financial crisis, Delhi grew more anxious about what it saw as growing Chinese assertiveness, bilaterally and regionally. Over time, it also worried about Beijing unilaterally changing the status quo when it came to territorial or maritime disputes. China's declaration of an air defense identification zone in the East China Sea in 2013 and its island-building in the South China Sea fueled Indian anxieties because of what these activities signaled about China's willingness to change the status quo unilaterally. In April 2013, September 2014, and over summer 2017, Delhi saw similar behavior on or around the Sino-Indian boundary (in the latter case, involving the Bhutan-China-India trijunction at Doklam).

¹⁹ Kevin Rudd, "The Convenient Rewriting of the History of the 'Quad,'" *Nikkei Asian Review*, March 26, 2019.

²⁰ Stephen McDonnell, "Nelson Meets with China over Military Relationship," *PM with Linda Mottram*, July 9, 2007.

²¹ Although the Quad itself faded away, bilateral and even trilateral relations between many of the Quad countries did broaden and deepen in the subsequent years.

²² For a more detailed look at Quad 1.0, see Madan, 2017.

²³ Shyam Saran, "The Quadrilateral: Is It an Alliance or an Alignment?" *Hindustan Times*, November 25, 2017.

²⁴ Stephen Smith, "Joint Press Conference with Chinese Foreign Minister," Minister of Foreign Affairs webpage, February 5, 2008.

Furthermore, even beyond Pakistan, China was deepening its relations with India's other neighbors through economic ties that only increased with BRI. Delhi was particularly concerned about the strategic and political implications of this Chinese involvement in the region. Moreover, it watched Beijing's behavior farther afield and its use of economic coercion against Singapore and South Korea, as well as reports of its political interference in Australia.

Thus, when Australia, Japan, and the United States proposed reviving the Quad in fall 2017, India agreed. Delhi had taken a number of steps to bolster its balancing strategy vis-à-vis China in the years before. These included agreeing to upgrade its trilateral dialogue with Japan and the United States and to include Japan as a regular participant in the annual U.S.-India maritime exercise. It had remained cautious about the revival of the Quad, which then—U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) commander ADM Harry Harris had raised in India in early 2016.²⁵ But in the aftermath of the Doklam standoff with China, when the Trump administration urged India to reconsider—and with Delhi wanting to keep Washington committed to the region—it agreed to come on board.

From 2017 through 2019, there were five meetings of the Quad at the senior officials' level. The first in November 2017 took place on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Manila, the second in Singapore on the sidelines of ASEAN-related meetings, the third in November 2018 on the East Asia Summit sidelines in Singapore, and the fourth and fifth in Bangkok in May and then November 2019. India's participation has been at the joint secretary level. The agenda has included discussions of the countries' visions of the Indo-Pacific, regional connectivity, cybersecurity, and a range of regional security issues related to nonproliferation, counterterrorism, and maritime security.

Additionally, at an annual conference cohosted by the Indian foreign ministry, there were also panels in 2018 and 2019 featuring senior military leadership from the Quad countries. India was represented by its chief of naval staff. In both cases, these were Quad-plus panels, with the military officials joined on the panel one year by a former Indonesian deputy foreign minister and the next year by the French navy chief.

These official and quasiofficial meetings sent a signal. They also helped create familiarity, identify issues that were ripe for coordination or cooperation, and set the stage for upgrading the Quad to the ministerial level, as well as more-operational coordination (see below).

Significantly, in September 2019, the four countries held a Quad meeting at the ministerial level on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, with India represented by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

For India, the Quad serves multiple purposes. Delhi sees the grouping as a signal to China. Moreover, it sees it as *a*—although not *the only*—platform for cooperation with the other Quad countries with whom it broadly shares a vision of the region and a concern about the challenge posed by Chinese behavior (the other bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral platforms are discussed later). From India's perspective, the Quad can serve as a forum to assess the other countries' views of China—as well as the limits of their willingness to balance China. In addition, given its uncertainties about the Trump administration's commitment to the region, Delhi sees the Quad as a vehicle to keep the United States engaged in the region. The Quad is also useful to India for broader information-sharing with these countries and a way to shape the conversation about the region. Finally, Delhi has believed it can use the potential upgrading

²⁵ Harry B. Harris, Jr., "Let's Be Ambitious Together," speech at Raisina Dialogue, New Delhi, India, March 2, 2016.

of the Quad as leverage with China—that is, a way to dissuade Beijing from taking steps that hurt Indian interests or to indicate its disapproval if Beijing takes such steps.

There have indeed been calls from Australia and the United States to enhance the Quad.²⁶ Some have suggested expanding the agenda, adding to the issues discussed. Others have wanted it to be upgraded to the foreign secretary (deputy secretary of state) or ministerial level—an objective now achieved. But the idea that has the most advocates and critics is for the countries to “militarize” or add a military dimension to the Quad. The most prominent suggestion is to add Australia to MALABAR, the annual U.S.-India-Japan trilateral maritime exercise. Canberra indeed requested inclusion in the exercise in both 2017 and 2018, but India rejected Australia’s participation.

India’s Step-by-Step Approach to Enhancing the Quad

There has not just been one single reason for Delhi’s gradual step-by-step approach to enhancing the Quad (i.e., to expanding its scope and upgrading its level, even as the United States and Australia have desired speedier progress). For one, India has been uncertain about the resilience of the other countries’ current attitudes toward China.²⁷ It essentially does not want to be the last one standing if the others take a more-accommodating posture toward Beijing in the future. Through this lens, Delhi watches Japan’s recent approach toward China, including its stated willingness to cooperate with Beijing on BRI. India has greater concern about the U.S. posture as mentioned earlier, and even more uncertainty about the sustainability of the current Australian attitude toward China and Australia’s willingness to take a more-competitive approach, particularly with changes in governments in Canberra.

There is a belief in Delhi that Australian governments under the Liberal Party have been more concerned about Chinese assertiveness and have been willing to work alone and with others to tackle it.²⁸ And, in Indian policymakers’ minds, this contributed to the more forward-leaning approach toward India taken by the John Howard, Tony Abbott, Malcolm Turnbull, and Scott Morrison governments. In their view, Labor governments have been more reticent toward India. Although the Kevin Rudd government made some overtures to India, its reversal of the Howard government’s decision to sell uranium to India left a mark (Rudd’s successor, Julia Gillard, briefly reversed the party’s position before Rudd took over again).²⁹

There is also a persisting belief in Delhi that Rudd’s government pulled the plug on the Quad in 2008. Moreover, Indian policymakers saw the announcement of Australian withdrawal in a joint press conference with China as a way to garner points with Beijing at the

²⁶ Shubhajit Roy, “China Watching, India Cautious to U.S. Move on Talks with Japan and Australia,” *Indian Express*, September 11, 2018; Abhijit Singh, “India Bides Its Time in the Indian Ocean,” *East Asia Forum*, February 8, 2019.

²⁷ Sujan Chinoy, “China Remains Wary of the Quad and Its Future Contours,” *The Indian Express*, November 7, 2019.

²⁸ Pragya Pandey, “Modi 2.0 and a New Term for Scott Morrison: What It Means for India-Australia Relations?” Indian Council of World Affairs, issue brief, December 26, 2019; Harsh V. Pant and Kartik Bommakanti, “Can the Quad Deal with China?” *Deccan Herald*, November 26, 2018.

²⁹ Bruce Loudon and New Delhi, “Rudd’s Uranium Reversal Irks India,” *The Australian*, March 2, 2008; Geoff Hiscock, “Australia and the Great Indian Uranium Sale Debate,” *CNN Business*, August 19, 2013; Australian Associated Press, “Rudd Won’t Rethink Uranium Sales to India,” *SBS News*, February 24, 2015.

expense of the others.³⁰ Finally, Indian officials perceived the Rudd government's approach to the Quad as reflecting a more benign view of China—one that was at odds with Delhi's view that is shared across party lines. And it coincided with a time in 2009–2010 when Indian policymakers saw their China challenge intensifying.³¹

This is responsible for a persisting concern in Delhi that Australia's China policy is not consistent, and that an about-face can be expected under a Labor government or because of Australian economic interests.³² To some extent, this reflects the fact that there does not seem to be a good understanding in India of the change in Australian views of China over the past couple of years. Even among those who have followed the growing Australian concerns about Chinese sharp power and influence operations, there is a sense of wanting to wait and see whether it lasts. There are others in Delhi who think that India is being too cautious.³³ And recent bilateral engagement with Australia could expand this group of people in India calling for Delhi to shed its skepticism of Canberra.³⁴

Although Delhi's concern about others' attitude toward China has caused it to hesitate about enhancing the Quad more speedily, its own delicate relationship with that country has been a second reason for its caution. When it comes to China, Indian policymakers have tended to seek the right balance between preparation for the worst and actions that might constitute a provocation. There are differences within the Indian government about what constitutes the right balance. But there has been a sense that expanding the Quad too quickly might cross the line and lead Beijing to, in turn, pressure or punish India elsewhere (on the flip side, when there is a sense that China is pushing or pressuring Delhi anyway, it strengthens the hands of Quad advocates).

A third reason for India's step-by-step approach has been the concern that some ASEAN countries have about the Quad. In fall 2017, as the Trump administration was rolling out its FOIP concept, the revival of the four-country consultations raised questions in Southeast Asia about where the Quad—and ASEAN centrality—fits into the FOIP idea. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's speech on India, the Indo-Pacific, and the Quad, as well as State Department comments on the four countries being the democratic anchors in the region, added to the anxiety.³⁵ Indian officials became aware of these concerns, and Modi tried to alleviate some of them when he hosted the leaders of the ASEAN countries for India's Republic Day in January 2018. He assured them that ASEAN was at the “center” of India's Act East policy.³⁶ In his subsequent speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue, he reiterated that Southeast Asia lay at the heart of India's vision for the Indo-Pacific. And the need to reassure the ASEAN countries was a key

³⁰ See Saran, 2017; and Chinoy, 2019.

³¹ Indrani Bagchi, “China Denies Visa to Top General in J&K,” *Times of India*, August 26, 2010a; and Indrani Bagchi, “India Declines to Affirm ‘One China’ policy,” *Times of India*, December 26, 2010b.

³² Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, “It's Not China, It's You, India Seems to Tell Spurned Aussies,” *Foreign Policy*, June 5, 2017.

³³ Rajesh Rajagopalan, “India's Hedging Strategy Is Bound to Fail,” *Raisina Debates*, June 2018; *Hindustan Times*, “Editorial: India Is Rather Too Cautious on the Quad,” January 24, 2019.

³⁴ Sudarshan Shrikhande, “Extending India's Navy Ties: Making Exercise Malabar a Quartet That Includes Australia,” *Financial Express*, January 14, 2020.

³⁵ See Tillerson, 2017; U.S. Department of State, “Background Briefing on Secretary Tillerson's Remarks at CSIS,” special briefing, Washington, D.C., October 18, 2017.

³⁶ Narendra Modi, “Prime Minister's Opening Remarks at the Plenary Session of the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit,” New Delhi, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, website, January 25, 2018a.

reason why Modi added “inclusive” to India’s ideal vision of the region, stressing that it was not restricted to “a club of limited members.”³⁷

A fourth factor for India’s hesitation is its general tendency to take things step-by-step. The evolution of the U.S.-India-Japan trilateral relationship is a prime example of this evolutionary approach: It first met in December 2011 at the assistant secretary/joint secretary level. It stayed at that level until September 2015, when it was upgraded to the ministerial level. Now it meets at both that level and the working level. Moreover, Japan was only included as a regular annual participant in the MALABAR exercise in 2015. Leader-level trilateral meetings only began in November 2018, with Modi coining the acronym *JAI* (Japan-America-India) for it—the word means victory in Hindi. Thus, India’s step-by-step approach to the Quad is perhaps to be expected; such an approach also might make those consultations more sustainable since the Quad will likely evolve on the basis of not just one leader’s preference, but of its overall utility to all the countries involved.

Although there tends to be a focus on India’s reluctance to enhance the Quad more speedily,³⁸ what is often missed is that its agreement to restart the Quad was a significant step. Moreover, despite its efforts with China in the past two years to stabilize their relationship, Delhi has not pulled the plug on the Quad to assuage Beijing’s concerns; indeed, since the Modi-Xi Wuhan summit, Delhi has agreed to move the Quad steadily forward. Since that summit, Indian officials at the working level have met with their Quad counterpart four times. India also agreed to upgrade the consultations to the ministerial level a few weeks ahead of another Modi-Xi summit in southern India in October 2019. This meeting, which the Indian foreign minister described as one of “the Quad” rather than the previously subtler “India-Australia-Japan-United States Consultations,” followed a strained few months in China-India relations and particularly Chinese criticism of India’s actions to change the status of Jammu and Kashmir.³⁹ Since that meeting, Delhi has also hosted the Quad for a counterterrorism tabletop exercise, and the four countries’ cyber experts have met on the sidelines of a multilateral meeting.⁴⁰

In the Shadow of the Quad

It is also worth looking at what India is doing with the other three countries bilaterally and trilaterally apart from the Quad. For example, not only does India have the JAI trilateral dialogue, but in 2015, it also agreed to an annual Australia-India-Japan trilateral dialogue at the foreign secretary level. And in 2017, an Australia-India-Indonesia trilateral was established,

³⁷ See Modi, 2018a.

³⁸ Derek Grossman, “India Is the Weakest Link in the Quad,” *Foreign Policy*, July 23, 2018a; Asha Sundaramurthy, “India Keeps Australia Out of the Malabar Exercise—Again,” *The Diplomat*, May 8, 2018.

³⁹ Subramanyam Jaishankar, Twitter post, September 26, 2019, 11:08 a.m.

⁴⁰ National Investigation Agency, *First Counter Terrorism Table Top Exercise (CT-TTX) for QUAD Countries*, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, November 19, 2019; Alice G. Wells, “Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of President Eisenhower’s Historic Visit to India,” remarks by the principal deputy assistant secretary, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council, December 11, 2019.

with an annual maritime security workshop initiated subsequently in 2019.⁴¹ India's bilateral cooperation with each of the other Quad countries has also broadened and deepened over the past few years. In the defense and security space, this will expand the countries' ability to share information, operate together, and build capacity and habits of cooperation bilaterally and with other partners in the region. It could also help lay the groundwork for a maritime Quad over the next few years.

India's Relationship with Australia

India's defense and security cooperation with Australia has progressed steadily over the past few years. The Australian defence minister noted, "We have gone from 11 defence exercises, meetings and activities in 2014 to 38 in 2018."⁴² In 2015, the two countries started a biennial maritime exercise, called AUSINDEX. It was held in 2019 for the third time, with an emphasis on antisubmarine warfare. Moreover, it included observers from New Zealand and the United States. In 2016 and 2017, Australia and India's army special forces held exercises known as AUSTRA HIND. In 2018, for the first time, the Indian air force and navy participated in Australia's multilateral exercises PITCH BLACK and KAKADU, respectively. In 2019, India sent observers to TALISMAN SABRE, the largest Australia-U.S. military exercise.⁴³ Australia meanwhile has sent trainers to India's multilateral medical exercise and continues to participate in the Indian navy's multilateral MILAN exercise.

In 2017, the two countries started a 2+2 dialogue at the defense and foreign secretaries' level. India has only had such dialogues with Japan and with the United States (although those are at the ministerial level). Each of their services also has regular staff talks. And over the past two years, the Australian defence minister, the navy chief, and chief of defence forces have traveled to India. Between 2015 and 2017, the Indian navy, army, and air force chiefs visited Australia.

This bilateral cooperation will help build trust and habits of cooperation between two defense establishments that share Commonwealth ties but have not actually engaged in very broad or deep cooperation. Australian and Indian soldiers fought together during the Second World War, but military contact since that time has been relatively limited. Bilateral diplomatic and defense engagement will also help Delhi better understand the shift in Australian views of China.

Other recent developments also will have shaped Delhi's perception of Australia for the better. Australia, for instance, coordinated the 2018 rescue of an Indian navy officer who had been participating in a solo around-the-world race.⁴⁴ And after the Indian Air Force strike across the Line of Control during the February 2019 India-Pakistan crisis, Canberra acknowledged

⁴¹ Telly Nathalia, "Indonesian, Indian, Australian Navies Hold Trilateral Security Talks," *Jakarta Globe*, December 2, 2019.

⁴² Christopher Pyne, "AUSINDEX 2019 Commences in India," media release, Australian Government, Department of Defence, April 9, 2019b.

⁴³ Linda Reynolds, "Talisman Sabre 2019—Largest Ever Bilateral Defence Exercise Begins," media release, Department of Defence Minister, Australia Government, Department of Defence, July 7, 2019a.

⁴⁴ Guardian staff and agencies, "Australian Navy Joins in Rescue of Abhilash Tomy Adrift in Indian Ocean," *The Guardian*, September 24, 2018.

Delhi's statement that it was targeting terrorist groups, and then put the onus on Pakistan to take actions against them "to eas[e] tensions."⁴⁵

Delhi will also worry less about a significant change in Australia's approach to the Quad and the region as a result of the surprise reelection of the Morrison-led government in May 2019. In the run-up to the polls, Labor had made some efforts to assure Delhi that it would continue to deepen relations if it came to power. During that time, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong and Shadow Minister for Trade and Investment Jason Clare had also traveled to India. Moreover, Wong and Shadow Minister for Defence Richard Marles wrote an op-ed supporting the Quad. Nonetheless, certain comments from prime ministerial candidate Bill Shorten suggesting a Labor government would take a softer stance on China fueled concern in Delhi about an Australian foreign policy shift if his party won.⁴⁶

Thus, Morrison's reelection, his subsequent efforts to engage Modi, and his placing the India relationship in the "top tier" have been welcomed in Delhi.⁴⁷ These events have paved the way for closer cooperation between the two countries in different platforms and spheres (including maritime security, cyber and critical technologies, counterterrorism, and regional economic governance and infrastructure).⁴⁸ The Indian government invited Morrison to give the keynote address at a foreign ministry conference in January 2020, and during that visit, the two countries were expected to sign a mutual logistics support agreement.⁴⁹ Although the visit was postponed because of the bushfires crisis in Australia, it is still expected to go forward at some point later in 2020.

India's Relationship with Japan

Delhi has also watched Japan's foreign-policy approach closely and has kept an eye on recent Sino-Japanese meetings. But it has fewer concerns about Tokyo because of the overall consistency in Japanese governments' attitudes across party lines toward India (and China) over the past decade. Moreover, bilateral cooperation has contributed to the greater degree of comfort and confidence. Japan's engagement with India has tended to be deeper in the economic space. Delhi has welcomed its assistance in developing infrastructure in India for years. More recently, Japan has especially sought to build or upgrade infrastructure—some of it potentially dual-purpose—in India's northeast and its Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal, albeit with mixed success. And now the two countries are trying to work together to offer connectivity alternatives regionally as well (although progress has been slow). Bilaterally,

⁴⁵ Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, "India-Pakistan Tensions over Terrorist Attack," media release, Canberra, February 26, 2019.

⁴⁶ Penny Wong, "FutureAsia—Deeper Ties with India," media release, Labor Senator of South Australia, October 3, 2018; Penny Wong and Richard Marles, "Why Labor Believes the Quad Is Important to ASEAN," *Australian Financial Review*, March 15, 2018; Jamie Tarabay, "Bill Shorten Wants Australia to Embrace China. But at What Cost?" *New York Times*, May 15, 2019.

⁴⁷ Elouise Fowler, "Morrison's High Praise for India Is a 'Hedge Against China,'" *Australian Financial Review*, October 6, 2019.

⁴⁸ Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, "India's Voice Consequential in Regional Order Building in Indo-Pacific Region," *Economic Times*, December 5, 2019.

⁴⁹ Ben Packham, "Morrison to Focus on Tech Deals in Talks with India's Modi," *The Australian*, November 25, 2019; Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury and Manu Pubby, "India Likely to Sign Logistics Pacts with Japan and Australia to Boost Navy Partnership," *Economic Times*, November 28, 2019.

they are focused on South Asia and the western Indian Ocean region, including East Africa. Their trilateral with the United States also has an infrastructure working group.

The two countries have more recently been engaging in the defense and security space. In 2015, they signed the General Security of Military Intelligence Agreement and reached an agreement on the transfer of defense equipment and technology.⁵⁰ India has begun new air force (SHINYUU MAITRI) and army (DHARMA GUARDIAN) exercises with Japan and has also continued their long-standing coast guard exercise (SAHYOG-KAIJIN). In 2018, they also held their first navy exercise (JIMEX) in five years. These exercises—and India’s agreement for Japan to join MALABAR—are intended by Delhi in part to recognize and encourage a Japanese security role in the region. Moreover, the two countries are negotiating a logistics agreement (expected to be signed in December 2019) and have upgraded their 2+2 to the ministerial level. Japan and India have various security dialogues: a defense ministerial, a defense policy dialogue, a national security advisers’ dialogue, and staff talks. The two countries have also been discussing the sale of Japan’s US-2 amphibious aircraft to India, but these talks have not yet borne fruit. But they have begun to conduct joint research on unmanned ground vehicles and robotics technology.⁵¹

India’s Relationship with the United States

India’s defense and security relationship with the United States is deeper than that with the other Quad countries. The two countries have existing annual army (YUDH ABHYAS), special forces (VAJRA PRAHAR), and naval (MALABAR) exercises; they have also sailed together as part of naval training exercises.⁵² In 2018, after a decade, the Indian Air Force held a bilateral exercise (COPE INDIA) with its American counterparts, with Japan present as an observer.⁵³ It also participated in the U.S. RED FLAG exercise in 2016. In November 2019, the two countries started a new annual triservices exercise (TIGER TRIUMPH) as well—one of only two that India conducts (the other is with Russia).⁵⁴ The Indian navy also participated in U.S. Africa Command’s Cutlass Express exercise for the first time in early 2019 and has joined RIMPAC as a full participant since 2014.⁵⁵ The United States will be joining India’s multilateral naval exercise MILAN in 2020.⁵⁶ The two countries have also deepened cooperation for jointly

⁵⁰ Yuki Tatsumi, “Abe’s Visit Takes Japan-India Security Relations to the Next Level,” *The Diplomat*, December 14, 2015.

⁵¹ K. V. Prasad and Sandeep Dikshit, “Japan Will Follow Twin-Track Security and Development Alignment with India: Envoy,” *Tribune*, August 5, 2019.

⁵² Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, “U.S.-India Military Relations Get More Complex,” *The Diplomat*, November 16, 2019.

⁵³ Press Trust of India, “Air Forces of the U.S. and India to Hold Joint Exercise ‘Cope India 2019,’” *Economic Times*, November 29, 2018b.

⁵⁴ PIH Delhi, “Curtain Raiser—HADR Exercise TIGER TRIUMPH to Commence at Visakhapatnam,” Press Information Bureau, Government of India, November 12, 2019.

⁵⁵ Indian Navy, “INS Trikand Participates in Exercise Cutlass Express 2019,” webpage, February 2019; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Defence, “INS Satpura Reaches Hawaii, USA for Exercise RIMPAC 2016,” webpage, June 30, 2016.

⁵⁶ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, “Joint Statement on the Second India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue,” media center, December 19, 2019.

training peacekeepers from a number of African countries and announced their intention to do the same for peacekeepers from the Indo-Pacific.⁵⁷

In 2018, India and the United States established a 2+2 dialogue at the ministerial level.⁵⁸ There have also been multiple meetings between the defense ministers in the past few years. In addition, there has been a regular exchange of visits by senior foreign and defense ministry bureaucrats and military officials. The countries' military cooperation group, navy executive steering group, defense technology and trade initiative interagency task force, cybersecurity dialogue, and counterterrorism working group have continued to meet over the past few years.

U.S.-India cooperation has also been facilitated by the signing and operationalization of the logistics exchange memorandum of agreement, implementation of the Helicopter Operations from Ships other Than Aircraft Carriers program, and signing of the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement, which would allow greater interoperability and technology transfer.⁵⁹ The two countries have also signed the Industrial Security Annex, which will facilitate greater cooperation between the defense industries, and are discussing the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement that could pave the way for geospatial intelligence sharing.⁶⁰ Greater institutionalization could also follow from agreements for engagement between the Indian navy and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command in Bahrain and the countries' defense innovation units. The United States is also considering placing a liaison at the new Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region established by India near Delhi.⁶¹

Additionally, the United States has given India Strategic Trade Authorization Tier 1 status, which would facilitate the export of advanced technology.⁶² In the past few years, the United States has approved the sale of armed drones and 24 multimission helicopters to India.⁶³ Over the past few years, India has also incorporated other American equipment into its arsenal, including Apache and Chinook helicopters, C-17 and C-130 transport aircraft, P-8i maritime reconnaissance aircraft, and M-777 howitzers, and will be purchasing Sig Sauer assault rifles for its troops on the China boundary shortly.⁶⁴ The United States is also seeking to sell fighter aircraft to the Indian navy and air force.

⁵⁷ Andrew Strike, "U.S.-India Joint Training Further Strengthens Peacekeeping Missions in Africa," DipNote (U.S. Department of State official blog), May 15, 2018; Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

⁵⁸ Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Defence, "Joint Statement on the Inaugural India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue," September 6, 2018b.

⁵⁹ Dinakar Peri, "LEMOA Fully Operational Now," *The Hindu*, September 8, 2018; Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Defence, "Full Text of Raksha Mantri's Press Statement After India-U.S. 2+2 Dialogue," September 6, 2018a.

⁶⁰ Rahul Singh and Rezaul H. Laskar, "India-U.S. to Sign Key Defence Pact During Second 2+2 Dialogue in December," *Hindustan Times*, November 15, 2019.

⁶¹ Shishir Gupta, "Soon, India Defence Attaché at U.S. Navy Bahrain Command," *Hindustan Times*, March 21, 2018; Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2019.

⁶² Press Trust of India, "India Third Asian Nation to Get STA-1 Status from U.S.," *The Hindu*, August 4, 2018a.

⁶³ Press Trust of India, "U.S. Approves Sale of Armed Drones, Offers Missile Defense Systems to India," *Economic Times*, June 8, 2019a.

⁶⁴ ANI, "India to Deploy Latest American Weapon Systems for Ex-HimVijay Along China Border," *Economic Times*, September 13, 2019; Rahul Bedi, "Indian MoD Approves Procurement of 10 More P-8I Aircraft for Indian Navy," *Jane's*, June 24, 2019.

The Road Ahead

Last year, when asked about the Canberra, Delhi, Tokyo, and Washington “Indo-Pacific strategy,” Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi responded that “headline-grabbing ideas . . . are like the sea foam in the Pacific or Indian Ocean: they may get some attention, but soon will dissipate.”⁶⁵ Beijing is probably hoping the Quad disappears, too. But, thus far, it has survived and indeed has been upgraded with enhanced cooperation. Moreover, bilateral and trilateral cooperation among the four countries has also increased.

Former Foreign Secretary of India Shyam Saran, who was present at the creation of the Quad dialogue, has in the past supported India’s step-by-step approach to the Quad. But he has also recently emphasized, “it is the Quad which may eventually emerge as the critical instrument to manage the China challenge.”⁶⁶ As his statement suggests, the Quad should not be thought of as a goal in and of itself but as a vehicle to facilitate cooperation among the four countries in the Indo-Pacific.

Form should not drive function. It will not always make sense for the four countries to work all together. On regional connectivity, for example, it might not be effective to undertake projects jointly; it would be more worthwhile to exchange information, particularly on which existing or potential projects could have strategic implications (essentially, Quad information-sharing could serve as an advance warning system) and where it makes sense to coordinate or to cooperate. Each member has its own comparative advantage, and sometimes it might be better for a country to work alone or with one or two of the other Quad members.

Not forcing the issue and letting cooperation develop organically will ensure that the Quad is more sustainable. The countries also need to do a better job of getting the messaging right with other regional partners; otherwise, they will make it easier for China to define the Quad as an exclusive alliance.

In the future, if the countries believe there is value in it, there are opportunities for the Quad in terms of both its function and its form. In terms of the former, the countries can decide to expand the game—that is, put additional items on the agenda. This could include sharing assessments about China. The four countries see China from different angles. Each also has questions about the others’ China approach, and the Quad could provide a platform to take one another’s temperature on China more systematically. If the four parties develop a greater comfort level with one another in the future, they could also discuss how to deter and/or raise the cost of bad behavior by Beijing. A second agenda item could be assessing political and economic vulnerabilities to economic coercion or influence operations.⁶⁷ If the countries are not comfortable discussing their own vulnerabilities, they could at the very least share assessments about regional vulnerabilities. A third item could be foreign direct investment national security screening processes, which are being reviewed in each of the countries. If and when the four countries develop a greater level of trust and interoperability, intelligence-sharing could also be on the agenda.

In terms of form, the countries could expand the players involved. For one, doing so could deepen working-level cooperation on existing agenda items. They could also consider function-

⁶⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, “Foreign Minister Wang Yi Meets the Press,” March 9, 2018.

⁶⁶ Shyam Saran, “Quad Can Be the Anchor for the Indo-Pacific Region,” *Hindustan Times*, June 29, 2018.

⁶⁷ See Alyssa Ayres, “Pivot to Democracy: The Real Promise of the Quad,” *War on the Rocks*, January 3, 2019.

based mechanisms that involve a different set of stakeholders than are usually involved. For instance, having the heads of their export-import banks and/or their development finance institutions meet to discuss regional connectivity efforts could help to share experiences, set standards, and complicate Chinese efforts to drive regional integration in ways that serve Beijing's interests at the expense of other actors. There have also been suggestions of Quad research collaboration on disaster response and management that would include experts and practitioners.⁶⁸

Recently, the Indian defense minister had successive meetings on the sidelines of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus in Bangkok with his American, Australian, and Japanese counterparts.⁶⁹ Although it was not a collective meeting of the Quad defense ministers—which might be a step too far from India's perspective at this stage—even that could be a possibility in the future, perhaps starting with meetings of defense officials at lower levels.

The countries could also consider more informal structures or dialogues, for example, a monthly meeting of their political counselors or even ambassadors in particular regional capitals (reportedly, these are already occurring in certain countries). And each could reconsider programs that encourage regional people-to-people ties that include a Quad dimension; for example, the United States could consider a Quad group of participants under its International Visitor Leadership Program.

Finally, the Quad countries could think creatively about military-to-military cooperation. The focus has, of course, tended to be on expanding MALABAR. If Delhi's comfort level with Canberra continues to increase and its discomfort with Beijing's attitude toward Indian sensitivities persists, we might see a Quad maritime exercise in the future. Given their overlapping areas of operation and their greater familiarity with one another, a Quad operation might even materialize in response to a major humanitarian crisis or natural disaster. But in the meantime, there are also other less high-profile ways to consider, including vis-à-vis other exercises that involve more than two Quad countries. In May 2019, there were two examples of such activity—a weeklong India-Japan-U.S.-Philippines group sail through the South China Sea and an Australia-Japan-U.S.-France exercise in the Bay of Bengal (LA PÉROUSE). There are also Australia-Japan-U.S. exercises in which India can be included as a participant or observer. Some, such as the SINKEX, take place during larger exercises such as RIMPAC, in which India is already a participant. The four countries host or participate in a number of such multicountry exercises and can undertake joint consultations or maneuvers on the sidelines. These kinds of activities, in turn, could lay the ground for a maritime Quad in the future—especially if Japan remains comfortable participating in MALABAR and if India's comfort level with Australia continues to grow. As the Indian navy chief reminded an audience recently when asked if the group had a military aspect, “*at the moment*, it doesn't.”⁷⁰

⁶⁸ See Akriti Vasudeva, “India's Role in Disaster Management: Can the Quad Give It a Leg Up?” in Yuki Tatsumi and Jason Li, eds., *International Disaster Response: Rebuilding the Quad?* Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, March 2019.

⁶⁹ Press Trust of India, “Rajnath Holds Bilateral Meetings with U.S., Japan, Australia, New Zealand Counterparts,” *Times of India*, November 17, 2019b.

⁷⁰ Dinakar Peri, “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Not Against China: U.S. Admiral,” *The Hindu*, January 9, 2019.

Conclusion

The Quad receives a lot of attention; it raises hopes and hackles in a way that few other initiatives do. Yet this potential coalition of the willing and capable is still a work in progress. Concern about China's behavior has sparked its revival, but that will not be the only determinant of its future. India's decisions will shape how far and fast it evolves—and indeed whether it does so at all—but so will those of Australia, Japan, and the United States. Their choices, not just about the Quad but also about China and the Indo-Pacific more broadly, can and will help determine Delhi's view of the four-country dialogue. If their views are seen as consistent, it will strengthen the hands of those in India arguing for enhancing the Quad. The four democracies will continue to have differences, but if India sees the others as remaining committed to ensuring a rules-based order in the region and this platform as having utility, it will likely deepen cooperation with them—via the Quad and through other mechanisms.

India's approach to the Indo-Pacific will also continue to evolve even as its key elements are already evident. This approach will not be exactly the same as those of the other Quad countries, but there will be many points of convergence. As Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar recently noted, today countries “won't have common score-sheets . . . everyone would have their own lyrics and their own tunes, but there would be notes that they would strike together.”⁷¹ And to ensure a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific, India will likely frequently play together—or in parallel—with the other Quad countries. And possibly in the future, it will feel comfortable assigning the Quad its own acronym—building on the JAI trilateral, some have suggested AJAI, a word that means “undefeatable” in Hindi.

⁷¹ Asia Society New York, “India: Minister of External Affairs Subramanyam Jaishankar,” webpage, September 24, 2019.

The Free and Open Indo-Pacific and the Quad as Seen from Australia and Indonesia

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This chapter presents perspectives on the FOIP and the Quad as seen from Australia and Indonesia. Because the two countries are neighbors, observers might reasonably presume that they share similar strategic outlooks, and indeed there are some similarities between the views of Canberra and Jakarta. Nevertheless, the countries also have important differences owing to their geographic locations, demographic compositions, political histories, and strategic partnerships, and these differences have significant policy impacts. As the southern anchors of the Indo-Pacific, some alignment between the outlooks of both countries is necessary to help realize a shared vision of the region, one that promotes stability and prosperity. Understanding the areas of convergence and divergence in the views of the two sides will prove critical to any effort to making the FOIP vision a reality and serves as the focus of this analysis.

There are key differences in the ways in which Australia and Indonesia envisage the Indo-Pacific for reasons that stem from both past and current considerations. With its long history of alliance cooperation with Washington, Australia will continue to prefer U.S. hegemony in the region. By contrast, Indonesia cherishes its autonomy and nonalignment and is more circumspect about U.S. leadership. Australia is more openly supportive of arrangements such as the Quad, whereas Indonesia will shy away from overtly supporting potential groupings of U.S. allies and partners that might be, or be characterized by Beijing, as focused on containment or anti-China. To be sure, both Australia and Indonesia are committed to upholding the rules-based global order, particularly given their limited size, capabilities, and influence, and both are committed as well to promoting ASEAN-based institutions and norms as the basic framework for Indo-Pacific security architecture.

Australia's Approach to the Indo-Pacific

Australia has a short but important history with the term *Indo-Pacific*. Australian policy commentators, particularly Rory Medcalf,¹ introduced the term to Australia and encouraged its use to refer to a geopolitical construct throughout the late 2000s and early 2010s, with the first official usage found in the 2013 Defence White Paper. Official documents describe the Indo-Pacific as being of “primary importance” to Australia and a “logical extension” of the Asia-Pacific.² Since that time, the idea of the Indo-Pacific as a predominantly maritime construct that includes all major players has sharpened and has come to be broadly accepted and used often by the policymaking and academic communities. For example, the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* references a “secure, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific.”³ Echoing this, then–Defence Minister Christopher Pyne recently stated that the region’s security should be premised on a “rules-based order” defined by being “open, inclusive, robust and free of coercion.”⁴ Specifically, as an island nation dependent on secure sea lines of communication, Australia supports an Indo-Pacific where “[f]ree and open access to oceans is fostered and rules governing maritime behavior are followed.”⁵

There is no exact official geographic definition, although there are several key points that help define how Australian policy sees the Indo-Pacific. For leaders and influential policy thinkers in Canberra, the Indo-Pacific is a construct that reflects the inexorable shift in global geostrategic center of gravity from the northwest to the southeast, across the landmass of Asia.⁶ Canberra, like Washington, Tokyo, and Jakarta, sees the Indo-Pacific as designed to reflect India’s growing strategic importance alongside China and the United States.⁷ The Indo-Pacific is broadly understood as an increasingly complex, multipolar, maritime construct linking the Indian and Pacific Oceans, where the interests of major strategic players are engaged.⁸ Alongside these, Australia sees the Indo-Pacific as comprising interlocking and overlapping subregions, where smaller and middle powers must work together to ensure that the stability and prosperity of each subregion contributes to the security of the broader whole.⁹ For example, Southeast

¹ One of the earliest and prominent works using the term *Indo-Pacific* is Rory Medcalf, Raoul Heinrichs, and Justin Jones, *Crisis and Confidence: Major Powers and Maritime Security in Indo-Pacific Asia*, Sydney, Australia: The Lowy Institute, 2011. Other Australian writers had used the term in the mid-2000s, but did not gain popularity in strategic or foreign policy circles until after Secretary of State Hillary Clinton used it in her 2011 *Foreign Policy* essay (Hillary Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century,” *Foreign Policy*, October 11, 2011). For an example of early usage, see Michael Richardson, “Australia-Southeast Asia Relations and the East Asian Summit,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 59, No. 3, 2005, pp. 351–365.

² Australian Department of Defence, *Defence White Paper 2013*, Canberra, Australia: Commonwealth of Australia, 2013, p. 7.

³ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017, p. iii.

⁴ Christopher Pyne, “Fullerton Forum Keynote,” speech at International Institute for Strategic Studies, Singapore, published on Australia Government, Department of Defence webpage, January 28, 2019a.

⁵ Pyne, 2019a.

⁶ Julie Bishop, “The Indo-Pacific Oration,” speech at the Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, April 13, 2015.

⁷ Bishop, 2015; Australian Department of Defence, 2013, p. 2.

⁸ Rory Medcalf, “Mapping Our Indo-Pacific Future: Rory Medcalf’s Speech,” Policy Forum and National Security College, Australian National University, Canberra, May 21, 2018a.

⁹ Medcalf, 2018a.

Asia is seen as a key site of economic and military growth, and its stability is managed by ASEAN processes.¹⁰ Other important subregions in Australia's Indo-Pacific thinking include South Asia, given India's increasing importance and an increased focus on the Indian Ocean. The other is the South Pacific, which has been a natural part of Australia's strategic thinking for many decades. Although not often talked about in terms of the Indo-Pacific, it can be seen as part of that construct, as China is increasingly engaged in infrastructure and development activities there.

Like more recent U.S. pronouncements and existing Japanese interpretations of the FOIP, there is a more explicit emphasis (particularly in speeches) on the Indian Ocean and East Africa as part of the Indo-Pacific. This has also been shaped at the national level by ministers and politicians from Western Australia, who tend to be more aware of western Indian Ocean and East African issues, given the state's geographic orientation (relative to the east coast) and its dependence on west and north maritime trade links.¹¹ The inclusion of the western rim of the Indo-Pacific has made clear that China's activities in places as far west of the Indian Ocean as Djibouti are of interest to Australian policymakers.¹²

It is no surprise that Australians were early adopters of the *Indo-Pacific* term, since it is a natural extension of Australia's outlook. Living next to Asia and the Pacific to the north and east, and the Indian Ocean to the west, Australians are keenly aware of how the region has been shaped by what Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade¹³ Frances Adamson characterizes as "fast-paced change, shifts in geo-economic weight and power, technological advances and demographic swings," particularly among major partners in China, India, and Southeast Asia, creating a regional picture that today is "far from simple or benign."¹⁴ Some of Australia's major partners now appear to compete globally—a competition that is now playing out in Australia's immediate backyards of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. Straddling two major ocean systems and adjacent to major sea lines of communication, the security of the seas is essential for Australia as a maritime nation. Australia has long had to deal with idea that not only are those oceanic systems linked but that India must be an important security provider in the Indian Ocean.

Embracing the Indo-Pacific has become ever more urgent as the main pillars of Australia's security evolve, at times in alarming ways. Australia sees the security of its strategic interests in two main elements: its alliance with the United States and the rules-based global order. The alliance with the United States is central to Australia's security, and Canberra is committed to enriching this crucial relationship. However, for the past decade, and increasingly since the

¹⁰ Julie Bishop, "ASEAN—Australia Dialogue: Closing Dinner," speech, March 13, 2018.

¹¹ Examples of prominent West Australian politicians and officials who have (or have had) roles in shaping and interpreting Indo-Pacific-related issues over the past decade include former Foreign Minister Julie Bishop, former Foreign Minister and former Defence Minister Stephen Smith, current Defence Minister Linda Reynolds, and current Chair of Parliamentary Committee on Intelligence and Security Andrew Hastie.

¹² Linda Reynolds, "Indo-Pacific Conference, WA," speech at Perth USAsia Centre Indo-Pacific Defence Conference 2019, Perth, August 12, 2019b.

¹³ In Australia, the position of secretary is the head of a department, drawn from the bureaucracy, and reports to the relevant minister. The position of minister is a political appointment responsible for that portfolio.

¹⁴ Frances Adamson, "Shaping Australia's Role in Indo-Pacific Security in the Next Decade," Women in International Security series, speech by the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, October 2, 2018b.

November 2016 election of Donald Trump, there has been serious debate within the country about balancing Australia's relationships with China and the United States and the future of U.S. relationships with and commitments to its allies.¹⁵ Although the status quo will continue for some time, Australia's *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* employs the term *self-reliant* to describe a growing self-awareness in Canberra that times are changing and that overreliance on the United States is undesirable. It is not that the status quo is not preferable—as one academic put it, Australians “like American hegemony and are sorry to see it fading.”¹⁶ Rather, Australian policymakers are responding to the world as it is while not completely giving up on what they would like it to be. Australia has expressed strong disagreement with the Trump administration's approach to major international agreements on trade (the Trans-Pacific Partnership), nuclear nonproliferation (the Joint Comprehensive Program of Action, or Iran nuclear deal), and climate (the Paris Accords). The Australian strategic community has also watched with concern the ways in which U.S. rhetoric toward allies Japan and South Korea has sharpened, and Australian observers are mindful that Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull had his own tense moments with President Trump over issues related to immigration and refugees. The current prime minister, Scott Morrison, appears to have more-cordial relations and alignment on such policy areas as climate change with his American counterpart.

As a consequence, the second pillar of Australian foreign and security policy—support for the rules-based global order—has now become an even more important means through which Australia's strategic interests are guaranteed and a main line of effort for Australian diplomacy. Although Australia wishes to influence global institutions, as outlined in the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, the country has focused its foreign policy toward its Indo-Pacific partners and strengthening regional institutions. Australia's response has been to double down on rallying countries of shared interests and common political outlook to serve as active enforcers of liberal norms and rules, particularly where ASEAN-centric institutions are concerned. With great power cooperation on issues such as countering jihadi terrorism, addressing global warming, and countering nuclear proliferation “patchy” in recent years, Australian analysts increasingly argue that all players—including middle powers and smaller players—must be actively engaged in contributing to the security of the region through support for existing security architectures and enforcement of international law.¹⁷ Aside from Indonesia and India, Australia's deepening ties with South Korea and Japan mirrors the U.S. approach of fostering “intra-spoke cooperation” as its hub-and-spoke alliance system in Asia. In fact, relations with New Delhi (discussed in detail further below) and Tokyo have seen significant deepening in recent years. In particular, the relationship with Japan was elevated to a special strategic partnership in 2014 and reinforced with frequent ministerial visits. Seeking to encourage such buy-in, Foreign Secretary Adamson stated that Australia will “promote and support reform and modernization of international institutions where that is warranted.”¹⁸

¹⁵ See, for example, Hugh White, “The U.S. Shouldn't Go to War with China over Taiwan—and Nor Should Australia,” *The Strategist*, February 13, 2019; Paul Dibb, “Australia and the Taiwan Contingency,” *The Strategist*, February 6, 2019.

¹⁶ Andrew Phillips, “The Indo-Pacific Is What You Make of It,” *APPS Policy Forum*, Asia & the Pacific Policy Society, July 10, 2018.

¹⁷ Ian Hall, “Coral Bell and the ‘Concert of Powers’ Problem,” *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, November 16, 2017.

¹⁸ Frances Adamson, “The Indo-Pacific: A WA Perspective,” speech by the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Perth USAsia Centre, Perth Town Hall, Australia August 7, 2018a.

The Indo-Pacific construct also allows Australia to focus on and maximize its comparative advantages as a middle-sized power. Australia's ability to influence great power rivalry is limited, and Canberra is unable to engage in direct competition with major players or get drawn into large-scale land- or maritime-based conflict with sizeable militaries to fight on its own. Australia would like to see an Indo-Pacific that does not allow might to make right. Along with enforcement of the rules-based global order, Australia would like countries, particularly small or medium-sized actors, to have choices rather than to be compelled or coerced into partnerships.¹⁹ For instance, in infrastructure development, Australia cannot provide the same scale of investment as Japan or China, but it is able to leverage its niche expertise in such areas as budgetary transparency. By providing options that support the overall economic well-being of regional states, Australia can make a difference and continue to develop its long-standing relationships in such places as the South Pacific.

In terms of implementing its Indo-Pacific strategy, it is worth highlighting three key subregions mentioned earlier that exemplify not only Australia's strengths as a medium-sized state but also how it positions itself as a subregional partner. First, as alluded to earlier, although Australia sees the whole of the Indo-Pacific as a significant strategic regional system and supports general principles aimed at promoting its cohesion, the government's approach also focuses on subregions. Foreign Minister Payne has called for Australia to "build links within and between nations on principles of transparency, sustainability and robust standards."²⁰ Recognizing the limits of Australia's contributions relative to the vast sums of investment provided by larger economies, the foreign minister sums up the government's plan as focused on leveraging Australia's "comparative advantage in infrastructure policy and financing."²¹

Australia's focus on the subregion is evident in its role in the South Pacific. By virtue of geography and history, Australia has had a long-standing interest in the subregion, and thus Canberra's Indo-Pacific vision would put greater emphasis on the South Pacific than on Washington, Tokyo, or New Delhi. It has become more urgent to Australia to maintain not only involvement but influence among its South Pacific neighbors because of China's increasing engagement in the area. That said, analysts caution against seeing South Pacific programs such as the Pacific Step-Up, announced in 2016 and boosted by the Morrison government in 2018, solely through the lens of competition with China.²² Australia's waning influence in the South Pacific is also attributable to its reluctance to push for climate change action, evidenced by the watering down of climate change-mitigation policies in the Pacific Islands Forum communiqué.²³ Australia has increased its investment through such initiatives as the Pacific Maritime Security Program, an AUD \$2 billion (USD \$1.38 billion) commitment for 30 years to the Pacific region; the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific

¹⁹ See, for example, statement by Prime Minister Scott Morrison in Jane Norman, "PM Urges Indo-Pacific Nations to Resist Chinese Coercion," *ABC Radio AM*, August 23, 2019.

²⁰ Marise Payne, "Address to the Raisina Dialogue," speech at Raisina Dialogue, New Delhi, January 9, 2019.

²¹ Payne, 2019.

²² Brendan Sargeant, "The Place of the Pacific Islands in the Indo-Pacific," *The Strategist*, July 9, 2019.

²³ Melissa Clarke, "Pacific Leaders, Australia Agree to Disagree About Action on Climate Change," *ABC News*, August 15, 2019.

worth AU \$2 billion (USD \$1.38 billion);²⁴ significant infrastructure upgrades for the Vanuatu Police Force;²⁵ and the redevelopment of the Blackrock Camp in Fiji into a regional hub for police and peacekeeping training and predeployment preparation.²⁶ Likewise, Canberra has committed to the delivery and has funded the majority of the construction of the Coral Sea Cable System, a high-speed undersea telecommunications link to the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea;²⁷ upgraded investment in the Lombrum Naval Base in Papua New Guinea; supported the Pacific Labour Scheme for an additional 2,000 Pacific workers to have access to the Australian job market each year; and pledged to the Boe Declaration signed in Nauru, a set of principles that define and strengthen Australia's security relationships with the South Pacific.

The second and equally important area of immediate strategic interest is Southeast Asia. Australia sees Southeast Asia and its related institution, ASEAN, as the “heart of Indo-Pacific” and its “collective voice.”²⁸ Similarly, Foreign Minister Payne has affirmed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for states to support “ASEAN centrality as a platform for cooperation across the Indo-Pacific region, and reinforce that commitment to ASEAN centrality.”²⁹ Thus, Southeast Asia is a critical partner in strengthening Indo-Pacific norms and institutions in the Australian perspective. ASEAN is not without its internal challenges, however, and, for ASEAN centrality to work, the organization needs support. To that end, Australia continues to focus on engaging the subregion through such diplomatic efforts as the Special Summit with ASEAN leaders held in March 2018. That event included the Australia–ASEAN Business Summit and a counterterrorism conference intended to help further build internal resilience and maximize areas of cooperation between Australia and Southeast Asian states and promote capacity-building within ASEAN. The joint statement affirmed “ASEAN's central role in the evolving rules-based regional architecture that is open, transparent, inclusive, and promotes stability and prosperity through ASEAN-led mechanisms.”³⁰

A third area of Australian effort in the Indo-Pacific is South Asia, including bilateral relations with India. Australia will be involved in regional economic connectivity in South Asia through a new South Asia Regional Infrastructure Connectivity initiative, worth AU \$25 million over four years and targeting energy and transport infrastructure. Relations with India continue to grow, underpinned by the idea that Australia can support its role as “a strategic anchor in the region.”³¹ In 2014, Australia and India conducted just 11 defense activities

²⁴ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Pacific Regional—Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific: Stepping-Up Australia's Pacific Engagement,” webpage, Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Development Assistance in the Pacific, July 1, 2019.

²⁵ Pyne, 2019a.

²⁶ Pyne, 2019a.

²⁷ Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “The Coral Sea Cable System: Supporting the Future Digital Economies of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands,” Barton, Australia: Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, September 25, 2018.

²⁸ Adamson, 2018b.

²⁹ Payne, 2019.

³⁰ Association of Southeast Asian Nations, “Joint Statement of the ASEAN–Australia Special Summit: The Sydney Declaration,” Sydney, Australia, March 18, 2018b.

³¹ Payne, 2019.

together; by 2018, this figure had reached 38.³² Keen to maintain momentum and recognizing that India will be an even more important partner to others in future, Australia released an India Economic Strategy, an independent report by former Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Secretary Peter Varghese that outlines the opportunities Australia sees to partner with India on economic issues out to 2035.³³ Australia's focus on the Indian Ocean region was strengthened further with the launch of a formal senior official-level trilateral dialogue among Australia, India, and Indonesia in September 2018, while a separate foreign secretary-level trilateral with Japan and India is also gaining momentum. It is also worth highlighting again that, like India and Japan but more so than the United States, Australia pays special attention to East Africa and the western Indian Ocean as part of its Indo-Pacific. The inclusion of East Africa as part of this construct is most evident in Western Australia, with 92 of the 134 Australian Stock Exchange-listed companies in 29 African countries being Western Australian, operating 231 mining projects.³⁴

The final pillar in Australia's increased South Asian engagement is its renewed interest in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue among Australia, India, Japan, and the United States. Arising in the wake of the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami humanitarian assistance cooperation, further developments after a 2007 informal meeting were quashed in February 2008, when then-Foreign Minister Stephen Smith announced that Australia "would not be proposing to have a dialogue of that nature" anymore.³⁵ It was a move largely interpreted by Indian analysts as then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd not wishing to offend China. Although debate still rages in Australian foreign and strategic policy circles about the risks of enmeshment with the Quad and the negative impact on relations with China, a decade later, Canberra has moved toward bipartisan support of the grouping as a way to build closer relations with India and Japan and to maintain U.S. involvement in light of an "America First" policy. China's assertiveness in such areas as the South China Sea has been another factor in Canberra's renewed Quad enthusiasm.

Australia's Response to FOIP and the Quad

Three points from this discussion are relevant for understanding how Australia has responded to the growing prominence of the FOIP concept and renewed interest in the Quad.

The first is that the Australian strategic policy community is generally supportive of the FOIP concept. The adoption of the term *Indo-Pacific* by the United States, Japan, and the region is in Australia's strategic interest. Rather than be seen as a geostrategic designation between two oceanic systems, FOIP is understood in Australia as a normative framework for the emergence of regional order and a guide for shaping relations and behavior among all the powers—great, medium, and small—in the Indo-Pacific region. In this sense, Australia tends to view FOIP as more akin to a vision than a strategy, mirroring the evolution of its development in Japanese thinking. As the sample of statements and speeches by Australian

³² Payne, 2019.

³³ Peter N. Varghese, *An India Economic Strategy to 2035: Navigating from Potential to Delivery*, Barton, Australia: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, April 27, 2018.

³⁴ Western Australian Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, *Prospect*, March–May 2018.

³⁵ Indrani Bagchi, "Australia to Pull Out of 'Quad' That Excludes China," *Times of India*, February 5, 2008.

ministers and departmental heads illustrates, Australia's support for the FOIP vision shows evidence of substantial conceptual overlap and common language with the U.S. definition of a *free* Indo-Pacific, in which all nations are "able to protect their sovereignty from coercion by other countries."³⁶ From Australia's perspective, this element of the U.S. FOIP is particularly useful for building consensus among major Indo-Pacific states on norms regarding the use of force. For example, the foreign minister states that Australia's aim in the region is "to ensure that as the region evolves, it evolves peacefully, so that countries like Australia can prosecute their interests free from coercive power, and so that economic momentum is sustained."³⁷ Both the secretary of the department of foreign affairs and foreign minister have also affirmed in other speeches, respectively, that Australia seeks "a balance in the region that supports these objectives and helps protect the interests of all states, large and small"³⁸ and that the country has an interest in "ensuring the peaceful development of an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region—a region in which the rights of all states are respected, large and small."³⁹ The defence minister has also referred to, without further elaborating, "oligarchies, as well as a host of non-state actors" as challenges to regional stability,⁴⁰ later seemingly referring to such states as Russia when referring to oligarchies "who think it is their birth right to simply annex their neighbor at will."⁴¹

The second observation is that Australia is concerned about U.S. commitment to the rules-based global order, particularly as part of its interactions in the Indo-Pacific. Then-Prime Minister Turnbull was at great pains to underscore the criticality of the order during his Shangri-La Dialogue keynote address in 2017.⁴² This rules-based global order has been challenged by such actors as North Korea, which continues to flaunt nonproliferation agreements. From an Australian perspective, the Trump administration's negotiations with North Korea are seen to reward such transgressions.⁴³ As Prime Minister Turnbull once stated, "Australia envisages a region that is more closely integrated and where we all collectively reject isolationism."⁴⁴ At the bare minimum, concerted cooperation on issues that affect all states is essential.

In terms of the *liberal* rules-based global order, by virtue of membership and emphasis on shared values, Australia makes clear that the democratic nature of dialogues such as the Quad is a normative preference. That is, like the United States and Japan, Australia's conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific also affirms the definition of *free* at the national level, meaning "good governance and the assurance that citizens can enjoy their fundamental rights

³⁶ Michael R. Pompeo, "Remarks on 'America's Indo-Pacific Economic Vision,'" speech by the Secretary of State at the Indo-Pacific Business Forum at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington D.C., July 30, 2018.

³⁷ Payne, 2019.

³⁸ Adamson, 2018b.

³⁹ Payne, 2019.

⁴⁰ Pyne, 2019a.

⁴¹ Pyne, 2019a.

⁴² Malcolm Turnbull, "Keynote Address at the 16th IISS Asia Security Summit, Shangri-La Dialogue," Singapore, June 3, 2017.

⁴³ See, for example, Nick Bisley, "Kim-Trump 2.0: Three Observations," *The Interpreter*, Lowy Institute, March 1, 2019.

⁴⁴ Turnbull, 2017.

and liberties.”⁴⁵ Aside from sharing a common emphasis on democracy, Australia values the Quad as a means to further build cooperation, familiarity, and capability—all valuable nontangible strategic assets that support regional security and stability. Its utility also extends beyond the four Quad countries. Rory Medcalf sees the Quad’s greatest gift as “mak[ing] the world safe for trilateralism,” drawing China’s ire and thus directing attention away from the more “consequential” trilateral and bilateral web.⁴⁶ Thus, the Quad is an important part of Australia’s Indo-Pacific approach, although leaders have tended to downplay this publicly, depending on the forum in which they are speaking.

This leads to a third point about some Australian reservations about both FOIP and the Quad, namely, concerns that these are seen as anti-Chinese or as vehicles for containing China. The Australian community is split in its perceptions of China. There are figures in the Australian strategic community who are suspicious of China⁴⁷ and who would agree with the U.S. *National Defense Strategy* description of China as “a strategic competitor using predatory economics to intimidate its neighbors while militarizing features in the South China Sea.”⁴⁸ There are also concerns about Chinese government influence in political and business circles, given the case of Labor Senator Sam Dastyari who resigned in 2017 after it was found he received questionable payments from a Chinese business figure;⁴⁹ major Australian business operations such as Rio Tinto regarding Chinese cyber operations and the arrest of ethnic Chinese Australian national and Rio Tinto official Stern Hu;⁵⁰ and China’s control of strategic assets such as Port of Darwin.⁵¹

At the same time, there are others who push for a more conciliatory tone with China in public. Former Foreign Minister Bob Carr has disagreed that China has attempted to interfere in Australian politics.⁵² The Trump administration’s trade war with China risks making the United States lose favor among Australians. According to the Lowy Institute’s 2018 poll, 82 percent of Australians see China as “more of an economic partner” than a “military threat” (up three points since 2017).⁵³ Australia does not favor an outright policy of strategic competition with China. As the secretary of the department of foreign affairs has pointed out, “the role of China is vital for continuing stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and will

⁴⁵ Pompeo, 2018.

⁴⁶ Rory Medcalf, Twitter post, October 26, 2018b, 6:28 p.m.

⁴⁷ Peter Jennings, “Suspicion for Parliamentary Hack Must Fall on China,” *The Strategist*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, blog, February 20, 2019.

⁴⁸ DoD, 2018, p. i.

⁴⁹ Lucy Sweeney, “Sam Dastyari Resigns from Parliament, Says He Is ‘Detracting from Labor’s Mission’ Amid Questions over Chinese Links,” *ABC News*, December 12, 2017.

⁵⁰ Kit Chellel, Franz Wild, and David Stringer, “When Rio Tinto Met China’s Iron Hand,” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, July 13, 2018.

⁵¹ Geoff Wade, “Landbridge, Darwin and the PRC,” *The Strategist*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, blog, November 9, 2015.

⁵² Rick Morton, “No Evidence of China Interference: Bob Carr,” *The Australian*, June 3, 2018. Carr, in turn, has been criticized for his think tank’s receipt of funds from Chinese business figures. See, for example, John Fitzgerald, “How Bob Carr Became China’s Pawn,” *Financial Review*, November 8, 2018.

⁵³ Alex Oliver, “2018 Lowy Institute Poll,” 2018 Lowy Institute Poll, June 20, 2018.

shape the future contours of our region.”⁵⁴ There is a bipartisan view, as well as consensus in the Australian strategic community, that engagement with China is preferred to conflict.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, policymakers are aware that Australia would inevitably be drawn into conflict between the United States and China; limited in its ability to make strike contributions, Australia’s role would involve more intelligence and monitoring, given joint facilities located in the country. Australia continues to walk the tightrope between its ally and its largest trading partner, in light of less certainty in U.S. policy.

Indonesia’s View of the Indo-Pacific

Like Australia, the Indo-Pacific is also an important construct for Indonesia for several reasons. First, the fusing of two oceans systems into a single strategic entity complements President Joko Widodo’s wish for Indonesia to be seen as an important nexus between the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. Unveiled in 2014, Jokowi’s “maritime fulcrum” vision for his country is predicated on building up Indonesia’s maritime domain through not only physical infrastructure but by fostering greater confidence in Indonesia’s sense of self as a regional power.⁵⁶ This worldview is not unique to Jokowi’s tenure; in the early days of the Indonesian Republic, President Sukarno had similarly sought to position Indonesia as a key player in such international forums as the United Nations. That said, placing Indonesia at the heart of the Indo-Pacific, whether as a significant player or as a key state within Southeast Asia, is a double-edged sword; it entails greater interest and investment from other players but also increasing expectations that Indonesia will assume greater responsibility. Although Indonesia’s leaders might harbor the desire for the country to be more strategically significant, the reality is that its capacity in certain areas, particularly in terms of naval hard power, is highly constrained. This is why a multipolar system, in which groups of states can balance against a potential hegemon, is desirable for Indonesia.

This leads to the second important point about how Indonesia sees the Indo-Pacific. Indonesia envisions a multipolar Indo-Pacific in which no country is preponderant and only peaceful means are used to achieved strategic interests.⁵⁷ In describing Jakarta’s own vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific, the Jokowi administration has emphasized “cooperation, not rivalry, inclusiveness, transparency and openness.”⁵⁸ That said, Indonesia sees ASEAN centrality as a critical element of this vision. To this end, it has successfully championed the ASEAN statement *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific*, released in June 2019, which draws

⁵⁴ Adamson, 2018b.

⁵⁵ For the government position, see, for example, Scott Morrison, “Address to Asialink ‘Where We Live,’” speech at Asialink, Sydney, June 26, 2019a; and Scott Morrison, “The 2019 Lowy Lecture: Prime Minister Scott Morrison,” speech at the Lowy Institute, Sydney, October 3, 2019b. For the opposition position, see, for example Penny Wong, “Australian Values, Australia’s Interests—Foreign Policy Under a Shorten Labor Government,” speech at the Lowy Institute, Sydney, May 1, 2019.

⁵⁶ Rendi A. Witular, “Presenting Maritime Doctrine,” Jakarta Post, November 14, 2014.

⁵⁷ See, for example, the Indonesian-driven *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific*, Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretariat, June 2019.

⁵⁸ Office of Assistant to Deputy Cabinet Secretary for State Documents & Translation, Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, “Indo-Pacific Cooperation Concept Focuses on Cooperation, Not Rivalry: President Jokowi,” November 15, 2018.

heavily on the Jokowi administration's ideas of ASEAN leading the formation of an economic and security architecture that integrates ASEAN norms into the wider Indo-Pacific.⁵⁹

Indonesia is thus supportive of the various overlapping security architectures and norms as a means of constraining military aggression and avoiding conflict. While these are long-standing ideas in Indonesian foreign and strategic policy, Marty Natalegawa, the foreign minister during the Yudhoyono administration, recast them in light of the Indo-Pacific in a speech in 2013.⁶⁰ Indonesia's long-standing policy of being a free and active player in international diplomacy as well as nonaligned means that the country is at pains to emphasize that it will not be dragged into any military alliances against an Indo-Pacific player. Natalegawa's speech outlined a strategic construct among India, Japan, and Australia in which Indonesia was at the center,⁶¹ and the Jokowi administration's growing strategic partnerships with such countries as India similarly reflects this thinking.

The third point is India's inclusion as part of the Indo-Pacific supports Indonesia's interests. The Jokowi administration explicitly does not support the creation of new security architecture for the Indo-Pacific; instead, it prefers a strengthening of existing ones, particularly in instances that touch maritime issues.⁶² India's increasing role in the Indian Ocean provides greater opportunities for partnering and securing Indonesia's western maritime flank. India's increasing military strength also provides a counterweight to China on continental Asia. Indonesia and India are also well placed to encourage further links between East Asian Summit and Indian Ocean Rim Association members, with both Jakarta and Delhi being active in both forums. India's championing of ASEAN centrality within the Indo-Pacific is also complementary to Indonesia's push to maintain ASEAN-related instruments and norms relevant to the Indo-Pacific. For instance, during the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in February 2018, Indonesia proposed to reinforce the regional architecture based not only on international law but also on the principles contained in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and the 2011 *Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations* (also known as the Bali principles).⁶³ The special partnership is reflected in the signing of the "Shared Vision of India-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific" in May 2018 during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Jakarta.⁶⁴ The test for whether this is merely a branding exercise or a meaningful event in Indonesia and India's joint leadership of the Indo-Pacific construct will be whether the countries can translate the discursive shift into deeper and more-sustained cooperation as a result of the Indo-Pacific banner. The reelection of both Jokowi and Modi will bring some policy continuity, but time will tell.

⁵⁹ *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific*, 2019.

⁶⁰ Marty M. Natalegawa, "An Indonesian Perspective on the Indo-Pacific," speech by the minister for foreign affairs, Republic of Indonesia, at conference on Indonesia, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 16, 2013.

⁶¹ Natalegawa, 2013.

⁶² Office of Assistant to Deputy Cabinet Secretary for State Documents & Translation, Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2018.

⁶³ Association of Southeast Asian Nations, "Press Statement by the Chairman of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat," Singapore, February 6, 2018a.

⁶⁴ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, "Shared Vision of India-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific," media release, May 30, 2018.

In some ways, Indonesia's view of the Indo-Pacific has areas of great overlap with Australia's, particularly in terms of promoting ASEAN centrality, engagement with the South Pacific, and a more active role for India in regional order building. One main difference with Australia is the extent to which Indonesian leaders would support continued U.S. hegemony in the region and such structures that project a sense of American power as the Quad.

These elements of Indonesia's conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific have significant points of convergence and divergence with the U.S. FOIP vision and the Quad. For one, Indonesia welcomes American statements on ASEAN centrality within the Indo-Pacific. Second, for a maritime nation, Indonesia is supportive of U.S. emphasis on international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which is the basis on which Indonesia denies illegal fishing in its exclusive economic zone.

Although the United States continues to be an important player in the Indo-Pacific, Indonesian leaders and commentators are also cautious that talk of the FOIP and Quad are not taken as signaling a policy of containment of China. Indonesian statements are at pains to avoid any privileging of major states over another. For instance, the emphasis on "inclusiveness" in Jakarta's official Indo-Pacific formulation (and the ASEAN Outlook) signals not just India's inclusion but potentially China's. Presently, Indonesia has ambivalent ties with China, which has replaced Japan as its largest trading partner. Indonesia is walking something of a tightrope, seeking to draw in Chinese investment for Jokowi's ambitious infrastructure plans but at the same time wary of the encroachment of Chinese fishing vessels in Indonesia's Natuna Seas or moves that weaken ASEAN consensus.⁶⁵ Indonesia's geographic vulnerability and still-modernizing navy and coast guard are a source of strategic anxiety, in light of growing PLA Navy capabilities. Thus, Indonesia's diplomatic statements must balance encouraging U.S. involvement in enforcing the global order with remaining sober about the reality of China's increasing influence.

That said, while freedom of navigation is supported, Jakarta's definition of *free* differs from Washington's and Canberra's use of the term at the national level. In the U.S. and Australian conception of the term, *freedom* can be understood as "freedom from coercion" and "freedom of choice." For Indonesian policymakers, being "free" is about the liberty to choose partners rather than the promotion of citizen's rights and freedoms. The promotion of such rights and freedoms is problematic for the Jokowi administration, which is currently seeking to introduce laws that criminalize criticism of the president, among other freedoms. In fact, the word *free* as used by Washington and Canberra to mean *rights* appears neither in Indonesia's current use of Indo-Pacific nor in the ASEAN Outlook.

A related point is that Indonesian resistance to the Quad is rooted in the archipelago's long-standing principle of pursuing a "free and active" foreign policy. If Indonesian policymakers, or indeed the Indonesian public, perceive the security grouping to be an American construct or aligned with U.S. allies and partners, Jakarta is extremely unlikely to provide overt support. Despite the change in regime type between the Sukarno era, the New Order and, post-*reformasi* Indonesia, there has been little change to the core principles of

⁶⁵ Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Indonesia-China Relations: To Be Handled with Care," *Perspective*, ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore, Issue 2019, No. 19, March 28, 2019, p. 4; Evan Laksmiana, "How Should Indonesia Engage a Hegemonic China," Centre for Strategic and International Studies Indonesia, Jakarta, October 22, 2018.

Indonesia's foreign policy since 1948. This is unlikely to change in the future and will impact Indonesia's enthusiasm for the Quad.⁶⁶

Lastly, there is hesitation in Jakarta over the Quad's potential marginalization of ASEAN centrality. Aside from excluding Indonesia (although membership would be problematic because of perceptions noted earlier about containment of China), some Indonesian foreign policy figures have voiced concern about a lack of Southeast Asian engagement with the Quad.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, ASEAN's consensus-based decisionmaking, already under strain, would make agreeing to cooperate with the Quad difficult.

Conclusion

The view of the Indo-Pacific is indeed very different depending on the context of either the southern hemisphere or equator and, in both cases, between two oceans. Elections in Indonesia in March 2019 and Australia in May 2019 returned both leaders, President Jokowi and Prime Minister Morrison, to power. As such, there are unlikely to be major changes in how both countries view the Indo-Pacific. That said, minor differences between the visions remain, and both Australia and Indonesia are grappling with internal debates about the future of U.S. leadership and the extent to which they have ability to push back on China. In Australia's case, Canberra is tied to the United States through its long-standing alliance; for Indonesia, its long-cherished principle of "free and active" diplomacy and nonalignment will keep Jakarta wary of American-led initiatives.

Ultimately, Australia and Indonesia have the potential to play a greater role, should some of these domestic issues be sorted out and their respective strengths in diplomacy be exercised and their relative weakness in economic diversity and military capability be addressed.

⁶⁶ Shafiah F. Muhibat and M. Habib Abiyan Dzakwan, "Indonesia and the Quad: Can't or Won't Decide?" *The Strategist*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, December 7, 2018.

⁶⁷ Comments made during Track 1.5 U.S.–Indonesia Strategic Dialogue; see Brian Harding and Andrekya Natalegawa, "Enhancing the U.S.–Indonesia Strategic Partnership," Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 9, 2018.

Conclusion

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As these proceedings make clear, debates in Delhi, Canberra, and Jakarta about how to respond to China's rise and the increasingly obvious (if not, by any means, "new"¹) strategic competition between Washington and Beijing. Their responses, in all likelihood, will hinge in substantial measure on factors relating to perceptions of national security threat and capabilities but also to domestic political calculations, articulations of national identity by elites, and trust. Indeed, as a recent RAND report on the growth of security cooperation among key Indo-Pacific nations (including Australia, India, and Indonesia) found, these factors are critical to explaining the broadening and deepening of security ties for many countries in the region.² With U.S. thinking about the role of the Quad and its relationship to the liberal international order and a FOIP continuing to evolve, what topics might the United States and its allies and partners focus on in the months and years ahead?³

Although not specifically discussed in the 2019 RAND report, there are additional steps that could be considered with the aim of advancing the goal of building a free and open Indo-Pacific. The authors of these proceedings discussed these steps during and after the conference:

- Ensure that regional infrastructure development is well matched to countries' needs and absorptive capacities, is sustainable, and does not undercut good governance standards.
- Continue to support the norm of ASEAN centrality and engage with ASEAN as an institution to signal respect for Southeast Asian nations' roles as partners and actors in the region's security while avoiding the impression of managing the region over their heads or treating the region as a "chessboard" upon which to compete with China.
- Coordinate the U.S. BUILD Act with Japanese, Australian, Indian, and other nations' financing vehicles to offer countries an alternative to China's BRI.
- Promote norms about data privacy and digital infrastructure that are favorable to the liberal international order.

¹ Elsa B. Kania, "Not a 'New' Era—Historical Memory and Continuities in U.S.-China Rivalry," Center for a New American Security, May 7, 2019.

² Harold et al., 2019.

³ Derek Grossman, "How the U.S. Is Thinking About the Quad," *The RAND Blog*, February 7, 2019.

- Counter terrorism, human trafficking, smuggling of illegal narcotics, illicit transfers of arms, and proliferation.
- Build regional partner capacity to monitor and police air and maritime domains and counter illegal, unreported, and regulated fishing.
- Extend regional trade and investment frameworks in ways designed to incentivize a race-to-the-top approach to economic growth and improved living standards.
- Reiterate calls for countries to meet global standards relating to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.
- Build on the origins of the Quad in the wake of the Indian Ocean earthquake of 2004, continuing to enhance resilience against and responses to natural disasters and global warming, while promoting more-sustainable approaches to development that include taking steps to reduce the generation of carbon dioxide emissions and ocean-destroying plastic wastes.

This list is by no means exhaustive but presents a set of possible areas in which further cooperation among the Quad nations, any prospective Quad observers, Quad + 1 partners, or simply FOIP-friendly nations could expand cooperation. The United States, the U.S.-Japan alliance, or the Quad may also wish to explore additional approaches to regional order, including expanding participation to such actors as South Korea or Taiwan in addition to ASEAN or to extra-regional actors, including the European Union or Canada.

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