

11 Threats without enemies

Are Australia's alliances and alignments still relevant?

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With the acceleration of globalization and the increased influence of non-state actors in international affairs, a new set of threats has emerged that sit alongside the traditional security agenda focused on interstate conflict. Conceptually located within the so-called 'new' or non-traditional security agenda, these threats are characterized by their transnational and intrastate effects, an emphasis on non-military responses and a reliance on international cooperation to address them. As Alan Dupont notes, non-traditional security threats are 'complex, interconnected and multi-dimensional' as well as 'moving from the periphery to the centre of the security concerns of both states and individuals'.¹ In this context, they raise important questions about Australia's traditional security arrangements, concluded primarily to deal with conventional security threats. Are they sufficiently flexible to address non-traditional threats? Have new approaches emerged and what are their characteristics? Is there a shared view between Australia and its partners on perceptions and priorities towards these 'threats without enemies'?² Taking Southeast Asia as its analytical focus, a region where Australia has abiding political, economic and security interests, this chapter argues that the increased prominence of non-traditional security threats such as drug trafficking, terrorism and illegal people movements has prompted a shift in the form and content of Australia's security arrangements. On the one hand, to remain relevant in a changed strategic environment the activities encompassed by traditional security arrangements have been broadened. On the other hand, new frameworks have been developed that are less formal in structure, more expansive in scope and broader in participation than traditional security arrangements.

The chapter begins by examining Australia's approach in its security arrangements to handle non-traditional security threats. Particular emphasis is given to the reorientation of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) and new approaches to cooperation. The greater uncertainty and complexity of the post-Cold War security environment has prompted scholars to reflect on the relevance and adaptability of traditional alliances in the new millennium. Australia's experience in dealing with non-traditional

threats in Southeast Asia provides a useful contribution to that reflection. This is the focus of the second section. To conclude the chapter, the issue of differing perceptions and prioritization of non-traditional security threats between Australia and its Southeast Asian neighbours is then discussed. Narrowing the gap in threat perceptions and prioritization is likely to yield benefits at both the political and operational levels, enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of response strategies. This perspective underlies the remarks that close the chapter.

The Five Power Defence Arrangements: sustaining relevancy through reorientation

Concluded in 1971, the FPDA commits Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Singapore to immediately consult with each other if the two latter countries come under external attack or threat thereof. Focused from the outset on conventional security threats, the FPDA targeted the air defence of Malaysia and Singapore as a priority in recognition of their limited capabilities in this area. An Integrated Air Defence System was established in 1971, a key element of which—as detailed by Ron Huisken in the previous chapter of this volume—was the continued stationing by Australia of two squadrons of fighters (together with their support units and, periodically, an infantry company) at Butterworth air base in Malaysia. Air defence exercises began in 1972 while land and sea components were introduced in the early 1980s. Combined air and sea exercises have taken place since 1997, and tri-service joint exercises were launched in 2000.³ Since then the FPDA's emphasis on joint and more complex conventional security exercises has deepened, including the addition of a logistics element. More recently, the defence ministers endorsed the launch of a new major joint exercise, *Sumatran Protector*.

The FPDA provides more than an opportunity for regular inter-military training to improve understanding of each other's equipment, tactics and communications procedures. At a fundamental level, it has helped attenuate tensions between Malaysia and Singapore, a not inconsiderable achievement. Bilveer Singh notes that 'Malaysia is perhaps the most conspicuous factor in Singapore's security calculations'.⁴ Informing this outlook is the qualitative and quantitative improvements in the Malaysian armed forces over the past 20 years, as well as tensions associated with Singapore's vulnerability to water supply disruption by Malaysia and contested sovereignty over Pedra Branca/Pulau Batu Puteh, a rocky feature atop of which sits a lighthouse.⁵ While Singapore's sustained investment in advanced weapons, systems and training, and its expressed willingness to use a military option if necessary may have moderated Malaysia's actions, so too has the FPDA. In particular, since its inception it has facilitated communication between the two militaries, despite periods of cool political relations.

Over time, the relevance of the FPDA and its utility to the membership has come under closer scrutiny. Impetus for this included the end of the Cold War, changes in the regional strategic environment and greater political recognition of non-traditional security issues. While traditional security issues such as maritime territorial disputes remain an enduring feature of Southeast Asia's strategic environment, the rise of non-state actor-based threats such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or their component parts highlighted the narrow focus of the FPDA and its exercise scenarios.

Recognizing this, defence ministers agreed on the need to reorient the FPDA if it was to remain relevant in contributing to the security of the subregion. In 2003 the ministers agreed to exercises involving asymmetric and non-conventional threat scenarios and to the involvement of non-military agencies.⁶ As then Australian Defence Minister Robert Hill noted: 'The capacity to respond to non-conventional threats will make the FPDA more relevant to a security environment where threats include terrorism, breaches of exclusive economic zones, smuggling, piracy and illegal fishing'.⁷ The first FPDA exercise focusing on piracy and maritime terrorism took place in the South China Sea in October 2004, with a second in September 2005. Building on these exercises, in September 2006 Singapore hosted exercise *Bersama Padu* (meaning 'together united' in Malay) involving 21 ships, 85 aircraft, one submarine, diving teams, defence ground support personnel, Singapore's Maritime and Port Authority, Police Coast Guard, immigration authority and customs service.⁸ Venturing further into the non-traditional security realm, the 2006 meeting of FPDA defence ministers agreed to explore cooperation on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.⁹ Within this context, Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Najib Tun Razak proposed the establishment of a regional humanitarian relief coordinating centre—an idea supported by the other members.

The FPDA has undergone an evolutionary shift to now encompass both traditional and non-traditional threats. In that sense, it usefully demonstrates Dupont's notion of coexistence of the two security agendas.¹⁰ The by-product is an FPDA that is more in tune with the diverse range of contemporary regional security threats, catalyzing a reaffirmation by the membership's defence ministers of its relevance in the new millennium.

Framework-type arrangements

Complementary to the approach of adapting and broadening existing security mechanisms is another that can be categorized as framework arrangements. Under this approach, an umbrella agreement or other broad-based mechanism forms the basis for cooperation on traditional and non-traditional security issues. Both formal and informal framework-type arrangements have emerged, as illustrated below.

Formal instruments

Australia has engaged in new framework security arrangements that explicitly cover both traditional and non-traditional threats, and have a strong emphasis on capacity building and intelligence/information sharing. Two examples illustrate this. The first example is the security treaty between Australia and Indonesia—the so-called 'Lombok Agreement' signed on 13 November 2006 by the respective foreign ministers.¹¹ The treaty's provisions cover nine areas and forms of cooperation. Two aspects are striking. The first is its strong emphasis on non-traditional security issues. Of the nine areas of cooperation identified, only one focuses on traditional defence cooperation. The second is the structure of the instrument itself. Rather than being prescriptive, it is outcomes focused and establishes a broad-based agenda for action. In the words of Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, 'existing and future MOUs on such issues as counter-terrorism, defence cooperation and police cooperation will operate within the overarching framework of the treaty-level agreement and be guided by the principles enunciated within'.¹²

The second example is a status of forces agreement between Australia and the Philippines on which discussions commenced in 2002. Following its expected ratification in 2007, the agreement will allow joint military exercises to be conducted in the Philippines similar to the arrangement Washington has with Manila. It will also enable joint sea patrols, transfer of surveillance technology, long-range reconnaissance training and the supply of small watercraft to help the Philippines military patrol rivers and marshlands in Mindanao in the fight against terrorism.¹³

Memoranda of Understanding

Canberra has concluded both regional and bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) arrangements, especially in the area of counter-terrorism cooperation. Regionally, the focus centres on the ASEAN–Australia Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism signed in July 2004. Among its provisions are enhanced cooperation and liaison among the parties' law enforcement and security agencies in order to bolster counterterrorism regimes, improved intelligence and information sharing, strengthened capacity-building efforts through training and education, and assistance on border and transport security measures.

By 2006 Australia had signed 12 separate bilateral MOUs on counter-terrorism cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries.¹⁴ In Southeast Asia, they include Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. Building on the MOU with the Philippines, and following discussion between the defence ministers, in July 2005 military, police and intelligence officials of the two countries met to consider how they could best cooperate in the maritime and law enforcement domains and to conduct information

exchanges. Concern about possible attacks in the southern Philippines against ships carrying Australian exports to Northeast Asia, including liquefied natural gas tankers, may have prompted this closer cooperation.¹⁵

Some government agencies have concluded MOUs in their own right with regional counterparts. The Australian Federal Police (AFP), for instance, has concluded MOUs with Indonesia (2002), Thailand (2003), the Philippines (2003) and Vietnam (2006). They provide for cooperation and information sharing between law enforcement agencies on terrorism, piracy, people smuggling and trafficking, drug and arms trafficking and economic crime such as money laundering and identity fraud. The in-country placement of AFP liaison officers augments these arrangements.

The Proliferation Security Initiative

Launched in 2003, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) can be characterized as a 'community of like-minded', with a shared goal of preventing the spread by air, sea or land of WMD, their delivery systems and component materials between states or non-state actors of proliferation concern. More than 75 countries currently support the PSI but only some have openly declared so and there remain doubts about the commitment of others.¹⁶

Australia's support of PSI has been unwavering and openly declared since the initiative's inception. In the words of Foreign Minister Downer, 'Australia is proud to be a key driver of the PSI, a practical and informal arrangement among countries to cooperate with each other, as necessary' on interdicting illicit WMD trade.¹⁷ Giving effect to this, Australia hosted and chaired the second PSI plenary meeting in Brisbane in July 2003 and a further meeting of legal and operational experts in Sydney in December 2004. Australia has hosted two multilateral PSI exercises: *Pacific Protector* in the Coral Sea in September 2003 and *Pacific Protector 06* in Darwin in April 2006. It also participated in the two PSI exercises held in Asia to date: *Team Samurai* hosted by Japan in 2004 and *Deep Sabre* in Singapore in 2005.

In justifying the Australian government's strong support of the PSI, Downer argued that:

There has to be room in our non-proliferation agenda for a greater variety of measures and fresh thinking. For this reason, Australia, while continuing to support and engage in non-proliferation forums, has wholeheartedly joined the Proliferation Security Initiative. ... In a time of high demand and limited resources, a results-oriented approach is what is needed.¹⁸

Reinforcing this viewpoint, he noted separately: 'Gone are the days when Canberra Commission-style talk-fests are an acceptable or effective counter-proliferation outcome. This Government is about taking the next steps—

practical actions that make a difference.¹⁹ It is difficult, however, to assess how much of a difference PSI actions have made. The exercises have been conducted under controlled scenario scripts that do not include surprises to test flexibility and lateral thinking in command, communication and field operations. And while senior US officials claim 11 successful intercepts have been made since the PSI was launched, the details are vague.²⁰ This hampers independent evaluation of the claim.

Capacity development

Capacity development by Australia with regional countries has taken several forms, focused on niche areas and with a strong counterterrorism focus. At a country level, Australia has launched a four-year, A\$10 million program with Indonesia to enhance law enforcement capabilities, establish a financial intelligence unit and tighten travel security screening. The Philippines has received a three-year, A\$5 million package focused on strengthening law enforcement capabilities and border and port security. On a military level, the Australian Special Air Service (SAS) reportedly provided training, logistical and operational support to the armed forces of the Philippines in the southern Philippines as part of efforts to track and neutralize terrorists in the area, as well as participating in hostage recovery exercises.²¹ In a similar vein, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) undertook counterhijack and hostage recovery training with specialist units of the Indonesian military and an exercise with Singapore on handling chemical, biological and radioactive threats.²²

Strengthening counterterrorism capability has also underlain the placement of AFP advisors in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. In the wake of the February 2004 *Superferry 14* bombing in Manila Bay, the AFP's offer of technical, forensic and investigative assistance was quickly accepted by the Philippines National Police.²³ Other AFP initiatives in the Philippines include implementing a A\$3.7 million joint project with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) to enhance the capabilities of local law enforcement agencies in counterterrorism intelligence and investigation, bomb investigation techniques, forensic analysis and establishing a computer-based case management and intelligence system.²⁴

Australia is also helping Burma in addressing non-traditional security threats. Over the next five years A\$15 million will be channelled through the development assistance program to support prevention, treatment and care activities as part of a six-nation initiative to help fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in Burma. It currently has the second highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in Asia, while tuberculosis and malaria are the leading causes of illness.²⁵ In the counterterrorism area several initiatives have been launched with Burma within the framework of programs offered to officials of ASEAN member states. The Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs has provided training to Burmese

officials on immigration intelligence while the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), the Federal government's cash transactions reporting centre, has helped strengthen Burma's capability in tracking suspected terrorist financing. The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) has helped in monitoring radioactivity and detecting the illegal use of nuclear material. Burmese officials have attended Australian-run courses on major investigation management, post-blast incident management and the international management of serious crime. They have also attended courses at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC), an initiative co-sponsored by Australia and Indonesia. These activities have helped build the contacts, knowledge and confidence among officials, all of which are useful for effective daily operations and critical for rapid action before or after a terrorist attack.

JCLEC represents a major Australian capacity-building initiative that provides research and educational and training programs in law enforcement, security and anti-corruption for officials from the region. Established in 2004, Canberra's commitment to the JCLEC includes funding of A\$36.8 million over five years, appointment of an Australian as director of studies and the provision of course leaders. Indonesia hosts the JCLEC and shares management responsibility for it. Counterterrorism training, including investigations management, criminal intelligence, forensics, financial investigations and communications, is a primary focus of JCLEC activities. Since its opening, more than 1,100 students from around the world have attended its courses.²⁶

Cooperation with regional countries on port security has exhibited strong progress. The Australian Office of Transport Security within the Department of Transport and Regional Services (OTS/DOTARS) has liaison offices in Jakarta and Manila. Working in conjunction with AusAID, OTS/DOTARS implemented a A\$3.5 million capacity-building project in the Philippines focused on strengthening compliance with the International Maritime Organization's International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code), building a national framework for port security and improving the security of local ports in the Sulu archipelago.²⁷ Australia has also supported capacity-building workshops in Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam to assist them in complying with the ISPS Code.²⁸ APEC's Secure Trade in the APEC Region initiative, launched in 2002, focuses on improving maritime, aviation and supply chain security, passenger information management systems, capacity building and project planning. Within this process, OTS/DOTARS has targeted cooperation against piracy and compliance with ISPS requirements as priority activities. Through new funding in the 2006–7 Australian Federal Budget, explosives and drugs trace detection technology will be installed in high risk ports in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.²⁹

Border control cooperation has taken several forms. In 2005 the Australian Customs Service worked with regional counterparts to improve

border controls around the Sulu and Sulawesi seas. Building on this experience, the 2006–7 Australian Federal Budget allocated in excess of A\$7 million over three years to help other countries strengthen their border controls. Particular emphasis is given to training in intelligence analysis, ship search, identification of chemical precursors (explosives and drugs) and commodities, passenger control and counterterrorism awareness.³⁰

Combating people smuggling and trafficking is a further element of border control. In the wake of just over 6,600 people arriving illegally by boat from Indonesia during 2000 and 2001, the Australian Foreign Minister and his Indonesian counterpart convened a regional ministerial conference on people smuggling, trafficking in persons and related transnational crime in Bali in February 2002. From this emerged the Bali Process, an ongoing effort involving 50 countries within and beyond the Asia-Pacific and multilateral institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, and Interpol. Its objectives include developing more effective information and intelligence sharing, improving cooperation among regional law enforcement agencies, strengthening cooperation on border and visa systems to detect illegal movements and placing greater emphasis on tackling the root causes of illegal migration. On the Australian side, the process is led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) through its ambassador for combating people smuggling and trafficking, coordinating inputs from the AFP, Customs, the Attorney General, and Immigration. Numerous capacity-building activities and workshops have been held throughout Asia, involving foreign affairs, justice, police and immigration ministries from the region. Strengthened cooperation between Australian and Indonesian police, immigration and foreign affairs agencies has been a notable development since the launch of the process.

More recently, Australia committed A\$21 million over five years to help judges and prosecutors in Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand receive training and access to specialist advice and reference materials to help combat people trafficking. In addition, the ASEAN Secretariat will receive assistance on people trafficking issues and access to relevant research.³¹ This builds on a 2003 commitment by the Australian government to provide more than A\$20 million over four years to strengthen anti-people trafficking measures.³²

Alliance reflections and Australia's Southeast Asian experience

As Bill Tow discusses in Chapter 2 of this volume, questions about the future relevance, shape and coverage of alliances have been the subject of considerable debate. In a thoughtful contribution to that discourse, Kurt Campbell argues that the key question is not whether alliances are dead, but how they are adapting to new demands and conditions.³³ In that context, Australia's experience in Southeast Asia offers a useful contribution about the structure and content of security arrangements in the new millennium.

Some scholars argue that while alliances will remain relevant, their nature and purpose will be different in the future. Campbell suggests that greater reliance will be placed on those *ad hoc* coalitions which can be assembled quickly and whose membership extends beyond traditional associates of the United States.³⁴ In his view, a typology of future US alliances is emerging, categorized as a new nuclear family, new friends and flings.³⁵ Strikingly, a common basis emphasized by Campbell in these structures is the new strategic environment engendered by the 'war on terror'.

That points to one of the evolutionary changes likely to characterize existing and future alliance arrangements: a mainstreaming of issues on the non-traditional security agenda. This contrasts markedly with the established focus of alliances on collective defence against traditional military threats. However, it is unlikely to simply be a case of 'in with the new security agenda, out with the old'; rather, both will have a place.

The Southeast Asian experience shows that adaptation of existing security arrangements is possible. The inclusion of non-traditional threats into the FPDA demonstrates how an existing security arrangement can evolve if the political will exists. Indeed, adaptation has re-energized the FPDA and its exercise regimes. Moreover, recent support by FPDA defence ministers to explore a role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief indicates further engagement with the non-traditional security agenda.

Adaptation is also apparent in the other approaches being utilized by Australia in the region. Among the frameworks in use to structure security cooperation are bilateral treaties, MOUs, community of 'like-minded' and capacity-building projects. Together they represent a 'toolbox' of instruments available for use as appropriate to particular circumstances and partners. They also highlight that a broad range of 'tools' exist from which policymakers can select, going well beyond the 'coalition of the willing' arrangements identified by Campbell.

Military alliances have traditionally been limited in their composition to the armed forces in the context of confronting external threats to a nation's security. Australia's experience in Southeast Asia shows that, in addressing non-traditional security threats, the contributing members to security arrangements extend well beyond the military to include law enforcement, transport, customs, quarantine, immigration and financial-transactions tracking agencies. In some instances the military's role has been minimal, while in others it has been one actor among many—and often not in the lead role.

A characteristic of alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the so-called 'San Francisco system' of bilateral alliances which the United States maintains in the Asia-Pacific is their longevity, with both arrangements established in the 1950s. This durability is unlikely to be replicated in the new approaches in which Australia is involved in Southeast Asia. The narrower focus of arrangements such as MOUs and capacity-building partnerships imbues them with a shorter lifespan. For

example, MOUs are usually time bound and activity—or program—specific. While provision exists for their renewal, if it is judged that the MOU has fulfilled its purpose, that the threat for which it was established has diminished or new strategic or budgetary priorities emerge, the arrangement can be restricted, suspended or terminated relatively quickly. Further, while terrorism and other non-traditional security issues are of high concern, they do not fall within the category of existential threats or invoke collective defence—important factors for prolonged support of an alliance by its members. This is not to say that the above arrangements will be terminated any time soon, but it is to say that it is difficult to envisage their lifespan challenging the 50-plus years accumulated so far by NATO, for example.

In considering alliances, Bruno Tetterts poses a fundamental question: What does it really mean to be an ally in today's dynamic world without a single definitive threat?³⁶ The case of preemption in self-defence presents an interesting example. On the one hand, in 2002, as part of prosecuting the 'war on terror', Prime Minister Howard argued a case for launching a pre-emptive attack against terrorist groups in the region to defend the country's national interest. As he put it:

It stands to reason that if you believed that somebody was going to launch an attack against your country, either of a conventional kind or of a terrorist kind, and you had a capacity to stop it and there was no alternative other than to use that capacity, then of course you would have to use it.³⁷

Predictably generating anger in Southeast Asia about breaching sovereignty, neither Howard nor his senior ministers retreated in the wake of the regional reaction. On the other hand, Australia has worked assiduously in cultivating support at the bilateral and regional levels for counterterrorism measures. In this, a shared threat requiring cooperative responses has been a key message in Australia's efforts to broaden and deepen support among ASEAN members.

For Canberra, then, while different means contribute to the same end—that is, to secure Australia, its citizens and Australian interests—difficult decisions arise in balancing national and regional security agendas. In that context, Tetterts' question is particularly apposite. Complicating the calculus are differing perceptions and prioritization of security threats by Australia and its regional neighbours, all of which influence response strategies.

Mind the gap

Australia and Southeast Asia share common interests in a number of areas, as reflected in free trade agreements (concluded with Singapore and Thailand and under discussion with Malaysia and ASEAN) and bilateral security relationships.³⁸ Offsetting this positive element, however, is concern in

Southeast Asia arising from Australia's strong alignment with Western values, its close security alliance with the United States, including being perceived as the 'deputy sheriff' of the United States, and a more proactive military strategy.³⁹ The risk, in David Bolton's view, is that 'the substantial divide between Australian and Southeast Asian interests and values will continue to inhibit Australia's capacity to build cooperative security relations in the region.'⁴⁰

Differences in the perception and prioritization of security threats are a manifestation of this. For Australia, 'defeating the threat of terrorism, countering the proliferation of WMD and supporting regional states in difficultly remain of the highest priority'.⁴¹ They have underlain increases in budget allocations, personnel recruitment and outreach programs to Southeast Asian countries. As an example, in the 2006–7 Australian Federal Budget the AFP received an extra A\$25 million over four years to fund new training programs and increase the number of counterterrorism advisors working in its network of liaison offices in Asia.⁴²

For many ASEAN countries, however, the above threats are not the highest priority. One Indonesian analyst remarks that:

Indonesia is an easy target for criminals or transnational crimes [sic] organization. Their activities include illicit drugs, small-arms, and people trafficking, piracy, documents fraud, as well as money laundering. . . . transnational crime is one of the most serious challenges to our national security, and must be put at the top of our priority list [emphasis added].⁴³

In the maritime domain, there are obvious divergences in threat perceptions. Australia's maritime security agenda gives strong emphasis to the PSI and the threat of piracy and maritime terrorism. By contrast, Indonesia gives highest ranking to threats to its sovereignty, followed by arms smuggling.⁴⁴ It has hesitated at becoming a member of the PSI despite pressure from the United States: as Valencia succinctly puts it, 'WMD are simply not Malaysia's or Indonesia's chief concern'.⁴⁵ Like Indonesia, Malaysia's highest maritime security priority is threats to its sovereignty; this is followed by illegal migration, the environmental and fisheries impacts of oil spills, and threats to its fishermen, especially from Indonesian pirates.⁴⁶ Maritime terrorism, piracy against foreign ships, and arms smuggling all rank as lower priorities.⁴⁷

Differences in threat perception and of collective identity within ASEAN's membership mean that outside powers such as the United States have had mixed influence on the security policy settings of individual countries. This ranges from enthusiastic support of US aid to wariness of the domestic political and sovereignty implications of aligning too closely with Washington. The same could be said in relation to Australia. Countries like Singapore and the Philippines have been supportive of Australia's

contributions to regional counterterrorism efforts. Indonesia's reaction has been mixed. In some cases it has been in concert with Canberra, as in the establishment of the JCLEC and the Bali Process. At other times it has hesitated, to Canberra's disappointment. This includes the delayed enactment of antiterrorism legislation and not proscribing *Jemaah Islamiyah* as a terrorist organization.

ASEAN's intramural differences are also a factor. In the case of maritime terrorism, for example, Singapore has tended to link it with piracy to stimulate a heightened sense of threat requiring urgent countermeasures to be developed.⁴⁸ On the other hand, Malaysia and Indonesia have sought to decouple the two issues and take a low profile, nuanced stance, influenced in part by domestic politics and a suspicion of Western intentions.⁴⁹ This difference is also apparent in addressing the terrorism threat more broadly, with Singapore being more proactive and direct in introducing countermeasures.

In narrowing the gap between perceptions and priorities, greater acknowledgment needs to be given to the fact that Asian countries view security in broad terms, extending beyond the military dimension to include political, economic and socio-cultural elements.⁵⁰ This wider perspective underlies a wariness of single 'magic bullet' solutions, particularly in the context of the 'war on terror'. A comprehensive approach to non-traditional security issues is required if coherent and durable response strategies are to be developed. Acting on this is the shared challenge for political and policy elites in Australia and Southeast Asia.

Notes

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12 Australia's changing alliances and alignments

Towards a new diplomatic two-step?

Pauline Kerr and Shannon Tow

Australia's security has long been intertwined with developments in the Asia-Pacific region. At differing points in time, Australian perceptions of the region have varied between that of threat and that of opportunity. Yet the enduring centrality of the region to Australia's security has induced it to become an adroit performer of a two-step dance—with its traditional security ally on the one hand, and its regional partners on the other. With the onset of the Cold War, Australia's sense of vulnerability was such that it turned towards the United States as its key security partner, despite its ongoing socio-cultural identification with Great Britain. Australia vigorously pursued and obtained a formal security alliance with the United States in 1951. During the Cold War and post-Cold War periods, Australia continued to strengthen this alliance and, simultaneously, to engage with different regional countries across a range of security and economic issues. Today, Australia realizes that its security and its economic wellbeing depends as much on China's behaviour as it does on the United States. Australia is bilaterally engaging with both countries with an intensity that is unprecedented.

Yet Australia's two-step dance, with its traditional security ally on the one hand and regional partners on the other, presumes that Canberra will be able to retain a significant degree of agency in managing these relationships. Recent developments, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) however, suggest that there are strong trends of regional integration that could potentially dislocate Australia from this driving position. This prompts the question of whether Australia's past behaviour is therefore necessarily a reliable guide to the future. Will Canberra be able to maintain this two-step dance and, if so, in what form? This chapter seeks to address these questions by examining contemporary regional trends that are affecting Australia's perceptions of its security, by examining how Australia has thus far responded, and with what effect for its relationship with the United States.

This chapter argues that an important trend in the region is what can be understood as the 'politics of leadership' among the major powers: the United States, China, Japan and India. This is being driven by China's rise, Japan's efforts to retain a regional balance of power, and US efforts to

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Foreword

Coral Bell

The twenty-first century seems likely to be 'Asia's century'. After 500 years of relative eclipse, in which even the greatest powers of Asia, China and India, as well as the middle and minor ones, were objects (sometimes prizes) rather than players in their own hands in the game of nations, they are now reaching their full potential—strategically, diplomatically and economically. That change will transform the society of states.

Indian scholars have called the five centuries from 1492 until the late twentieth century the 'Vasco da Gama era', that notable navigator's name standing for all the factors which allowed Western ascendancy to be established over an Asian world that was, in many ways, more advanced than the West itself at the time. Certainly it was much larger in both territory and population, and at least as skilled in most arts and sciences.

As late as 1820, according to the economic historians, China and India were the largest economies in the world. In a few decades, they may be so again. So what we are seeing in the present redistribution of power in the world is, in some respects, a return to the past. Yet its affects are much more radical and widespread than most people have realized. Almost everyone has probably noticed by now the rise and rise of China and India, but those two vast sovereignties are only the most spectacular instances of the process of transformation.

According to the demographers, by the middle of the twenty-first century 19 of the world's societies will collectively have more than 100 million people. Eight of them will be Asian (headed by India and China with almost three billion people between them)—comprising a third of the then world total. The other six (Japan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Vietnam) will between them have more than 1,000 million. So Australia will have more than four billion Asian neighbours, at various stages of economic growth and with various kinds of political structure. Most of them (except Japan) will be aiming at high rates of economic growth, to lift their respective peoples out of the dire poverty in which the majority of them still live.

Population numbers in themselves have not in the past been much indication of economic strength, diplomatic clout or military capacity. But that

was then, and this is now, since the countries in what we used to call the Third World have acquired (in just the last 30 years or so) better technological skills and stronger nationalist consensus, along with an understanding of how to achieve rapid economic growth. Nineteen very large, mostly fast-growing economies, with a need for commodities which are in some cases (crucially perhaps oil) going to be in dwindling supply, offer formidable prospects of competition, and potentially friction. So the world will need careful, prudent and resourceful diplomacy if the worst dangers are to be averted.

The society of states has never been a democracy. It has, for the most part, been an oligarchy—the rule of the few by the great powers of the time. The most vital point to note about the group of great and near-great powers who seem to be emerging at the moment is how much wider and more *diverse* they are than their predecessors of the past. Aside from the eight Asian powers mentioned, there are four African states (Nigeria, Congo, Ethiopia and Uganda) in the '100 million plus' club, two Latin American (Brazil and Mexico) and two Middle Eastern (Iran and Turkey). There is only one Western society—the United States. No individual state within the European Union makes it to the 100 million mark, though the group as a whole (depending on how the 'widening' process goes) may reach a population of 600 million, or more if Russia is eventually recruited. The scarcity of Westerners is not a temporary disparity: according to the demographers, they will shrink to 12 per cent of the world's people.

Australia was of course settled in a time when Western ascendancy was at its peak, and was so much taken for granted that it was unconsciously assumed to be natural and eternal. Our 'great and powerful friends', as defined by R. G. Menzies when he was prime minister, were Britain from the time of settlement until December 1941, and the United States thereafter. But Australia must make its future (economically, diplomatically and strategically) in a world where influence is far more widely distributed—a world of six great powers (the United States, the European Union, China, India, Japan and Russia) and several others (Indonesia and Pakistan in particular), whose choices will be vital to the peace of Asia and therefore also to the future of Australia.

I have no doubt that we have the capacity to live securely and prosperously in that new landscape of the society of states. Australia has no sworn enemies, and several natural or well-cultivated friends. The authors represented in this book are all experts in their particular fields, and their analyses offer very useful guidance in this time of transition.