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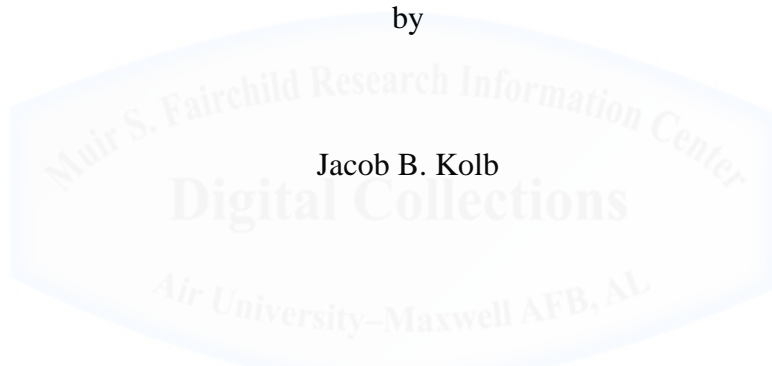
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U. S. SECURITY STRATEGY IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC: PARTNERING
WITH ASEAN TO MAINTAIN STABILITY WITHIN THE REGION

by

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A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

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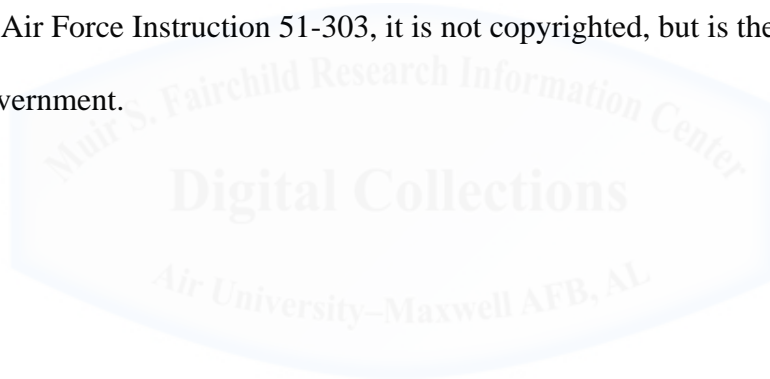


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Abstract

Throughout history, the United States has shifted its national security policy and developed new agendas for its defense forces based on the current state of affairs. In recent years, the United States (U.S.) has identified a change in circumstances and shifted its strategic focus from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region. The region has a rich history of diversity with a variety of different cultures, thus, presents a dynamic security environment in which the U.S. must develop tailored security strategies. The region has seen exponential growth in its population and has prospered economically in the last few decades. The U.S. has developed key partnerships and alliances in the region and has an obligation to assist its partners in ensuring that any threats to the social and environmental stability are managed in accordance with the rules of law. The U.S. relies on the region for trade of goods and has partnered with allies and other entities to maintain the regional stability. Asia-Pacific nations have faced many challenges that have resulted from such changes. Increased resource demands, violent extremism, and territorial disputes are examples of issues that are present in the region. China also poses unique challenges with its hegemonic actions and expansion of its sphere of influence in the region. The U.S. has taken steps to assess the state of the region, however, more strategies are needed to guide military leaders and policy makers. A stable security environment is the objective and partnering with international entities to collaborate and form cooperative strategic alliances can align the security objectives of the U.S. with its Asia-Pacific partners. This paper seeks to answer the question of whether a U.S. strategy toward partnering with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) can serve as a mechanism to strengthen U.S. partnerships in the region while sustaining stability and maintaining the economic growth of the region.

INTRODUCTION

Overview of the Study

The U.S. is in the midst of a paradigm shift in its military objectives. The significant withdrawal of defense forces from the Middle-East is evidence that the U.S. is shifting its strategic military focus. While current Overseas Contingency Operations and Global War on Terror activities continue to demand much of the U.S. military attention, there are complex challenges and uncertainties developing in another region of the globe; the Asia-Pacific region. Even though the U.S. has historically had a presence in the Asia-Pacific region, there is an enduring requirement for the regional strategy to be refined and further developed to stay concurrent with the ever-changing circumstances in the region.

Until recently, the U.S. military strategy in the Asia-Pacific has been based on post-WWII alliances and remnants of Cold War initiatives.¹ Some of these alliances have further developed, while others have dissolved over time. The military partnerships that continue to mature between the U.S. and Asia-Pacific Nations have the potential to significantly influence the economic and political climate between the U.S. and these countries. It's imperative that current strategy is refined to include, further development of key relationships with the Asia-Pacific nations themselves, as well as the governmental organizations (GOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international governmental organizations (IGOs) that are essential for the U.S. to achieve a unity of effort.

An example of one of these organizations, and the focus of this research, is the ASEAN. ASEAN is a ten-nation organization that was established to form a cooperative alliance between South-Eastern Asian nations with common interests. It is an important entity for the U.S. to understand the interests, equities and challenges between the key stakeholders in the region.²

The research presented herein will provide background information on the Asia-Pacific region, ASEAN and the potential influence this organization could have in the formulation of U.S. Security Strategy in the region. The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most militarized regions in the world with significant cultural diversity that is deep rooted in history. The prosperity of the region has increased and has caused some nations to rethink their strategies and how they will sustain themselves into the future. Multi-lateral cooperation with ASEAN and its associated entities can serve as a catalyst for U.S. by maintaining stability in the region and furthering economic and social prosperity.

The Nature of the Problem

The United States has for many years been involved in conflicts with both state and non-state actors across the globe. U.S. operations like those in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria have caused our military to adapt new strategies to remain vigilant and prepared to meet a variety of emerging and unpredictable challenges. In February of 2015, the White House released the 2015 National Security Strategy (NSS), in which President Obama outlined an agenda that points to the steadfast requirement for strategic patience and persistence. President Obama also pointed to the need for U.S. leadership and an obligation toward international order. U.S. military objectives are moving beyond the large ground wars in the Middle-East that have guided military strategy over the past decade.³ The U.S. is becoming increasingly reliant on international partnerships and in order to sustain its interests abroad, the U.S. has renewed its interests in the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region is a critical shift from the previous NSS. The renewed focus on the Asia-Pacific has begun to uncover gaps in regional security strategies. One such gap is the lack of policy for the security of the Southeast Asia region.

The renewed focus in the Asia-Pacific will complement the dominant U.S. military presence which has existed in the Asia-Pacific since the end of WWII. The U.S. regional security system is currently comprised of bilateral alliances with Australia, Japan and South Korea. The region has experienced unprecedented economic growth and prosperity due to advances in technology which allow the transportation and flow of modern goods and services to spread throughout. As with most significant increases in prosperity, it has come with complex challenges. One of the more predominate challenges is dealing with the rise of China. as an economic superpower. The effects of China's ascension on the political, social, and environmental climate of the region will be substantial. As China continues to expand, it is likely that it will increase pressure on nations with smaller militaries such as Vietnam or Indonesia to strengthen its position in the region. This could diminish U.S. relationships with regional allies and threaten economic stability on a global scale.

We have an opportunity-and obligation-to lead the way in reinforcing, shaping, and where appropriate, creating the rules, norms, and institutions that are the foundation for peace, security, prosperity, and the protection of human rights in the 21st century. The modern-day international system currently relies heavily on an international legal architecture, economic and political institutions, as well as alliances and partnerships...⁴

The U.S. is in a position to exert its influence in the region and minimize confrontation among surrounding nations. By leveraging existing relationships with countries like Japan and Australia, as well as strengthening other partnerships through security cooperation efforts, the U.S. can remain effective at deterring future conflicts. Ensuring the international system is stable and in line with our national security strategy has long been a top priority, and the Asia-Pacific region is no exception. The international security environment is rife with complexities, and the U.S. cannot sustain its security without assistance from its allies and the cooperative partnerships with GOs, NGOs and IGOs. ASEAN members like Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia

and Brunei have all bolstered themselves as military partners of the U.S. with security cooperation agreements for the purpose of interoperability and regional security. The U.S. currently lacks a well-documented Southeastern-Asia specific strategy. If the U.S. is to assist in the continuance of economic and social prosperity, such strategies need to be developed further.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the complexities of the Asia-Pacific region with special emphasis on Southeast Asia, and to highlight the importance of the U.S. partnership with ASEAN. From this research, analysis and conclusions may be used to develop and refine future strategies in the Asia-Pacific region. This will assist in follow-on developments of an integrated and interoperable environment, one which is free from transgressions between neighboring nations. The pursuit of a stable security environment in the Asia-Pacific region, to promote economic prosperity and strengthen international partnerships, is not only directly in line with the current U.S. National Security Strategy, but it's also key for the advancement and prosperous future of the world.

Research Question

The intent of this research is to determine the answer to the following question: Will a U.S. strategy toward partnering with ASEAN serve as a linchpin in the U.S. military rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region and strengthen the economic and political relations in the region? While the U.S. has prioritized its rebalance to the region with the hope of strengthening trade and investment opportunities,⁵ so too have other Asia-Pacific nations by continuing the development of trade agreements and partnerships with others in the region. Organizations like ASEAN may continue to impact relations with the U.S. and the integration of regional economies.

Research Methodology and Structure

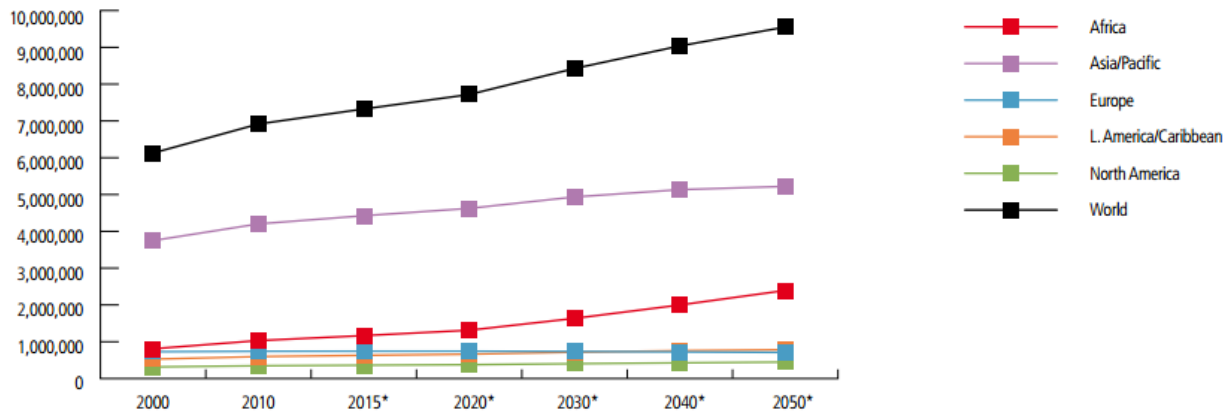
The problem/solution methodology is used for this research paper. The objective is to assist strategic planners in understanding the benefits of U.S. alignment with ASEAN and provide suggestions regarding how to develop future U.S. strategy. Through the analysis of current studies on U.S. Asia-Pacific strategies as well as the partnerships with GOs and NGOs within the region, further insight to the significance of the problem is revealed. An overview of the state of affairs in the Asia-Pacific region as well as current regional strategy provides a starting point for assessing the U.S. security implications. A concise overview of the ASEAN organization and the linkages to other U.S. allies in the region follows. Analysis ultimately concludes a gap exists in current U.S. strategy, evidence that further research is necessary and of the need to develop a regional strategy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The State of the Asia-Pacific

Population

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most populated regions in the world. It accounts for over 60% of the world's total population and will continue to increase in the future. Figure 1, taken from the World Population Prospects - 2014 revision, provides a comparison to other considerably populated regions of the world.⁶ Because the majority of the population resides in China and India, the economic and social impacts of such a significant population are astounding, resulting in a magnification of challenges.

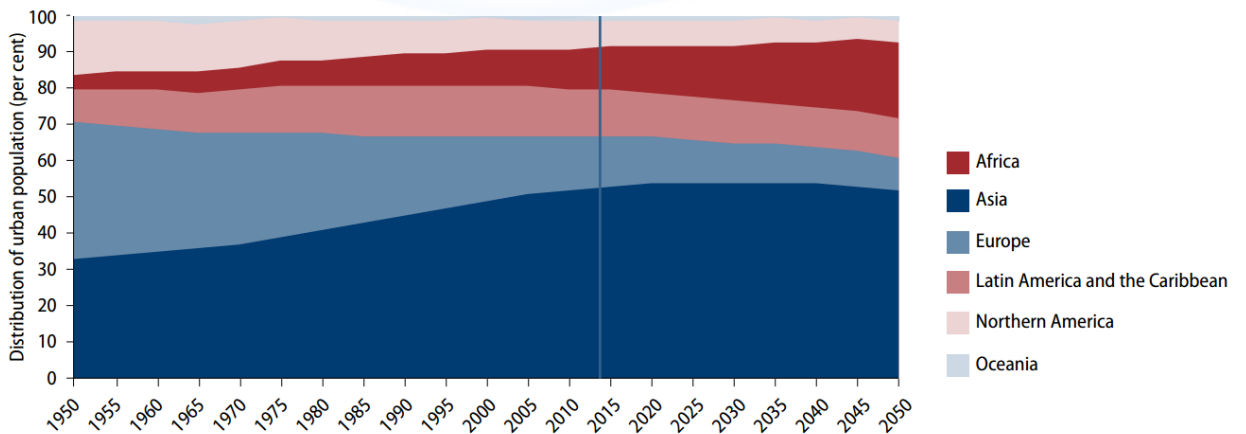


*Projection
 Source: World Urbanizations Prospects: The 2014 Revision.

Figure 1. Absolute Total Population Numbers, by region, 2000-2015 (thousands).

The economic impact is further illustrated by the trends of urbanization around the globe (See figure 2). “In 2007, for the first time in history, the global urban population exceeded the global rural population.”⁷

Asia will continue to host nearly one half of the world’s urban population



Source: World Urbanizations Prospects: The 2014 Revision.

Figure 2. Global Urban Population Trends.

Given this urbanization data, inferences can be made that there are larger concentrations of economic activity in these urbanized areas resulting in significant societal implications. The social stratifications are undergoing a transformation. This introduces a great deal of change in the way of life for some nations, creating a variability in the social order that demands attention in order to sustain some level of equality amongst the different nations. For these growing populations to maintain sustainable growth, cooperation amongst nations is essential to reduce both economic and societal disparities in the region.

Economy

The Southeast Asia region has some of the fastest growing nations we have seen over the last decade. For instance, the Philippines recently experienced impressive growth in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). GDP rose 6% from 2011 to 2016 with a reported 6.4% GDP in 2016, which is the 16th highest growth rate in the world.⁸ Likewise, Vietnam and Laos reported GDPs of 6.1% and 7.5% respectively.⁹ China with its much larger population reported 6.6% in GDP.¹⁰ Though the data indicates that there is considerable growth in the region, whether or not these fast-paced economies can continue this upward trend is unknown. Where steady economic prosperity is good for a nation, rapid growth can result in economic volatility that can be detrimental to a nation's vitality both within and outside of its borders.

Violent Extremism

While the Asia-Pacific region manages its challenges with population growth and its strengthening influence on the global economy, the region is simultaneously being confronted with other challenges, such as violent religious and cultural extremism. For instance, extremism from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is prevalent in the Southeast Asian region and Southeast Asian countries actively participate in regional, international, and multilateral

efforts on counter terrorism to combat ISIL.¹¹ Organizations like the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) also have been instrumental in combatting ISIL, but there is growing concern that ISIL activity in Southeast Asia is increasing.

Key U.S. partners in the region are investing extensive resources toward the effort of countering ISIL in the Asia-Pacific region as well as other parts of the globe. For example, in 2015, Australia sent 300 military personnel to contribute to the international Building Partner Capacity mission in Iraq which aims to eradicate ISIL.¹² “Australia is a regional leader in the fight against terrorism, and worked to strengthen the Asia-Pacific region’s counterterrorism capacity through a range of bilateral and regional initiatives in organizations such as ASEAN, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Pacific Island Forum.”¹³ Indonesia also experienced significant impacts from ISIL. Indonesia is a hotbed for ISIL recruiting and as of December 2015, it is estimated there are around 800 Indonesian terrorist fighters in Iraq and Syria.¹⁴ Often these fighters return to their country of origin undetected and pose an internal threat as well as influence surrounding nations’ security. “Several other countries, including Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Malaysia, are traditional focal points for extremism recruiting, fundraising, movement and other facilitation efforts.”¹⁵ ISIL is just one example of an extremist group that threatens the stability in the region. There are also smaller groups like the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah in the southern Philippines that attempt to disrupt political and social systems.¹⁶ Smaller nations, such as Myanmar, are also being faced with the challenges of violent extremism given the current ethnic and religious tensions.

Resource Constraints

The Asia-Pacific region has a rich and diverse bundle of resources. However, as China and a few of the Southeastern Asian nations continue to experience rapid economic growth, the demand for resources will increase and may cause tensions between neighboring countries. For example, oil consumption in Asia is responsible for 66% of the growth in global demand in the last 20 years.¹⁷ Figure 3 shows the magnitude of Asia's leadership in the region for having the highest level of: production, imports, exports and supply of crude oil.

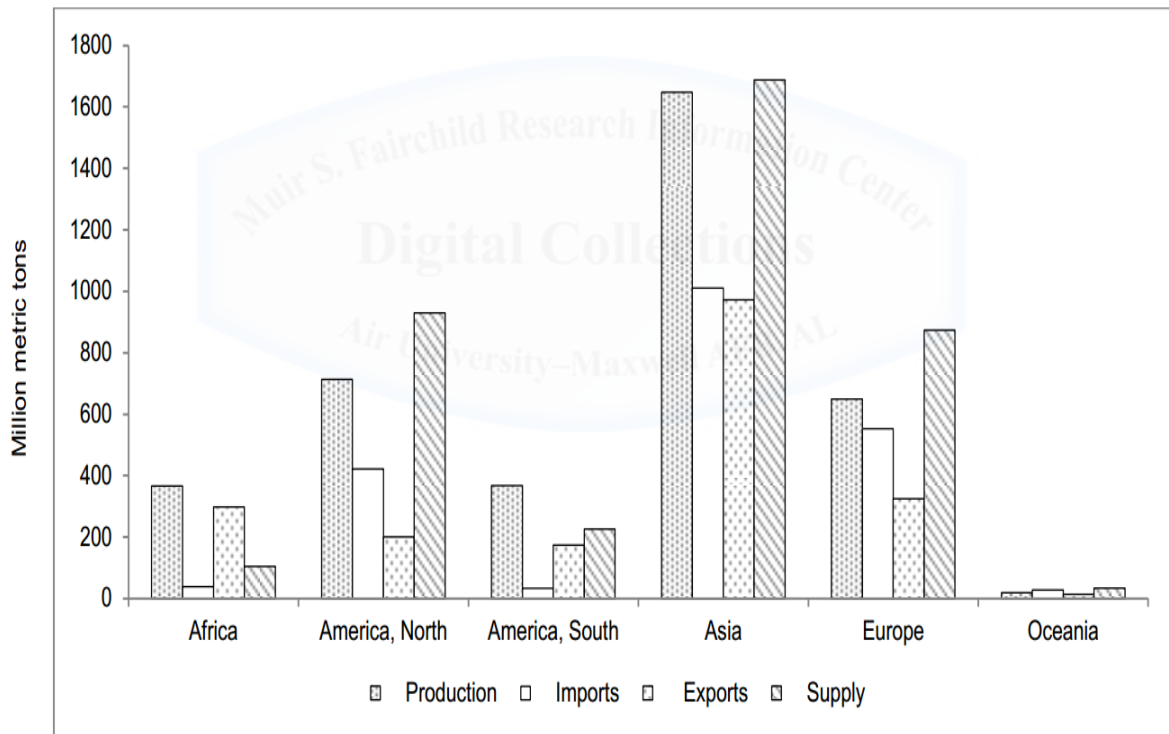


Figure 3. Production, Trade, and Supply of Conventional Crude Oil, 2014.¹⁸

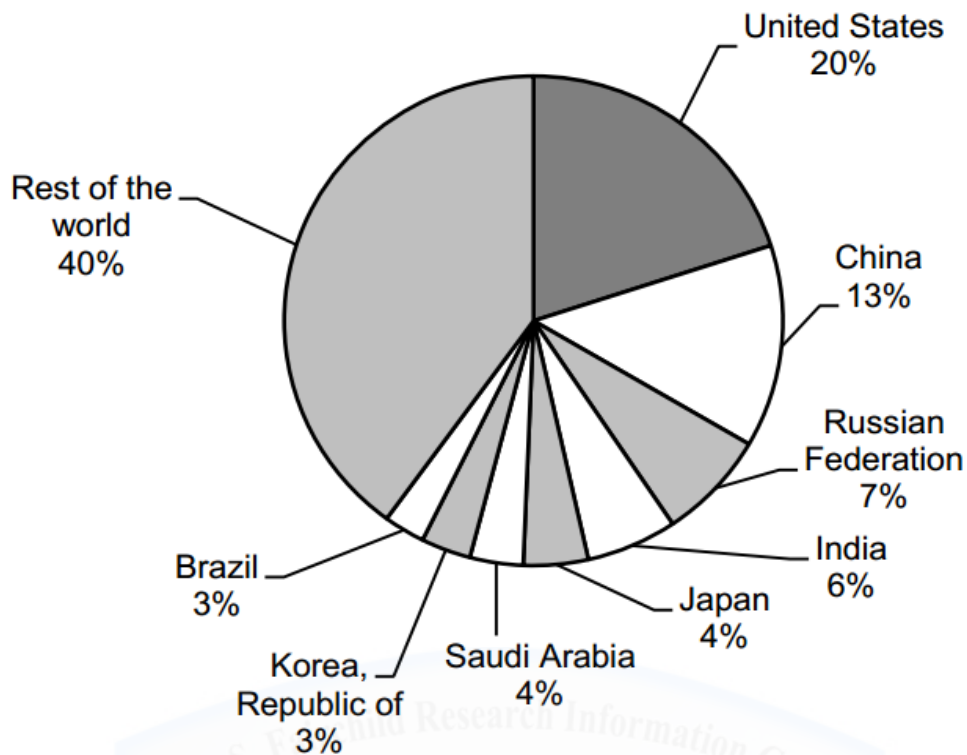


Figure 4. Major Crude Oil Consuming Countries, 2014.¹⁹

In a breakout of the major crude oil consuming countries, it can be seen that the two sections representing Asia-Pacific nations, make up roughly 20%, which is equal to U.S. consumption (Figure 4). As the availability of crude diminishes, competition for this resource may require Asia-Pacific nations to continue refining multilateral trade agreements and to establish energy consumption caps to sustain their economies and continue the industrialization of the region. Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a good example of a forum aimed at the development of cooperative economic growth within the region. APEC strives to increase energy efficiency and renewable energy options for the region. In 2011, members committed to reducing energy usage in the region by 45% by 2030.²⁰ Cooperative organizations like APEC help form the vast network of economic partnerships in the region.

Territorial Disputes

There are extensive territorial disputes across most of the Asia-Pacific region. These disputes will be covered in further detail in a later section. However, it's important to set the foundation by illustrating the complexities of determining maritime borders and the breadth of current issues regarding the broader Asia-Pacific region. Defining the maritime boundaries is not a simple task. The U.S., for instance, has determined through international treaties and customary laws how to establish a ruleset for boundary determination. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is responsible for depicting boundaries on its nautical charts which includes; the limits of the 12 nautical mile territorial sea, the 24 nautical mile contiguous zone, and the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (Figure 4).²¹

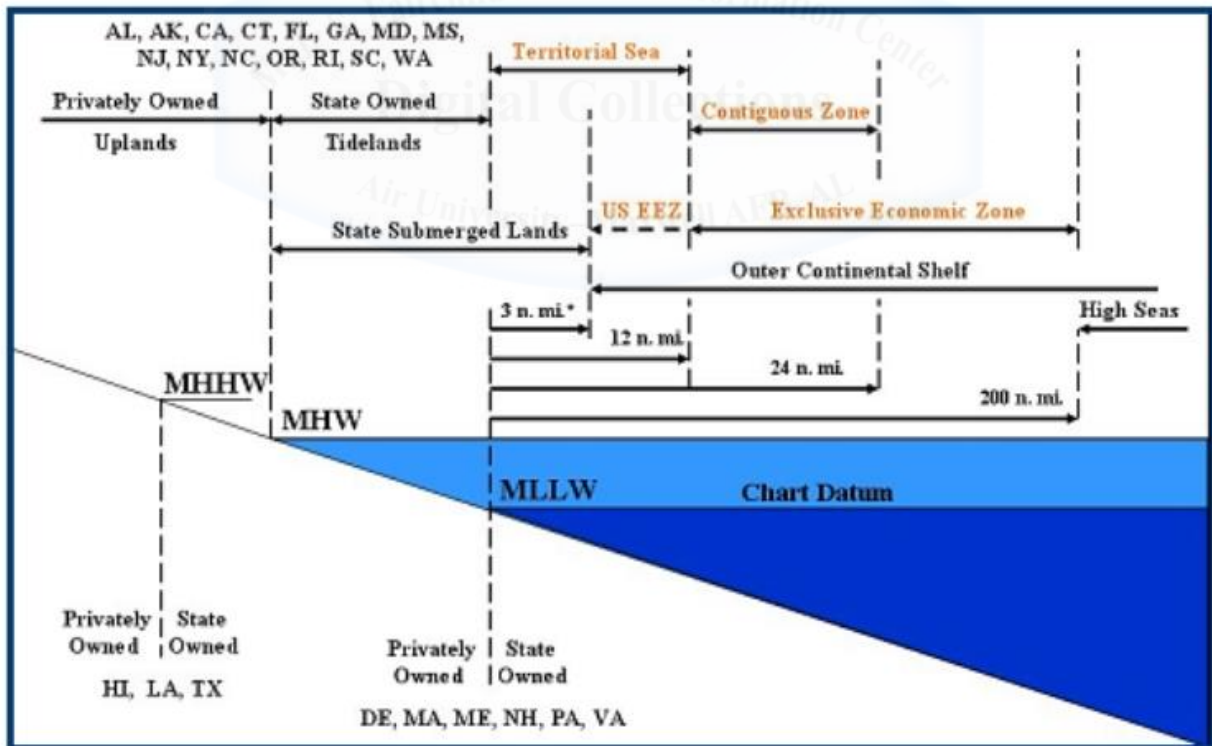


Figure 5. NOAA Nautical Charts.²²

The U.S. can establish these maritime zones partly due to its close relationship with Canada and Mexico and its relatively short history of sovereignty when compared to the Asia-Pacific region. On the other hand, in the East China Sea, the dispute over the Senkaku (Diaoyu/Diaoyutai) Islands between Japan and China, two nations with deep-rooted history, is evidence of the often-tumultuous challenges accompanying maritime claims between sovereign nations. The surrounding waters of the Islands are known to have rich fishing grounds and possibly significant natural gas fields. These resources fall within overlapping Chinese and Japanese exclusive economic zone (EEZ) claims (Figure 6). China, with its quest for hegemony, in many ways cannot afford to ignore the prospects of controlling such territories. In 2010, tensions flared when Japan purchased three of the Islands from a private owner, prompting China to send patrol ships to the Island region to express their displeasure with Japan's claims.



Figure 6. East China Sea Disputed Territory.²³

Territorial disputes also exist in the South China Sea, presenting challenges to the Southeast Asian nations. The Paracel Islands, Spratly Islands and Scarborough Reef are contested regions that China has occupied and laid claims to despite other nations asserting their rights. Although the Southeast Asian nations vary in their opinion of China's rise in economic and world power, there is little disagreement that the stability of the region is uncertain. The dynamics of the South China Sea presents the U.S. with an opportunity to rejuvenate U.S. influence in the region.

Russia and China

*"China's sheer vastness is arguably both its greatest strength and greatest weakness."*²⁴

The two largest nations in Asia are Russia and China. China will be discussed in further detail in a later section but it's important to note that China's ambitions will have a formidable influence on the future state of the Asia-Pacific region. The 2015 U.S. National Military Strategy (NMS) states that the U.S. encourages China to become a partner for greater international security.²⁵ China's actions are adding tensions in the region and the international community is calling out to China to settle issues cooperatively and without coercion.²⁶ The Russian influence on U.S. strategy within the region will be heavily dependent on positive relations with their neighbor China.

Russia has been struggling to assert itself on the global marketplace since the Cold War. Although, recent reports show that the Russian economy may be on an upswing after experiencing a 2016 GDP increase of 2.9% from the 2015 figure of -3.7%. Russia is seeking to reassert themselves as a world power. Aligning themselves with China would potentially allow for an increase in foreign investment thereby raising the stakes in the Asia-Pacific economy. Russia has been cooperative and is trying to align itself with the Asia-Pacific region economies

in recent years, even though it has been a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation since 1998.

Like China, Russia has weapons of mass destruction, most notably nuclear weapons. Despite efforts over the past fifty years to reduce nuclear proliferation, nukes remain at the epicenter of military deterrence. The world's combined inventory of nuclear warheads is approximately 14,900, roughly 93% owned by Russia and the U.S. (Russia – 7,000, U.S. 6,800).²⁷ If Russia is successful at expanding its sphere of influence within the region and forms an alliance with China, the security environment may become highly volatile.

The U.S. Asia-Pacific Strategy

*The Department of Defense has three maritime objectives in the Asia-Pacific region: to safeguard the freedom of the seas; deter conflict and coercion; and promote adherence to international law and standards.*²⁸

As stated in the 2015 NMS, “America’s global network of allies and partners is a unique strength that provides the foundation for international security and stability.”²⁹ This foundation is the premise behind the U.S. ‘rebalance’ to the Asia-Pacific region and the aim of a strategic plan toward ASEAN. President Obama traveled to the Asia-Pacific region over twenty times during his presidency. This highlights the importance placed on developing U.S. partnerships in the region. As the U.S. strategy for the Asia-Pacific region continues to develop, what binds the policy together will be the network of partnerships and the regional order these can provide. The result of successfully forged relationships, refined political imperatives and economic prosperity will be equally shared by all parties. The adage of “a rising tide raises all ships”, fits this assertion and multi-partisan cooperation is crucial.

Two key documents that were researched to provide a concise overview of the current U.S. Asia-Pacific Strategy include: The Department of Defense Asia-Pacific Maritime Security

Strategy and the Asia-Pacific Rebalance 2025: Capabilities, Presence, and Partnerships. Both reports were generated because of concerns in Congress about aspects of the U.S. security strategy within the Asia-Pacific region. The 2012 and 2015 National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) requested further research be conducted to assess how Asia-Pacific region security could be accomplished. A summary of each report follows.

Maritime Security Strategy

At the forefront of a security strategy in the Asia-Pacific is the requirement to secure the oceans and seas. The Asia-Pacific region is primarily water so it is only appropriate that a maritime strategy establish the ground rules and objectives for the region. In accordance with the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2015, the Department of Defense, Asia-Pacific Maritime Security Strategy was written and established guidelines with a look to the future. The strategy focused on three main objectives: to safeguard the freedom of the seas; deter conflict and coercion; and promote adherence to international law and standards.³⁰ All three of these objectives require distinct strategies themselves and the interdependencies between them must be clear.

Before the maritime strategy can be fully understood, it is important to appreciate the large scale of the region. Figure 7 is a geographical representation of the vast area of responsibility bestowed on the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM). USPACOM, as the combatant command responsible for the Asia-Pacific region, is a significant force in the region. “The Asia-Pacific is a heavy militarized region of the world, with seven of the ten largest standing militaries and five of the world’s declared nuclear nations.”³¹ Couple this with the



Figure 7. USPACOM Area of Responsibility.³²

largest populated region of the world, as well as some of the largest economies, there is significant risk of security challenges. USPACOM with its four component commands, has the mission to preserve the security, stability, and freedom upon which enduring prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region depends.³³ With the unwavering complexities in the region, the role of the USPACOM forces is critical.

As discussed in the previous section, one of the challenges the Asia-Pacific region currently is faced with are the territorial disputes, such as those in the South China Sea. The

Maritime Strategy covers these challenges and provides further detail on the recent land reclamation activities of China in the Spratly Islands. To safeguard the freedom of the seas, the U.S. and its international partners must seek to understand the implications of the Chinese expansion of these islands. If China continues to develop these islands both from a commercial standpoint as well as increasing its military capability, it could impede shipments of goods transiting through the region. Such impediments to shipping lanes may create tensions between nations and could result in conflict. With China expanding its territory and its capability to project its defense forces, the ability of the U.S. and its partners to thwart China's efforts will be at risk if conflicts were to arise.

Conflicts may also result from one nation exerting too much influence over another inland. For instance, Myanmar's proximity to China and the Bay of Bengal makes the country an asset in the trading of goods. Myanmar is one of the least developed countries in the Asia-Pacific region and especially in Southeast Asia. However, it is a large exporter of natural gas and oil, both of which are in high demand. This can create complications with the governance of trade and lead to potential conflict. Furthermore, with Myanmar's lack of adequate governance regarding its extractive exports, the risk is high for corruption and potential environmental damages to the region. The U.S. is working together with its allies to assist in conflict resolution by promoting the collective "rules of the road" and attempting to establish multilateral measures can minimize the threat of conflict.

The U.S. presence in the Asia-Pacific region and the quest to maintain peace and stability is an enduring commitment. The U.S. is enhancing capabilities in the region to increase its projection of power at sea and on land. This, combined with the effective utilization of the

international legal mechanisms, and collaboration with the regional multi-lateral agencies, makes the ability to uphold the commitment possible.

Asia-Pacific Rebalance

When President Obama addressed the Australian Parliament in 2011, his primary objective was not to just reaffirm the relationship with a longstanding U.S. ally and to ensure its leaders that U.S. interests in the region are in line with those of Australia. President Obama was there to inform the nation, arguably the U.S.'s number one ally that the U.S. is "all in" when it comes to seeking a secure and prosperous Asia-Pacific.³⁴

The Asia-Pacific Rebalance 2025 review is a comprehensive assessment of the Asia-Pacific region and provides planners with a strategic baseline. The review proclaims that there are gaps in the implementation effort in the rebalance to the region and these gaps may be putting U.S. security interests at risk. The CSIS team identified four lines of effort "that build upon and go beyond current administration efforts to sustain and implement the defense component of the rebalance in a more competitive and challenging regional environment."³⁵ What follows is a list of these four lines of effort along with the recommendations for each. Each one of the recommendations represents opportunities for the U.S. to formulate strategy and develop solutions.

Asia-Pacific Rebalance Lines of Effort

1. Align Asia Strategy within the U.S. government and with allies and partners.
 - Prepare Asia-Pacific strategic report
 - Increase administration outreach to Congress
 - Better coordination of U.S. strategy with allies and partners
 - Ensuring alignment between strategy and resources

- Expand confidence building and crisis management with China
- 2. Strengthen ally and partner capability, capacity, resilience, and interoperability.
 - Pursue federated approaches with highly capable regional allies
 - Build maritime security capacity in Southeast Asia
 - Form a standing U.S. joint task force for maritime security
 - Encourage Japan to establish a joint operations command
 - Further deepen regional whole-of-government HA/DR expertise
- 3. Sustain and expand U.S. military presence in the Asia-Pacific.
 - Implement and resource key posture initiatives
 - Increase surface fleet presence
 - Improve undersea capacity
 - Deploy additional amphibious lift to enhance engagement and crisis response
 - Continue to diversify air operating locations
 - Bolster regional missile defenses
 - Advance and adapt the U.S. Army's Regionally Aligned Forces concept
 - Address logistical challenges
 - Stockpile critical precision munitions
 - Enhance intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance cooperation with allies in the region
- 4. Accelerate development of innovative capabilities and concepts for U.S. Forces.
 - Institutionalize a culture of experimentation
 - Encourage rapid platform evolution
 - Develop advanced long-range missiles

- Fund innovative missile defense concepts
- Field additional air combat systems
- Exploit the U.S. undersea advantage
- Augment space, cyber, and electronic warfare (EW) capabilities

Consistent with the previous assertions in this paper, CSIS contends that China has a significant impact on regional foreign policy given its recent increase in economic presence as well as an increase in its military capabilities. An example of such a military capability that is causing concern, is China's anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) capacity. The U.S. basing arrangements in the region are at risk of losing their effectiveness as China continues to evolve their electronic warfare and naval capabilities. The range of fighter aircraft is limited and as China continues to expand its envelope of defensive capabilities, the ability of the U.S. to reach potential targets deep inside of China is reduced.

If tensions were to rise in the region and necessitate U.S. military intervention, the potential for the problematic interactions between nations may cause significant stress on the region. "China has credible, even if fundamentally unproven, capabilities to disable or destroy U.S. carriers – with incalculable implications for U.S. prestige globally – making the efficacy of such an intervention much more questionable."³⁶ For these reasons, the criticality of the U.S. to align its security strategies in the region is apparent. Collaboration with the key stakeholders in the region, to include regional international organizations like ASEAN have significant impacts to not only economic and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, but to the military security of the region as well.

U.S. Asia-Pacific Partnerships

An area where the U.S. has done quite well in recent years is the strengthening of the partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region. As previously mentioned, the USPACOM region is vast and the U.S. will not succeed without the alliances that have evolved over many years. Some of these partnerships have been developed over the last hundred years and a few have emerged over the last few decades. One thing is for certain, the U.S. Asia-Pacific alliances are a vital part of the U.S. force strength and are instrumental for U.S. to achieve its objectives. From a military perspective, the distance from the U.S. is so great that overseas U.S. basing is required to project military power in the region, develop joint force capabilities, and serve as a force multiplier. Economically speaking, the utilization of trade routes, exportation and importation of goods, as well as the integration of economies because of globalization, has required the U.S. and its partners to remain vigilant, as unwanted conflicts can wreak havoc on the global system. Aligning the security objectives of the U.S. with those of its international partnerships is no easy task. Although, once legitimacy between the nations can be realized, the combined forces become a viable solution for regional peace and stability. The U.S. has many partners in the Asia-Pacific region. Three of these partnerships are with Australia, Japan, and South Korea. An overview of each is provided below.

Australia

Since WWI, Australia has fought alongside the U.S. in every major conflict. However, some think the U.S.-Australian alliance is causing more problems for the Australians because of U.S. foreign policy. The Marrickville Peace Group, in its submission to the 2015 Defence white paper, states “the alliance with the U.S. has led Australia into needless wars, compromises Australians independence and should be critically scrutinized.”³⁷ While the opinions of many

Australians vary regarding the perceived value of the US alliance, there is evidence of opposition to the US foreign policy in the region and should be considered a risk. Australia's dependence on China has grown in recent years, Chinese investments in Australia's natural resources has boosted the Australian economy. The bilateral arrangements between the US and Australia may not be as conducive to regional priorities as they once were. A New York Times February 2, 2017 article further indicates this assertion. President Trump and Prime Minister (PM) Turnbull reportedly had a 'candid' phone conversation on the 28th of January 2017. The conversation centered on the US taking in up to 1250 refugees currently being held in Australia. President Obama and PM Turnbull had made the agreement and President Trump, having an alternative direction for the U.S. immigration policy, expressed his concerns to PM Turnbull. This event comes on the heels of US immigration policy turmoil, a decision that sparked political firestorm as the new administration takes office. "In less than two weeks in office, President Trump's actions have strained alliances and alienated potential partners of the United States, and his phone call with Mr. Turnbull seemed to be one more example, this time with a country that has fought on America's side since World War I."³⁸ These examples illustrate that even the closest allies can have some differences of opinion. Of course, the long history of the US and Australia will not be destroyed over a heated phone call. However, the U.S. security strategy in the region depends heavily on its partners and it must remain cognizant of the impacts changes in U.S. foreign policy have on its alliances.

Economically speaking, China has become the most influential country in Australian affairs. China has become Australia's largest trading partner. The economic boom of China resulted in a need for resources and Australia had the needed assets. Chinese investments in Australia have increased significantly and the Australian economy has experienced the positive

effects. For instance, thirteen percent of Australian exports is coal and it's going to China.³⁹ China has also purchased Australian mines producing coal or iron ore. Both of which are in high demand in China and leading Australian exports. As the Chinese economic boom seems to be waning, Australia will seek further investment from China in other sectors like services and commodities. "In April 2013, the Australian and Chinese Governments agreed to establish a new diplomatic architecture for the relationship which would consist of an annual leader's meeting and ministerial – level Economic and foreign and strategic dialogues."⁴⁰ With Australia's growing dependence on Chinese investments for the sustainment of its economic stability, the dynamic of the U.S.-Australia partnership is even more relevant as the U.S. security policy develops for the Asia-Pacific region.

From a military perspective, the U.S. and Australian forces are closely aligned. In many cases, the Australian Defense Force technologies are the same as the U.S. The U.S. has made great strides to ensure U.S. forces are interoperable with Australian defense capabilities. Significant Security cooperation arrangements, as well as foreign military and direct commercial sales of military capabilities, have further aligned the U.S. and Australian forces. To improve the cooperation and interoperability, defense training exercises are carried out in the region. Exercise Talisman Sabre, RIMPAC, Pitch Black, and Black Flag are examples of such training events. These exercises also involve other U.S. allies. The continued close alignment between the U.S. and Australian defense forces is one of the most important components in the development of the U.S. security strategy objectives in the Asia-Pacific region.

Japan

While the relationship with Japan may have begun amid turmoil, the interactions between the two have reshaped the political landscape of the world and in many ways ushered in

globalization. After the significant bombing of the country and with the financial assistance of the U.S., reparations were made in an attempt to return Japan to a steady economic state. At the conclusion of WWII, the U.S.-Japan partnership began and it has grown ever since. However, the current state of affairs in Japan has grown complex in recent years. Declining populations due to the low birth rates over the past few decades and coupled with an aging population, have slowed economic growth and caused some anxiety to persist. A few natural disasters have also affected life in Japan. There is a growing concern by some Japanese that they are too reliant on the U.S. for national defense and have lost some autonomy as a sovereign nation. This has placed some stress on the U.S.-Japanese relationship, not to say that the Japan-U.S. alliance is weakening, but there is an indication that things are changing with Japan striving to be self-reliant and separated from the influences of the U.S.

In 1960, U.S. and Japan signed the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. This treaty serves as the bedrock of the relationship between the two parties, but by no means has served as an obligatory agreement between the nations. Japan has chosen to stay out of a few of the conflicts that the U.S. was a part of, most notably any conflicts against ISIL. Despite some differences in foreign policy, the Japan-U.S. partnership is strong. Using the significant economic ties as an example, in 2015 Japan was listed as the “fourth-largest single-country trading partner regarding two-way merchandise trade, accounting for 5.2 percent of U.S. total merchandise trade.”⁴¹ Currently, the U.S. has representation from all three military services with bases in Japan and Okinawa. There are approximately 35,000 troops and 5,000 DoD civilians stationed in Japan. The strategic location of the Japan Islands is particularly important to the U.S. defense strategic objectives and its economic influence on the U.S. is remarkable.

South Korea

The U.S. relationship with South Korea began with the 1882 Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation.⁴² For much of the nineteenth century, Korea was occupied by the Japanese. When Japan surrendered to the U.S. at the end of WWII, the Korean peninsula was divided into two halves; The Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North and the Republic of Korea in the South. The U.S. came to South Korea's aid during the Korean War when North Korea invaded the Southern part of the peninsula. Ever since then, the U.S. has had defense forces in South Korea and because of its geography, it is critical to the U.S. national defense strategy.

South Korea has experienced significant economic growth since the end of the Korean War. "In the 1960's GDP per capita was comparable with levels in the poorer countries of Africa and Asia. In 2004, South Korea joined the trillion-dollar club of world economies."⁴³ Despite the economic prosperity, they are facing similar challenges as its neighbor Japan. The population of South Korea is aging and with comparatively low birthrates, the country could be heading toward stagnation.

The US-South Korea partnership is another area where U.S. foreign policy will need to strengthen in order for the U.S. to mitigate emerging challenges of the region. As South Korea's economy begins to see a downturn, they will be forced to lean on regional partners for support. If ideology differences persist, China or even Russia may become an attractive partnership. Further, multi-lateral relationships with Japan and Australia will surely impact decisions in the future as the three nations have a stake in maintaining the stability in the region. On February 12, 2017, North Korea test launched a ballistic missile that had a reported range of more than 1,240 miles according to South Korea's intelligence agency.⁴⁴ President Trump and the Prime

Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, both issued statements condemning the missile test and affirming the alliance between the U.S. and Japan. A Washington Post article published on February 13, 2017, suggested that the U.S. is in need of a new North Korean Strategy.⁴⁵

The Rise of the Dragon

“The Department of Defense (DoD) approach to China is part of a broader U.S. strategy for the Asia-Pacific region that is focused on ensuring and building upon a stable and diversified security order, an open and transparent economic order, and a liberal political order.”⁴⁶

The People’s Republic of China has impressed the entire world with how quickly they have risen to be one of the largest economies and how they have developed an industrial base. Such growth has changed the paradigm of the Asia-Pacific and now requires more intimate relationships between the nations of the region. From north to south and east to west, China’s expansion is affecting the way countries now perceive their roles in the Asia-Pacific region.

While China continues its expansion and sphere of influence, how its actions will impact the Southeast Asian countries is still unknown. For starters, China is perhaps the most influential country in the Southeast Asia region. The national decisions made by China undoubtedly will have some effect on the neighbors in the region, especially the significantly smaller nations. For example, the Mekong River (known as the Lancang in China) is becoming a hotbed for controversy due to some of China’s actions related to the river. Most of the Mekong River is situated in the southeast part of China. The Mekong River extends through the southern part of Asia flowing through or bordering Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and eventually creating the Mekong Delta in the southern part of Vietnam. At a little over 2700 miles long, making it the twelfth longest river in the world, it is a critical resource for the region. China and its rapidly growing population and industrial complex, which is resulting in an insatiable energy

requirement, has built several dams along the Mekong River. These dams have affected the river downstream by causing droughts in the river basins impacting fish populations, and altering the fertility of the land in some parts where crops need to grow. If China continues to build more dams as it intends to, the impacts to the Southeast Asia region will only amplify. This example of the Mekong River is just one example of how China's expansion has impacted the region. Another key area to review is the changes China is making to its military.

While the economic conditions of China have improved, it has prioritized the advancement of its military capabilities to protect its interests from both an internal and external perspective. There is now an enduring requirement for China to protect itself from outside threats that could disrupt the progress and impact future prosperity. The last few years have been significant for the development of China's military strategy. "The People's Liberation Army updated high-level strategies, plans, and policies that reflect its intent to transform itself into a more flexible and advanced joint force capable of advanced joint operations and fighting and winning 'informationized local wars' – regional conflict defined by real-time data-networked command."⁴⁷ To enhance its strategic deterrence, China has also continued to modernize its nuclear capabilities. Development of new road-mobile Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, testing of hypersonic glide vehicle, and development of long-range bombers are all examples of how China is changing the force structure of its military.⁴⁸

China's quest for hegemony in the region is apparent by the continuous assertion of its territorial claims in the East and South China Seas. In the East China Sea, the Senkaku Islands are a source of contention between China and Japan. Neither nation recognizes each other's claims to the Islands. China claims its control of the islands date back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), but Japan insists that the Islands were never settled and that it laid claim to the

Islands in 1895. To further complicate matters, article 47 the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the governing body of work that establishes maritime boundaries and contiguous zones in territorial seas, establishes archipelagic baselines.⁴⁹ Following these baselines, one could deduce that neither country has rights to the islands for the purposes of generating maritime zone entitlements.⁵⁰ The U.S. has made attempts to stay out of the dispute, however, in 2014 President Obama confirmed the U.S. commitment to Japan and the position for both nations to seek peaceful resolution.⁵¹

Island reclamation in the South China Sea is also a rising concern. “Since China’s land reclamation efforts began in December 2013, it had reclaimed more than 2,900 acres of land as of June, 2015.”⁵² In the Spratly Islands, it has significantly altered the landscape by adding air strips and navy outposts. By doing so, China is able to project its forces further outward into the South China Sea. This is a significant military advantage that has impacted U.S. security strategy. For instance, the premier U.S. fighter jet F-22 has a range of 1,724 miles.⁵³ If China continues to advance its EW technology and A2/AD capabilities, it will become difficult for the U.S. fighters to receive the EW and aerial refueling support needed.

Multi-polarity and economic globalization are at the forefront of China’s assessment of its own national security strategy. Like many other nations, it recognizes the information age the world powers currently reside in and understands that for its security objectives to be realized, it must rely on its allies and partnerships in the region. China asserts that its military security policy is defensive in nature and does not have imperialistic motives behind its expansion.

ASEAN

ASEAN was established in 1967 to develop a cooperative partnership between Southeast Asian nations with similar interests to promote political, economic, and regional stability.

ASEAN initially began with five nations (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand) and has grown to its current state with a ten-nation membership. The additional five nations joined over a period of about fifteen years: Brunei – 1984, Vietnam – 1995, Laos and Burma – 1997, Cambodia – 1999.⁵⁴ The original document outlining the agreement between the nations contained only five articles, which outlined the establishment of ASEAN and described the aims and purposes of the organization. “The aims and purposes were about cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, technical, educational and other fields and the promotion of regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law adherence to the principle of the United Nations Charter.”⁵⁵ The document proclaimed ASEAN as representing “the collective will of the Southeast Asia to bind themselves together in friendship and cooperation and, through joint efforts and sacrifices, secure for their people and for posterity the blessings of peace, freedom and prosperity.”⁵⁶ The ASEAN Declaration lists seven aims and purposes of the organization:

Aims and Purposes of ASEAN⁵⁷

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavors in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations.
2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter.
3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields.

4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres.
5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilization of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples.
6. To promote Southeast Asian studies.
7. To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organizations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.

Since ASEAN's inception, the organization has made significant strides in unifying the region and integrating the international affairs of its members and the U.S. has played a critical role in these affairs. The sheer trade volume between the entities is evidence of the value of this relationship. The ASEAN countries, together, rank as our fifth largest supplier of imports in 2013.⁵⁸ Annex A provides further details on the trade statistics.

ASEAN contributes much more to the region than just serving economic interests. There are several other organizations that include a few ASEAN based organizations which have an influence on the region. Five organizations were highlighted as part of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) review, Asia-Pacific Rebalance 2025. They are: the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), and the ASEAN+3 which includes South Korea, Japan, and China. There are a variety of areas that these organizations address and many issues they attempt to resolve. APEC works toward the free and

open trade between partners and seeks to build capacity. At the ARF and the East Asia Summit leaders from many countries come together to discuss a broad range of issue and try and help resolve specific problems that partner nations may be faced with. The U.S. is an active participant in many of the Southeast Asian organizations as well as the special forums. Figure 8 depicts the relationships between the organizations and the participants of each entity.

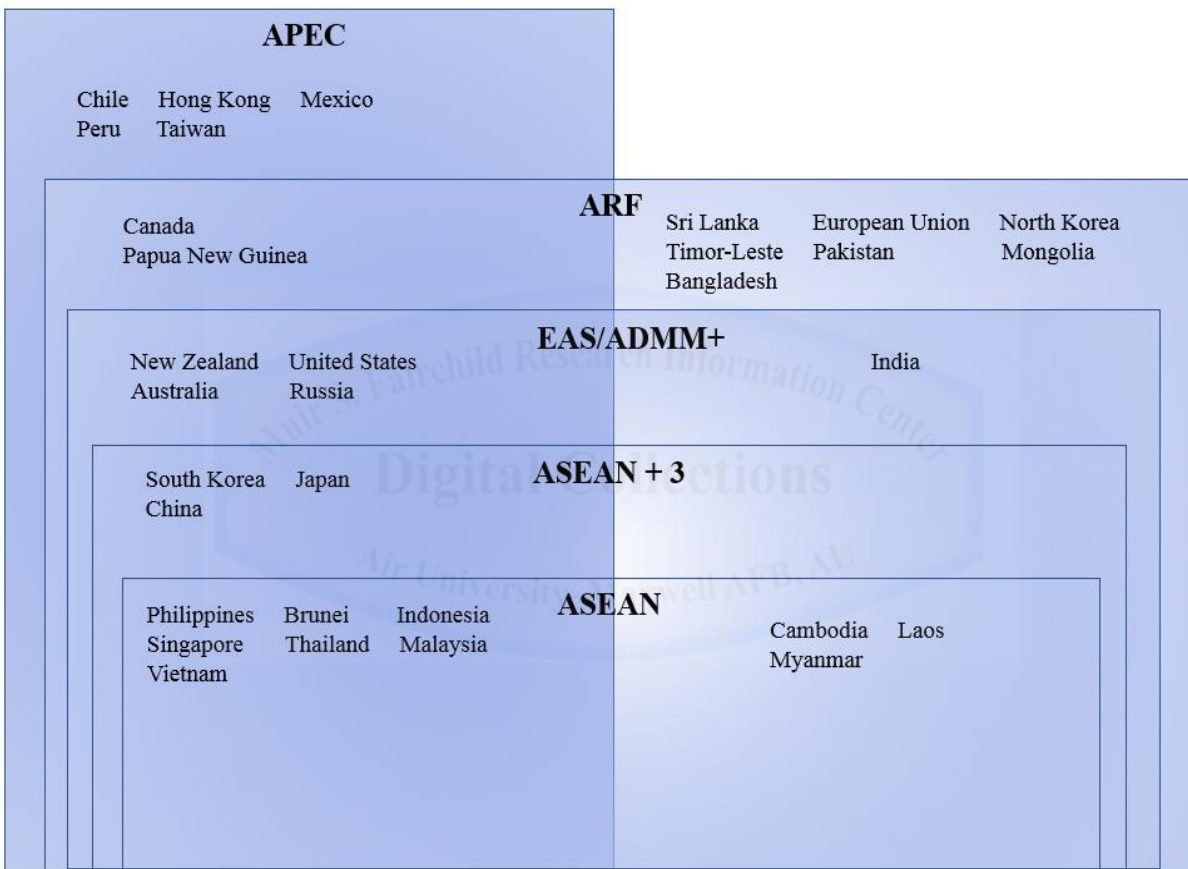


Figure 8. Southeast Asian Organizations.⁵⁹

The strategic relationships the U.S. has with the Asia-Pacific nations is for the most part positive and rewarding on many fronts. The dynamics of the region presents opportunities to increase cooperation between international entities and strengthen alliances. The diversity of the ASEAN nations results in myriad interdependencies and without cooperation, could lead to a fragmented set of priorities that are misaligned. The U.S. participation in regional affairs

through the multi-lateral arrangements of ASEAN, allows it to gain insight into regional issues so that assessments can be made and foreign policy refined.

ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis

“Since the decline of the British maritime power in the Pacific at the end of the 19th Century, the underlying geostrategic objective for the United States in Asia and the Pacific has been to maintain a balance of power that prevents the rise of any hegemonic state from within the region that could threaten U.S. interests by seeking to obstruct American access or dominate the maritime domain.”⁶⁰ Effective utilization of the U.S. instruments of power (e.g. diplomatic, informational, military, and economic) will allow the U.S. to exert its influence in the Asia-Pacific region. The integration of these instruments of power within a construct of a multinational domain is a challenging endeavor. The U.S. must rely on its allies and partner international organizations. Cooperation and careful planning between the allies of U.S. and the international organizations in the Asia-Pacific region will increase interoperability, stabilize the security environment, enhance trade, and ensure U.S. national strategic objectives are achieved.

Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Operation Planning, states that in addition to the use of military and economic instruments, the U.S. is to achieve its objectives by interacting with non-DoD organizations. This includes domestic and international agencies. “Successful interorganizational coordination of plans facilitates unity of effort among multiple organizations by promoting a common understanding of the capabilities, limitations, and consequences of military and civilian actions.”⁶¹ In addition to understanding these areas, the U.S. needs to be

knowledgeable of the current state of affairs in the other nations in the region. ASEAN can provide the forum and the opportunity to gain such a perspective.

There is a plethora of organizations in the Asia-Pacific region that have relations with the U.S.. Until recently, the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) was one such organization. The TPP was designed to free up trade barriers with Asia-Pacific nations and the U.S. In 2015, the U.S. trade with TPP partners, was valued at \$680 billion, which accounts for 45.2 percent of total U.S. exports to the world.⁶² However, the U.S. portion of the partnership did not achieve a secure foothold before the U.S. turned over administrations. On January 23, 2017, soon after accepting the oath of office, President Trump signed an executive order effectively ending the U.S. participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Almost all traces of the TPP have since been removed from the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) website. What now exists is a reference to a future policy on U.S. trade: the “America First Trade Policy.”

“The Office of the United States Trade Representative is committed to ensuring that American workers are given a fair shot at competing across the globe. USTR is working to reshape the landscape of trade policy to work for all Americans. On a level playing field America First trade policy will make it more desirable for companies to stay here, create jobs here, pay taxes here, and rebuild our economy. Our workers and the communities that support them will thrive again, as companies compete to set up manufacturing in the U.S., to hire young people and give them hope and a real shot at prosperity again.”

The America First Trade Policy is outside of the scope of the research paper. However, it is important to understand that the U.S. is entering a new era which may be a fundamental shift in the U.S. national security strategy. How such a shift affects the current relationships with the Asia-Pacific partners is uncertain. This uncertainty exacerbates the need for further development of strategic guidance. Organizations like ASEAN can be influential in fostering collaborative joint decisions for the greater good of common interests.

Conclusions

The U.S. security policy in the Asia-Pacific is in many ways the mortar that maintains the regional stability. The various partnerships in the region, each having their own unique set of priorities and objectives, creates a complex set of challenges. How the U.S. manages each of these relationships will not just impact the Asia-Pacific, but can affect the entire world. Indeed, there is volatility across the region. Although, with adequate planning and development of key strategic frameworks, the U.S. can achieve its national security objectives while strengthening regional partnerships. As succinctly stated in the Quadrennial Defense Review 2014, the U.S. will need to “operate in close concert with allies and partners to establish norms and confront common threats, because no country alone can address the global challenges.”⁶³ To sustain peace and prosperity, cooperation with regional entities is necessary. As resources become scarce, there is a requirement for a mechanism that seeks to align the interests of key stakeholders to minimize the risks of catastrophic second and third order effects. ASEAN can serve a pivotal role in maintaining a balanced set of priorities.

The U.S. interest in sustaining stability involves cooperating with China as well. As discussed, China is rapidly developing and making advancements in its military and economic capabilities to influence the region and maintain its prosperity. Using its military to assert regional dominance and potentially creating conflict with ASEAN nations, will undoubtedly prompt the U.S to engage on some magnitude. Ensuring that the interdependencies between the nations are well understood and that the priorities of each nation are shared with all stakeholders is necessary. With the recent change in administration, U.S. defense forces may in fact once again rebalance, re-prioritize and seek to secure a new set of national security interests.

However, the requirement for an Asia-Pacific strategy is omnipresent and the U.S. will continue to have an interest in the region.

Recommendations

The Asia-Pacific will continue to present challenges for the U.S. and its allies. There are two recommendations that may assist the U.S. in achieving regional objectives. The first, is for the U.S. to create a comprehensive security framework that is centered around the ASEAN and inclusive of the ASEAN based organizations. As the Asia-Pacific Maritime Strategy is polished, the multilateral dialog between key stakeholders of the region, will ensure the U.S. has a full grasp on the implications of its security plans. In order for the U.S. to have a balanced approach to securing stability, the expectations of each nation must be understood and utilization of the ASEAN network provides the opportunity.

The second recommendation is for the U.S. to develop an Asia-Pacific Air Defense strategy. Currently there is not a U.S. Air Force specific strategy for the Asia-Pacific region. While the Navy is the predominate force in the region, the Air Force also has a significant role. If a conflict were to arise, it's imperative that the U.S. have clear distinct strategy for the region. The U.S. seldom operates in a single service environment as joint operations have become the norm. Aligning the U.S. security objectives with its partners' security objectives, requires distinct regional strategies to prepare our defense forces and reduce the risk of adverse circumstances caused by escalated conflict.

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Appendix: U.S. – ASEAN 10 Trade and Investment Facts

U.S. goods and services trade with ASEAN countries totaled \$241.7 billion in 2013. Exports totaled \$100.5 billion; Imports totaled \$141.2 billion. The U.S. goods and services trade deficit with ASEAN countries was \$40.7 billion in 2013.

The United States has \$206 billion in total (two ways) goods trade with ASEAN countries during 2013. Goods exports totaled \$79 billion; Goods imports totaled \$127 billion. The U.S. goods trade deficit with ASEAN countries was \$48 billion in 2013.

Trade in services with ASEAN countries (exports and imports) totaled \$36 billion in 2013. Exports were \$22 billion; Services imports were \$14 billion. The U.S. services trade surplus with ASEAN countries was \$7 billion in 2013.

According to the Department of Commerce, U.S. Goods and Services exports to ASEAN supported an estimated 499,000 jobs in 2013 (365,000 from goods exports and 134,000 from services exports).

Exports

- U.S. goods exports to the ASEAN countries in 2013 were \$79.0 billion, up 4.7% (\$3.6 billion) from 2012, and 75% from 2003. U.S. exports to the ASEAN countries account for 5.0% of overall U.S. exports in 2013.
- The ASEAN countries, together, would rank 4th as an export market for the United States in 2013.
- The top 5 ASEAN export markets in 2013 were Singapore (\$30.7 billion), Malaysia (\$13.0 billion), Thailand (\$11.8 billion), Indonesia (\$9.1 billion), and Philippines (\$8.4 billion).
- The top export categories (2-digit HS) in 2013 were: Electrical Machinery (\$15.6 billion), Machinery (\$10.5 billion), Aircraft (\$9.9 billion), Mineral Fuel and Oil (\$5.1 billion), and Optic and Medical Instruments (\$4.8 billion).
- U.S. exports of agricultural products to ASEAN countries totaled \$10.7 billion in 2013. Leading categories include: soybeans (\$1.7 billion), dairy products (\$1.3 billion), wheat (\$1.1 billion), cotton (\$923 million), and soybean meal (\$909 million).
- U.S. exports of services to ASEAN were \$21.5 billion in 2013, down 6.9% (\$1.6 billion) from 2012, but up 93% since 2003.

Imports

- U.S. goods imports from the ASEAN countries totaled \$127.0 billion in 2013, up 3.3% (\$4.1 billion) from 2012, and up 55.1% from 2003. U.S. imports from ASEAN account for 5.6% of overall U.S. imports in 2013.

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- The ASEAN countries, together, would rank as our 5th largest supplier of imports in 2013.
 - The top 5 ASEAN import suppliers in 2013 were Malaysia (\$27.3 billion), Thailand (\$26.2 billion), Vietnam (\$24.7 billion), Indonesia (\$18.9 billion), and Singapore (\$17.9 billion).
 - The five largest categories in 2012 were: Electrical Machinery (\$30.8 billion), Machinery (\$17.8 billion), Knit Apparel (\$11.0 billion), Woven Apparel (\$7.3 billion), and Rubber (\$6.0 billion).
 - U.S. imports of agricultural products from ASEAN countries totaled \$9.5 billion in 2013. Leading categories include: rubber and allied products (\$2.2 billion), tropical oils (\$2.0 billion), processed fruit and vegetables (\$781 million), coffee (unroasted) (\$759 million), and tree nuts (\$697 million).
 - U.S. imports of services from ASEAN were \$14.2 billion in 2013, up 0.9% (\$133 million) from 2012, and up 180% since 2003.

Trade Balance

- The U.S. goods trade deficit with ASEAN was \$48.0 billion in 2013, a 1.1% increase (\$503 million) over 2012.
- The United States had a services trade surplus of \$7.3 billion with ASEAN countries in 2013, down 19% from 2012.

Investment

- U.S. foreign direct investment (FDI) in ASEAN countries (stock) was \$204.0 billion in 2013, up 9.1% from 2012.
- U.S. direct investment in ASEAN countries is led by the nonbank holding companies, manufacturing and finance/insurance sectors.
- ASEAN countries = FDI in the United States countries (stock) was \$20.8 billion in 2013, up 5.8% from 2012.
- The distribution of ASEAN countries FDI in the United States is not available.

ASEAN countries include Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

NOTE: Refers to private services trade not including U.S. military sales, direct defense expenditures, and other miscellaneous U.S. government services. Services trade data includes all ASEAN countries except Burma (Myanmar), Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam

Source: <https://ustr.gov/issue-areas/trade-organizations/association-southeast-asian-nations-asean/us-asean-10-trade-and>