

Spoke-to-Spoke Alliance: *Australia, ASEAN, the Philippines, and 'Middle Power' Diplomacy in the Indo-Pacific*

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Outline

- 1. New Era**
- 2. Marcos Jr.'s New Strategic Posture**
- 3. Australia as major middle power**
- 4. Diplomatic Renaissance**
- 5. Policy Recommendations**



Band of Brothers

- In 1922, Manila held a state funeral for **Rear Admiral John Saumarez Dumaresq CB CVO**, the first Australian born commander of the Australian fleet and the captain of *HMAS SYDNEY* during the last two years of the First World War;
- During the Second World War, Filipino and Australian troops fought on the same side. **The single deadliest day for Australian forces was 01 July 1942**, when more than one fiftieth of all Australian Service Personnel, who were taken as prisoners during operations in South Pacific, were killed in northwestern coast of the Philippines aboard an Imperial Japanese;
- During the war, **Australian forces aided Philippine guerilla fighting against Imperial Japanese forces**, particularly in the island of Mindanao, which is relatively close to Australia's northern shores. Both the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), which provided critical intelligence, as well as the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) contributed cruisers, which played a critical role in Battle of Surigao Strait (1944), were instrumental to the eventual liberation of the Philippines from Imperial Japanese forces;

Bilateral Security Milestones

- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cooperative Defense Activities on 22 August 1995.**
- The new deal provided the foundations for the establishment of the **Joint Defense Cooperation Committee (JDCC)**, which is tasked with overseeing the operationalization of a wide range of joint military activities.
- The milestone in bilateral relations, however, was the Philippine Senate's overwhelming (17 in favor, 1 against) ratification of **the Status of Visiting Forces Agreement (Sovfa) between the Philippines and Australia in 2012**
- “We have not ratified the SoVFA between Australia and the Philippines for two years because we did not see the need for it”, but now, “because of our problem with China, which claims some islands in the West Philippine Sea [Philippine Exclusive Economic Zone in the South China Sea] which are ours, we suddenly want to ratify it.”
Senator Joker Arroyo on SoVFA ratification



PRESIDENTIAL PHOTOS

Bilateral Security Cooperation Milestones

- After the ratification of SOVFA, the Philippine Department of National Defense (DND) announced that Australian forces would soon joint US-Philippine wargames, sending as many as 68 participants to the 2014 *Balikatan* exercises. In October 2013, the two sides established the Joint Defense Cooperation Working Group (JDCC) and the Defense Cooperation Working Group (DCWG) to operationalized their defense agreement;
- Joint Declaration on Australia-Philippine Comprehensive Partnership (DCP).
- In early 2016, three former Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Balikpapan-class land craft heavy (LCH) were transferred to the Philippine Navy (PN) as part of a broader package of five vessels, two of which were already commissioned into the PN a year earlier.
- The acquisitions form RAN are expected to strengthen the Philippines' humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations (HADR) capabilities, a cornerstone of bilateral security cooperation with Australia. The centrality of HADR to Philippine-Australia relations was fully on display in the immediate aftermath of the Haiyan (Yolanda) super typhoon, a once-every-century natural disaster, which devastated large parts of central islands of Visayas.
- **2017:** Marawi operations and Australia deploying the HMAS *Adelaide* and the HMAS *Darwin* for a four day

BUSINESS DEALS

Cerberus to take over Subic Bay shipyard near South China Sea

US fund nears deal on strategic Philippine facility that stirred China interest



Trade and Economic Relations

- Bilateral trade and investment ties are substantial. Two-way trade between Australia and Southeast Asia has exceeded US\$100 billion in recent years, while bilateral investment was as large as \$259 billion in the pre-pandemic years. Australia has also hosted as many as 100,000 students from the region in recent years;
- Australian investment in the Philippine reached AU\$9.3 billion in 2016, while Philippine investment in Australia were valued at AU\$1.3 billion in the same year.
- By 2017, bilateral trade reached AU\$4.8 billion. In 2016, as many as 216,000 Australian visited the Philippines, while more than 8,000 Filipinos were studying in Australia. Beyond economic and people-to-people ties, Philippine-Australia relations also began benefitting from major strides in the realm of security cooperation.

Donor		Funding* (USD)	Percentage to Total Funding
1	United Kingdom	122,743,593	14.19
2	Private (Individuals & Organizations)	98,589,169	11.40
3	United States of America	90,585,530	10.47
4	United Nations	81,506,255	9.42
5	Canada	63,645,009	7.36
6	Japan	63,328,022	7.32
7	European Union	40,470,717	4.68
8	Australia	38,700,165	4.47
9	Disasters Emergency Committee (UK)	38,520,357	4.45
10	Norway	31,579,414	3.65
11	United Arab Emirates	20,622,870	2.38
12	Sweden	18,511,521	2.14
13	Germany	17,208,111	1.99
14	Netherlands	13,690,879	1.58
15	US Fund for UNICEF	11,812,512	1.37
16	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	10,000,000	1.16
17	Ireland	8,971,234	1.04
18	New Zealand	8,625,588	1.00
19	Denmark	7,998,747	0.92
20	Finland	6,432,284	0.74
21	Italy	5,859,192	0.68
22	Russian Federation	5,738,871	0.66
23	International Organization for Migration	4,658,604	0.54
24	Switzerland	4,579,654	0.53
25	Spain	4,171,931	0.48
26	Various Donors (details not yet provided)	3,510,848	0.41
27	Asian Development Bank	3,000,000	0.35
28	Luxembourg	2,992,435	0.35
29	Republic of Korea	2,800,000	0.32
30	IKEA Foundation	2,754,821	0.32

PHILIPPINE ELECTIONS

Marcos visits Australia for vacation after Philippines election win

President-in-waiting makes unannounced trip as investors await cabinet line-up



Just a week after winning the Philippines presidential election, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. made an unannounced "private" trip to Australia. (Source photos by Ken Kobayashi and AP)

Neither, Nor

- **Marcos Jr.'s Foreign Policy Reset: Negation of Negation**
- * Negates Duterte era strategic subservience towards China
- Negates 'liberal' Filipino president's US-centric foreign policy
- **"Normalization" of PH foreign policy: More ASEAN than Mexican!**
- **Like Father, Like Son: Multi-Vector Foreign Policy**

The Triangular Dance

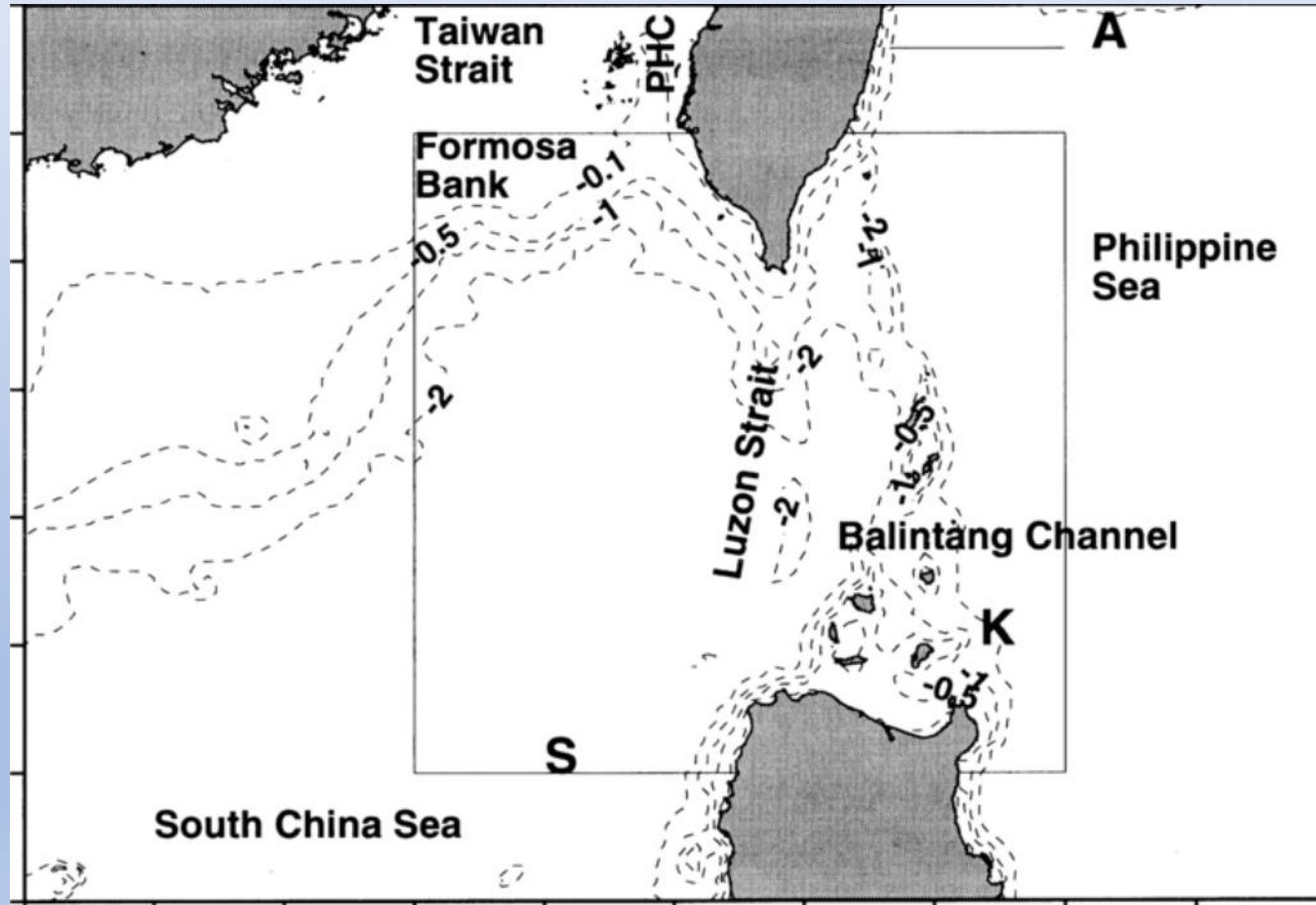




GAMECHANGER: MARCOS JR. TRANSFORMS THE PHILIPPINE-U.S. ALLIANCE

BY RICHARD JAVAD HEYDARIAN | DECEMBER 6, 2022
AMTI UPDATE

Taiwan Angle



Chinese investors plan economic zones in 3 strategic islands in the Philippines





Mavulis

Japan, S. Korea join US-Philippines defense drill

October 3, 2022 (Mainichi Japan)



Marines from Philippines, Japan, South Korea and the United States carry their flag during opening ceremonies of an annual joint military exercise called Kamandag the Tagalog acronym for "Cooperation of the Warriors of the Sea" at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig city, Philippines on Monday Oct. 3, 2022. (AP Photo/Aaron Favila)

MANILA (Kyodo) -- Japan and South Korea participated as "observers" in this year's military exercise between the United States and the Philippines that started Monday for an 11-day run.

The drill was taking place with simmering tensions between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea, between the United States and China over Taiwan, and North Korea's test firings of ballistic missiles.

It marked the first time that Tokyo and Seoul have joined the annual drill between Washington and



Japanese fighter jets land in Philippines for first time since WWII



Philippine Air Force (left and second from left) and Japanese Air Self-Defense Force personnel mark the historic arrival of two ASDF F-15 fighter jets with a photo at Clark Air Base in Mabalacat, north of Manila, on Tuesday. | KYODO

Spoke-to-Spoke Alliances

- **Shared Interest: No Single Power should control/dominate/disrupt the South China Sea and regional SLOCs;**
- **Quad Plus:** Core ASEAN states cooperate with Quad and likeminded external powers to uphold UNCLOS and a rules-based regional order;
- **Collaborative initiatives:** US, Japan, Australia (Blue Dot Network), G7 (Build Back Better World), and EU Connectivity Initiatives – geared towards capacity-building
- **SQUAD:** Regularized military exercises, and institutionalized dialogue on maritime security issue;

OPINION

Australia must seize chance to reset relations with ASEAN states

Country can leave behind image as 'America's deputy sheriff' with better outreach



Richard Heydarian

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Anthony Albanese is in a unique position to launch a new era of personal diplomacy in Southeast Asia. © AAP/AP

Beyond the Quad

- On one hand, the new prime minister has signaled continuity in Australia's Quad policy by emphasizing how “I acknowledge all that the Quad has achieved” and declaring that his government is committed to “standing together for a free, open and resilient Indo-Pacific region and working together to tackle the biggest challenges of our time, including climate change and the security of our region.”
- The new government says it is also intent on maximizing the potential of the AUKUS defense agreement with traditional allies. On her part, Foreign Minister Penny Wong also clarified earlier during the election campaign that Australia had “actually already chosen” a side by maintaining robust defense ties with the US, which enjoyed “deep bipartisan support.” <https://www.alp.org.au/policies/defence-force-posture-review>



ASEAN Centrality

- Defense Minister Richard Marles visited Southeast Asian to revitalize bilateral ties. During [his visit to Singapore](#) for the Shangri-La Dialogue earlier this year, Marles made it clear that relations with ASEAN nations will be “completely central” to Australia’s strategic priorities.
- Australia’s Bahasa-speaking and Malaysian-born top diplomat, Penny Wong, [received a rockstar reception](#) in Indonesia. A major thrust of Australia’s regional policy will likely be developmental cooperation, including in the realm of [climate change and green infrastructure development](#).
- Australia’s new climate change and energy minister, Chris Bowen, is [also a fluent](#) Malay speaker, underscoring the potential for warm and mutually respectful relations between Canberra and key Southeast Asian countries. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpretor/wong-s-bahasa-pitch-indonesia>

Policy Recommendations

- Connectivity Minilateralism/Alt-BIR - [Blue Dot Network](#) (together with US and Japan) and [Build Back Better World](#) (together with G7);
- Strategic investments – booming new sectors
- Intelligence and security – high-tech and intel-sharing deepening
- Counter-Sharp Power Cooperation - . *The National Security Legislation Amendment (Espionage and Foreign Interference) Act 2018; Foreign Influence Transparency Scheme Act 2018; Australia's Foreign Relations (State and Territory Arrangements) Act 2020; Security Legislation Amendment (Critical Infrastructure) Bill 2020; 2021 amendment of the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(HESA\)](#);*
- People-to-People – expansion in scholarship and education cooperation initiatives