

POLICY BRIEF

July 29, 2019

Dr Thomas S. Wilkins is currently a Senior Fellow at the Japan Institute for International Affairs in Tokyo. He is normally based as a Senior Lecturer in International Security at the University of Sydney, Australia. He specializes in security issues in the Asia Pacific region and has published on this subject in journals such as *Review of International Studies*, *International Relations of the Asia Pacific* and the *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, among others.

Disclaimer :

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of The Japan Institute of International Affairs or any other organization with which the author is affiliated.

Does Australia have an “Indo Pacific strategy”?

Dr Thomas S. Wilkins

Introduction

The US Department of Defense (DOD) released its long-awaited Indo Pacific Strategy Report (IPSR) in tandem with the IISS-Shangrila Dialogue in Singapore on 1 June 2019. This IPSR appears to subsume or extend the earlier Free and Open Indo Pacific (FOIP) strategy (sometimes referred to now as a “vision”) into a more comprehensive regional Indo Pacific Strategy (IPS), that is anchored in the earlier 2017 National Security Strategy (NSS) and 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) documents. Australia has yet to produce an analogous document dedicated to profiling its own “Indo Pacific Strategy”, but with the US iteration in view, it is possible to construct a plausible image of such a strategy in the Australian case by drawing upon various pertinent materials from a range of government sources. Indeed, the notion of an overarching IPs is gradually taking shape in Australian strategic thinking, as testified to by a variety of official documents, including large portions of the 2016 Defence White Paper, and especially 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, alongside other policy statements and initiatives, framed in the context of analysis and debate undertaken by nationally-based strategic commentators. A small case “s” in “Indo Pacific strategy” is specifically employed in this paper to distinguish the author’s conception from any formally mandated government “Strategy”.

An examination and assessment of a putative Australian IPs is important in light of the release of the US Report, which goes some way to substituting for the discarded Pivot/Rebalance strategy of the previous Administration, in that it brings into relief the context in which American allies like Australia must now operate. Indeed, whilst an Australia IPs will demonstrate convergences with the US version (and Japanese FOIP strategy/vision), it is useful to examine both how Canberra will contribute to the *American* IPS, as well as the particular dilemmas it faces as a “middle power” state in the current security environment. Since Wesley attests that “Australia will be significantly affected by the presence and quality of American grand

strategy.”¹ Not only this, but such a study is also useful to illustrate to key allies and partners such as the US, Japan, India, and various South East Asian states the current regional strategic posture Australia is adopting.

The bases of an Australian “Indo Pacific strategy” (IPs)

Scholars and analysts have debated whether a medium-sized state with relatively limited resource constraints can conceivably articulate a “grand strategy”, with the inference that this is the prerogative of great powers only. Unfortunately space precludes an in depth discussion of “strategy”/ “grand strategy” in this short *Policy Brief* (please refer to reference below), but succinctly stated: “Grand strategy is the highest level of national statecraft that establishes how states, or other political units, prioritize and mobilize which military, diplomatic, political, economic, and other sources of power to ensure what they perceive as their interests.”² Indeed, given the vast geographical scope of the Indo Pacific (IP) region, and the particular concentration that Australia has traditionally assigned to “its region”, there may not be too much to distinguish any “grand strategy” from an “Indo Pacific (regional) strategy” - at the very least they will be deeply-interrelated. The closest that Australia has come to the former, is the 2013 “National Security Strategy” (NSS), whilst both the 2016 Defence White Paper and especially 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper evinced a strong Indo Pacific regional focus. It is from these two more recent documents that the contours of a specific IPs can be best discerned since they emphasise the embrace

of the Indo Pacific construct for determining Australia’s strategic posture (set within a “global” approach). Additionally, researchers, such as Brewster, have pondered the possibility of a sub-regional “Indian *Ocean* strategy” (IOs) and how this would fit into the larger IP concept (discussed further below).

Notwithstanding - such abstract debates and semantics aside - the essence of any Australian IPs revolves around a number of defining principles tied to the worldview championed by Canberra.³ Australia’s “vision” of a future Indo Pacific security order thus has three essential elements that must be borne in mind when considering the more specific policies and initiatives enumerated below. First, the determination to uphold a so-called “Rules Based Order” (RBO) based upon common adherence to international law, rules, and norms, including free and open markets, has long been a central pillar of Australian foreign and defence policy, and has now taken front stage in the projection of its worldview (and now finds expression in the US-Japanese FOIP concept; integral to its IPs, as discussed below). Second, the desire to see the US retain its (military) primacy, and large-scale engagement in the region largely defines Australia’s overall approach to the Indo Pacific (and broader Asia Pacific). As Wesley notes “Australian strategic policymaking has always been strongly invested in regional unipolarity.”⁴ Ergo, the contents of the American IPSR will greatly influence Canberra’s regional approach, as will be evident from the following discussion. Third, ever-increasing regional (Asian) engagement, through trade, security ties, and multilateral institutions (which was most visibly profiled in the 2012 Australia in the

1 Michael Wesley, “Australia’s Grand Strategy and the 2016 Defence White Paper,” *Security Challenges* 12, no. 1 (2016): 20.

2 Paul van Hoof, “Grand Strategy,” in *Oxford Bibliographies* (2017), 10.1093/OBO/9780199743292-0218.

3 Allan Gyngell, *Fear of Abandonment : Australia in the World since 1942* (Carlton, Vic.: La Trobe University Press, 2017).

4 Wesley, 20.

Asian Century White Paper).⁵ This will account for the strong “local” (sub-regional) role that Australia plays in South East Asia and the South Pacific as part of an IPs, alongside an increasing “India-centric” emphasis.

Together, these three overarching principles resonate throughout the following discussion of some of the key policies and initiatives that Canberra has initiated towards realising its regional vision and can be said to illustrate a putative IPs.

Operationalising an Australian Indo Pacific strategy:

In order to implement its IPs, Australian foreign and defence planners aim, like the US and Japan, at a holistic approach that incorporates security, economics and governance issues, and recognises the nexus between them. Thus security, defence/military, economic, trade, and development/connectivity policies form of tapestry of strategic interaction with the IP region (thus giving it a flavour of the core instruments of “grand strategy”). These specific economic and security aspects have been thematically discussed by the author in ‘The Role for Middle Powers in the Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Looking at Opportunities for Canada and Australia,’ *JIIA Policy Brief*, (with Jonathan Berkshire Miller), and are therefore not reiterated here verbatim.⁶

In Part 1, this *Policy Brief* now introduces four key elements of an Australian IPs: (1) The “Indo Pacific” as a geopolitical construct; (2) instruments of national “hard power”; (3) the US-alliance and; (4) multilateral regional organisations. In Part II it then specifically

looks at three key sub-regional foci: (5) India; (6) South East Asia (SEA); and (7) The South Pacific. This list of activities below is by no means exhaustive, but rather selected as representative of an IPs.

Part I: The pillars of an IPs

(1) First off, Canberra has explicitly identified the “**Indo Pacific**” as a **suitable geopolitical construct** through which to frame its continued region engagement. Influential Australian figures have long advocated for a refocusing on the Indo Pacific, aside from the extant “Asia Pacific”, as recognition not only of India’s rise to economic and strategic prominence, but as a better reflection of the actual region Australia itself inhabits at the junction of these two great Oceans. It was first introduced in the Gillard Government’s 2013 Defence White Paper (replacing the term “Asia Pacific” from previous iterations). “At its simplest”, according to Medcalf, “the Indo-Pacific means recognising that the accelerating economic and security connections between the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean region are creating a single strategic system.”⁷ It reflects a recasting of Australia’s strategic map to reflect the tremendous importance of the intersection of the Western Pacific and Indian Oceans has acquired based upon the intense and growing trading, diplomatic and strategic flows between them.

In itself, the IP is a value-neutral concept, which includes all the states in the region around an indisputable “Asian core” (even if precise geographical descriptors of which states it comprise remain fluid around the edges). Medcalf states that the “Indo-Pacific

5 Australian Government, *White Paper: Australia in the Asian Century* (Canberra: Australian Government, 2012).

6 Jonathan Berkshire Miller and Thomas Wilkins, “The Role for Middle Powers in the Free and Open Indo-Pacific: Looking at Opportunities for Canada and Australia,” *JIIA Policy Brief*, Japan Institute for International Affairs, 25 June 2019.

7 Rory Medcalf, “In Defence of the Indo-Pacific: Australia’s New Strategic Map,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 68, no. 4 (2014): 471.

is an objective description of Australia’s two-ocean geography as well as the region in which China is rising.”⁸ The term has been adopted by Australian allies and partners, and continues to gain currency among regional states. Such a reframing of Australia’s regional posture - an Indo Pacific “pivot”? - appears to capture the real geographical and geopolitical locale that Australia inhabits, as well as its chosen strategic focus. Naturally, it has a strong maritime emphasis due to the importance of trade and energy routes passing through the region (Sea Lines of Communication), with Australia’s Western and Northern coasts overlooking an “Indo Pacific Arc”, increasingly identified by analysts as the “primary strategic objective” for Australian defence strategy.⁹ Thus, the following sections show that the wholesale adoption of the Indo Pacific label, reflects more than simply a rhetorical shift on the part of Australian policy makers.

(2) Second, to be effective any Australian strategy must be backed by **the instruments of hard power**. This includes all elements of state capacity - economic, diplomatic, and military. The Australian Foreign Policy White Paper states that ‘Australia has a vital interest in the strength of the regional economy.’¹⁰ And the Australian economy appears relatively well-poised to tap into the opportunities raised by India’s continued rise, existing Chinese trade, and enhanced investment and connectivity opportunities around the region. As a provider of raw materials and services it seeks to leverage the benefits of increased interaction with emerging markets. Diplomatically, Canberra takes an out-sized role in regional economic and

security forums and is building a wide array of closer “strategic partnerships” with states in the region.

Lastly, as the security element of regional interaction comes to the fore due to increased military modernisation and rivalry, Australia has worked to enhance its already potent military forces and attune its defence strategy to the two theatres encompassing the “Indo Pacific Arc” and “Melanesian Arcs”, vital to its own nation defence, whilst retaining the ability to make meaningful contributions to military coalitions elsewhere most likely led by its US ally (a point of major import in contributing to the American IPS).¹¹ “Soft power” instruments, such as Australia’s values and reputation as “good international citizen” also enter the picture, especially under the notions of RBO, and are seen in action through economic and security activities in service of the FOIP.

(3) An Australian IPs is firmly anchored in its **bilateral alliance relationship with the US**, and thus as an adjunct to Washington’s IPS. Canberra has always been determined to play a resolute role in the broader US “hub and spokes” alliance system, and support the American primacy that upholds the regional RBO. In order to ensure the regional balance of power favours the US and its allies, Australia has sought to increase its defence budget (“burden sharing”) and contributions to ANZUS, through the hosting of “rotational” US Marine and Air deployments in its Northern Territories (Force Posture Initiatives) to enhance joint integration of training and force interoperability for multi-domain operations.¹² How far Australia has

8 Medcalf, 472.

9 Adam Lockyer, “The Future of Australian Defence Strategy,” *United Service (Journal of The Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies NSW)* 68, no. 4 (2017): 15.

10 Australian Government, 43.

11 Rod Lyon, “Australia, Concentric Circles and Strategic Priorities,” *The Strategist*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 10 May 2016.

12 Thomas Wilkins, “Re-Assessing Australia’s Intra-Alliance Bargaining Power in the Age of Trump,” *Security Challenges* 15, no. 1 (2019): 9-32.

thought about what it is willing and able to do to support the US in any regional conflict (e.g. Joint Concept for Access and Maneuver in the Global Commons (JAM-GC)), or in support of the RBO, is unclear however, yet bilateral and minilateral/multilateral exercises such as Talisman Sabre and Kakadu give some indication of such contingency planning.

It has also supported US efforts to better connect its security relationships in the region through multiple partnerships and participation in minilateral security groupings such as the Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD), with Japan, and “Quad” (with the addition of India). It has played its part in “networking” the US allies together (as emphasised as “networked security architecture” and “intra-Asian relationships” in the IPSR).¹³ Lastly, through Australia has not officially endorsed the FOIP label (referring instead to an “open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific”¹⁴), it basically adheres to its guiding principles as outlined explicitly by the US and Japan. The principles of respect for sovereignty, peaceful dispute resolution, free, fair and reciprocal trade based upon open and transparent arrangements, and the adherence to international law, rules and norms (including freedom of navigation and overflight) are all endorsed by the Australian government throughout various documents and statements.¹⁵

(4) Also integral to Australian engagement with the Indo Pacific is its participation in the full range of **regional multinational institutions**. Canberra has continued to pursue its foreign policy strategy through such organisations, especially those related to ASEAN, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and East Asian

Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM+) among others. This is part of an Australian desire to accord with the notion of “ASEAN centrality” among its key SEA partners (see below), and illustrated by the Australia-ASEAN Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and the 2018 Australia-ASEAN Special Summit. ASEAN recently released its own response to the intensifying debates around the IP construct entitled “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo Pacific”, including a range of activities which might loosely be termed a “strategy”, and some of which complement Australian goals, at its annual summit meeting in Bangkok in June 2019. It now adopts “A perspective of viewing the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, not as contiguous territorial spaces but as a closely integrated and interconnected region, with ASEAN playing a central and strategic role.”¹⁶ This accords well with Australian perspectives appertaining to regional institutional architecture.

Moreover, the extension of the Indo Pacific region to encompass the Indian Ocean more fully than the previous “Asia Pacific” focus necessitates greater attention toward the regional architecture there. As such, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) looms the large as the only (almost) pan-regional organisation. This is an avenue for engaging India (see below), but also through which to incubate a greater regional consciousness among the Indian Ocean states. Canberra has invested in trying to strengthen the grouping to build its effectiveness in addressing pressing issues such maritime security, the blue water economy, and women’s empowerment, with a dedicated Action Plan 2017-21 setting out a road map for

13 The United States Department of Defense, “Introduction,” in *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region* (The United States Department of Defense, 2019).

14 Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017).

15 The United States Department of Defense, *Indo-Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships, and Promoting a Networked Region* (The United States Department of Defense, 2019), p. 4.

16 Association of Southeast Asian Nations, “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific,” 23 June 2019, p. 2.

future initiatives, including Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and counter-terrorism cooperation as well.¹⁷

But, as Brewster points out, IORA's capacities are currently uneven and limited at present, with much work remaining to be done if it is to achieve its potential as an instrument through to uphold international norms in the region.¹⁸ Likewise, improved interaction with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) - in which Australia holds observer status - the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), is aimed at boosting regional economic and security governance.

Part II: Sub-regional foci of Australia's IPs:

This second part shines a spotlight on **three specific sub-regions** upon which Canberra has more recently devoted priority attention. Canberra remains naturally concerned with the deteriorating security situation in North East Asia, especially the North Korean nuclear challenge and maritime/territorial disputes, as articulated in the defence and foreign policy white papers cited above. But India, SEA, and the South Pacific have all drawn substantial attention under a IPs-related agenda, as indicted by the shift towards a more expansive IP concept itself, which extends the scope beyond the traditional policy concerns of East Asia, and which undoubtedly retain great importance among strategic thinkers in Australia.

(5) **India** thus assumes a prominent place in Indo Pacific strategizing for Canberra, which seeks to reinvigorate its amicable but heretofore under-developed bilateral relations with an emerging great power with which it shares an array of common valued and shared interests. The Australia-India Strategic Partnership enunciated in 2009 was revitalised in 2014 by Prime ministerial summits aimed at deepening political, economic and security ties. Currently, the two engage in a 2+2 Foreign and Defence Secretaries' Dialogue to coordinate their views on regional issues, and have agreed to work toward a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement to boost underperforming bilateral trade levels.¹⁹

Additionally, the 2009 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation (JDSC) serves as the backdrop for Annual Defence Policy Talks and an annual 1.5 Track Defence Strategic Dialogue, which together superintend an expanding network of defence and military-to-military ties. The biannual AUSINDEX naval exercises are another avenue for strengthening military-defence ties. Australia shares with India a desire to address pressing maritime security issues, including MDA, and improve naval cooperation against disruptive actions by other states. Lastly, Canberra has been a keen advocate of drawing India into the larger FOIP vision through means of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue ("Quad"), alongside the US and Japan, in order to coordinate response to challenges to the RBO in the Indo Pacific.²⁰ As an ancillary to this Australia also has a trilateral dialogue with India and Japan separately. For all these reasons, India occupies a central place in any conception

17 Gurpreet Khurana, "Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean: From Tentative Collaboration to Effective Architecture," *Journal of Indian Ocean Rim Studies* 1, no. 2 (2018): 9-25.

18 David Brewster, "Australia's Second Sea: Facing Our Multipolar Future in the Indian Ocean," *Special Report*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 19 March 2019, pp. 48-50.

19 Peter N Varghese AO, *An India Economic Strategy to 2035: Navigating from Potential to Delivery* (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018).

20 Ryosuke Hanada, "The Role of U.S.-Japan-Australia-India Cooperation, or the 'Quad' in FOIP: A Policy Coordination Mechanism for a Rules-Based Order," CSIS Strategic Japan 2019 Working Papers.

of a cohesive IPs. Yet Brewster argues that a potential “Indian Ocean strategy” as a sub-set of an IPs, must not be limited to India exclusively in order to seek opportunities with other states, with Sri Lanka presented a prime example of what might be achieved through capacity-building assistance and maritime cooperation.²¹

(6) Closer to home are the **maritime and peninsular states of SEA** with which Australia is a major trading partner, as reflected by a number of bilateral FTAs (Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia) and progress toward an ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), as well as participation in Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Moreover, SEA is crucial to Australian defence strategy as the “Indo Pacific arc” that represents the country’s northern approaches, and where several SEA states are embroiled in the thorny maritime territorial dispute with China in the crucial waterway of the South China Sea. As the government identifies “Southeast Asia sits at a nexus of strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific.”²² Space precludes a through discussion of the entire ASEAN region, but several important developments will be touched on here.

Defence ties with Malaysia and Singapore through the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA) endure (and may be enhanced as the UK seeks to play a stronger defence role in the Indo Pacific). Additionally, Canberra has just announced a Strategic Partnership with Vietnam, and the Strategic Partnership with Singapore has been augmented in recent years, alongside others. In this respect, Australia - as “southern anchor” of the US alliance system -

serves as a “regional hub” through which to link together key states into a local-regional maritime security front. Notably, relations with Jakarta have improved as the country has sought to put forward its own vision as a “global maritime fulcrum” in response to the FOIP.²³ Australia has also supplied capacity-building assistance to SEA states that require it, including counter-terrorism cooperation with the Philippines. While the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) performs low-key FONOPS under Operation Gateway, a flagship part of regional engagement is the Indo Pacific Endeavour exercise which aims at public diplomacy and building interoperability as it cruises the Western Pacific (and Indian Ocean) to make port calls at several SEA states (and Sri Lanka) in its 2019 iteration.²⁴ SEA will remain central to both the economic and security aspects of an IPs.

(7) Finally, Canberra has ramped-up its policy-attention towards the **Pacific Islands Countries (PICS)** - an area where challenges to regional stability have multiplied. Within the broader context of a FOIP-based regional order, Canberra has become alert to inroads made by the PRC through economic and infrastructure development initiatives seeking to acquire strategic purchase in Australia’s near neighbourhood. Interestingly, former White House strategist Steve Bannon credits Australia as providing a “wake up call” for Chinese infiltration into this region.²⁵ This is alarming to Canberra as any hostile presence in the vital “Melanesian arc” of national defence (such as a Chinese naval port access), would present a serious threat to Australian interests.

But the objectives of the new “Pacific Step

21 Brewster, 21.

22 Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 43.

23 Leo Suryadinata, “Indonesia and Its Stance on the ‘Indo-Pacific’,” *Perspective*, Yusof Ishak Institute, no. 66 (2018): 1-7.

24 Australian Government Department of Defence, “Indo-Pacific Endeavour, 2019,” 3 May 2019, <<https://sldinfo.com/2019/05/indo-pacific-endeavour-2019-2>>.

25 Cameron Stewart, “Australia ‘alerted the US’ to China’s Pacific threat,” *Weekend Australian*, 1 June 2019, p. 9.

up” policy toward this region are double-edged.²⁶ On the one hand, they seek to reassert Australian influence in the South Pacific as a counterpoint to China, alongside FOIP partners such as the US, Japan and New Zealand (which launched its own “Pacific Reset” policy).²⁷ This dovetails with the US intent of “revitalising its engagement with the Pacific islands to preserve a free and open Indo Pacific region.”²⁸ The supply of development aid and infrastructure investment is designed to prevent the PICS falling into dependence upon China (including “debt-trap diplomacy” style predatory economics), whereas capacity-building such as the provision of patrol boats and coast guard training is aimed at protecting infringement to their sovereign rights (such as illegal fishing/resource extraction). The planned joint naval facility with the US at Manus Island in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is the sharpest evidence of strategic competition in this new arena.

On the other hand, it is part of a long-standing programme to improve their national resiliency through Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) by addressing the development, security and governance needs of these “fragile states”, which could form a potential source of non-traditional security threats such as people smuggling, drug trafficking or terrorism injurious to Australian national security. This has compelled the government of Australia to take the real concerns of the PICS about the negative repercussions of climate change and natural disasters into account, quite aside from incipient internal or external political challenges (as reflected in the Boe Declaration by the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)).²⁹ Thus,

one observes a clear nexus between economic and security imperatives in the Australian local strategy towards the South Pacific.

Conclusion/Assessment

Whether the IPs in anyway amounts to a representation of (or part of) a fully coherent Australian “grand strategy” is debatable, as often the boundaries between the use of the concept are blurred, and frequently just substituted with various aspects of foreign and security policy, more generally. And, as noted in the introduction, “Middle or smaller powers are often implicitly or explicitly assumed to be too constrained to pursue grand strategies.”³⁰ Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Canberra is taking an active role in seeking to shape the Indo Pacific region (especially) in its national strategic interests in an increasingly competitive environment through the various inter-related and interlocking initiatives documented above, and that it closely dovetails with the mainstays of the US version enunciated in the IPSR. Indeed, the US statement of intent will be likely well-received in Canberra, which has fretted over the abandonment of the “pivot” and the lack of strategic direction in the region evident in the first two years of the Trump Administration. As this Policy Brief has demonstrated, based upon the enduring world view of Australia (RBO; US-alliance; Asian engagement) the elements of a more directed IPs can be discerned throughout the related policy initiatives and sub-regional concentrations illustrated above. Australia therefore clearly seeks to exert its own strategic influence upon the IP region as far as its resources will allow, augmenting them where

26 Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Stepping Up Australia’s Pacific Engagement,” <<https://dfat.gov.au/geo/pacific/engagement>> [Accessed 10 March 2019].

27 New Zealand Government Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Strategic Intentions* (Wellington: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2018).

28 The United States Department of Defense, 40.

29 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, “Boe Declaration on Regional Security,” <<https://www.forumsec.org/boe-declaration-on-regional-security>> [Accessed 15 July 2019].

30 Hoof.

possible through cooperation with key allies and partners such as the US, Japan, India and key states in SEA and the South Pacific.