

# JGSS

## Journal of Global Strategic Studies

---

Vol. 01 No. 02 December 2021

Quad: Origin and Evolving Dynamics

*Srabani Roy Choudhury*

Japan and Foreign Territory Strike:  
Debate, Deterrence, and Defense Strength

*Corey Wallace*

Health Diplomacy as an Instrument of Indonesian  
Foreign Policy in the Era of COVID-19 Pandemic

*Dino Patti Djalal, Agus Subagyo, and Mariane Olivia Delanova*

Coup de Grace: How the Quad is Hastening  
the Destruction of Asean

*Quinissa Putrirezhy*

Unit-Level Explanation on Indonesian Foreign Policy:  
Elite Consensus and Sink the Vessel Policy Under the Jokowi's Presidency

*Miftachul Choir*

A Prayer for Democracy:  
Secretarian Violence and Regime Type in Indonesia

*Donald Greenlees*

Master's Programs in International Relations  
Faculty of Social and Political Science  
Jenderal Achmad Yani University

## **COUP DE GRÂCE: HOW THE QUAD IS HASTENING THE DESTRUCTION OF ASEAN**

Quinissa Putrirezhy

*University of Indonesia*

*(Submission 5-11-2021, Review 24-11-2021, Revision 5-12-2021, Published 20-12-2021)*

### **Abstract**

The rekindling of the US-led Quad alliance in 2017 has tested ASEAN ever since. Southeast Asia is at the centre of a simmering strategic rivalry between the two world superpowers, the United States and China. China's meteoric economic ascendance on the global stage has shifted the balance of global power in contemporary geopolitics. This article seeks to examine the potential of the Quad and how it could shake ASEAN's unity and centrality as a result of China's rise. Beijing is aggressively asserting its pseudohistorical irredentist claims in the South China Sea, a vital route for regional trade, and creating territorial disputes with some ASEAN member countries. This article finds that the reactions of Southeast Asian states towards China's rise as well as the Quad countries are diverse, but nonetheless have general likely trajectories. Hitherto, it has been convenient and beneficial for the ASEAN member states to cooperate with each other, with no bones of contention allowed to fracture the organization. This period of nonchalance has come to an end, however. Thus, the article makes the assertion that ASEAN will disintegrate gradually under the pressure of geopolitical realities.

**Keywords:** ASEAN, China's Rise, Quad, Disintegration

---

### **Introduction**

The rise of China has been the most significant development for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), simultaneously inspiring alarm, posing a challenge, and offering opportunities for this group of countries. As a regional organization consisting of ten states with various national interests, China is

presently shaking the unity of ASEAN itself. All ASEAN countries have economic ties with China; however, maritime countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, and even Indonesia, also share a common issue with China regarding territorial disputes in the South China Sea. The reemergence of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue in 2017, known more conveniently as “the Quad,” an informal dialogue among four democratic nations—the United States, Australia, Japan, and India, has been viewed ubiquitously as a reaction to rise of China and added further tension to the situation by quietly coordinating security policy and military activities with China in mind (Grossman, 2018).

The revival of the Quad is undoubtedly being closely observed in Southeast Asia, one of the zones where Sino-American rivalry is most visible. Some ASEAN countries such as Thailand and Indonesia have traditionally attempted to walk a fine line by cultivating good relations with both the Quad nations and China, while one finds the other nations at various positions along the spectrum. Whereas the likes of the Philippines and indisputably Vietnam have taken a more confrontational approach towards China, especially concerning maritime issues, others such as Laos and Cambodia have nurtured warming ties, as both nations enjoy generous sums of loans and investments from China. Moreover, the Quad countries themselves also have economic relationships with China, and some also share security issues, which has caused even more confusion and distrust. It cannot be denied that the ASEAN countries, when discussing China, have varied and complex relationships both with China and these four democratic countries. Thus, this has begun to put a strain on ASEAN, as the member states have been unable to reach a common consensus on these issues in order to tackle them effectively.

This article examines the potential of the Quad’s existence to exhaust the unity of ASEAN due to the rise of China, which will slowly but surely dissolve ASEAN’s importance as an organization because of their inability to reach

consensus on this crucial matter. The first section of this article discusses ASEAN and its relationship with China, including the countries that are more concerned economically and have a less friendly security posture. In the next section, by noting that Quad is merely a loose cooperation without a specific grouping framework (as of yet), the article will examine the relations between Quad member countries and ASEAN states, particularly security-concerned countries, followed by multifaceted relationships between the Quad countries and China and some issues they have. Lastly, the last section contains the conviction that ASEAN will go through a slow gradual dissolution as a result of this issue by also taking into account ASEAN's objectives and principles, and what might come next.

### **Quad: An Overview**

The precursor to the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue arose to cooperate on maritime matters and disaster relief in the wake of the 2004 earthquake and tsunami that struck southern Thailand and the northern Sumatran region of Aceh in Indonesia. The Quad itself emerged in 2007 from a vision of the Indo-Pacific as a unified strategic region in which efforts in one area would inevitably influence activities in another. The grouping fell out of relevance following the Great Recession of 2007-2008 and Australia's decision to leave the Quad in 2008. It reemerged again in 2017, motivated by two fundamental objectives. The first is that the four nations have a strong interest in maintaining the current order's laws and norms, strengthening existing institutions, safeguarding freedom of navigation and trade, and boosting connectivity, economic development, and security within existing codes and regulations. The second point was, international policy watchers believed, though it was never explicitly mentioned, that the Quad members saw China's growth and the scope of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a threat to each country's respective power in the region (Miller, M.C., 2021). Today, the countries—all democracies with

thriving/developed economies—are focused on a far larger agenda that includes addressing security, economic, and health concerns.

In their first virtual summit earlier in March this year, the group's connecting ideals once again were underscored— democracy, a rules-based system, and a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific – and emphasized its position as a “force for global good.” These establish the broad framework within which the Quad will function in order to shape international order in an age of transition from the “unipolar” world of the US as the sole superpower to one in which China seeks a significant role (Kutty, S.N. and Basrur, S., 2021).

The Quad is a loose coalition rather than a formal alliance, and their diplomacy has ebbed and flowed throughout time. Japan first stressed the four nations' democratic identities, whilst India appeared more at ease promoting functional collaboration. As for the Australian leaders, they have been hesitant to give the appearance that the organization is a formal alliance. As of 2021, policymakers in all four nations are more unified in their common reservations about China's growing assertive actions in the region, and they are more prepared to establish a constructive agenda of collaboration. In November 2020, the four navies engaged in their first joint exercise in almost a decade. In March 2021, US President Joe Biden hosted a virtual Quad summit in which Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga participated. Working groups were created on COVID-19 vaccinations, climate change, technology advancements, and supply-chain resilience (Smith, S.A., 2021).

### **ASEAN–China Relations**

Ever since the start of the dialogue process between ASEAN countries and China in 1991, both have broken new ground in the relationship featuring win-win cooperation, good-neighborliness, friendship, mutual trust, and mutual benefit

(Bu & Fan, 2016). ASEAN - China economic relations continue to thrive, and 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-China relations. Presently, China is ASEAN's largest trading partner and the third-largest external source of foreign direct investment (FDI). In 2020, the trade in goods reached USD 684.6 billion, and for the first time in history, ASEAN surpassed the EU to become China's largest trading partner (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, 2021). In 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic slashed worldwide FDI flows by 35%, and Southeast Asian countries suffered a 25% drop in FDI, some figures indicated China's investment in ASEAN increased 52.1 percent year on year to \$14.36 billion. With the signing of the major free trade agreement Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in November 2020, numerous trade and economic agreements between China and ASEAN countries are expected to further consolidate this already lucrative relationship (Global Times, 2021).

China's so-called "charm offensive" and the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement (ACFTA) has given the impression that China was prepared to endure some economic cost to give the impression to ASEAN countries that China can be trusted and that its new regional prominence could potentially be beneficial for the region (Beeson, 2016, p.14). Not merely confined to the economic domain, both have also promoted cooperation in science and technology, connectivity, as well as socio-cultural cooperation (ASEAN, 2018). When the Covid-19 pandemic hit in early 2020, countries in Southeast Asia were quick to collaborate with China from the very beginning of the crisis. Recently in October 2021, ASEAN and China released a joint statement related to the COVID-19 pandemic recovery framework, emphasizing the significance of ASEAN and China cooperation on the COVID-19 response and economic recovery, recognizing the existing accomplishments of the two sides (ASEAN, 2021). Aside from ASEAN as an organization, Indonesia and Malaysia have comprehensive strategic partnerships with China, while Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar have

comprehensive strategic cooperative partnerships with China (Sam & Van, 2015, p. 187). Thus, for the mainland ASEAN countries, China is especially important.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, China has undertaken a number of steps to demonstrate its commitment to globalization, interdependence, and multilateralism. The most notable of these has been its widespread medical assistance to and unflinching support for the WHO (Feldwisch-Drentrup, 2020). However, China's increasingly bellicose rhetoric and aggressive actions in the South China Sea present a stark contradiction. China appears to support multilateralism when, and only when, it serves to strengthen its own unilateral aspirations.

Some ASEAN countries are very concerned about security cooperation, particularly in ensuring freedom of maritime and aeronautical movement throughout the South China Sea. Beijing's assertions of sovereignty and insistence on special rights within the "nine-dash line" spanning practically the entire South China Sea have heightened regional tensions. With its now-infamous rejection of the historic UNCLOS judgment in favour of the Philippines in 2016, China has further eroded the authority and credibility of international arbiters. The nine dash line is undoubtedly controversial because it covers territories that are deemed exclusive to the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Indonesia (the Natuna Islands) (De Castro, R.C., 2020).

The mainland ASEAN nations of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar are not parties to the issue and have not actively addressed China on the South China Sea. Significantly, most of these ASEAN continent-based countries, such as Laos and Cambodia, have often relied extensively on China. China is the most essential element of the rapid development for both Laos and Cambodia, through development aid programs and FDI. With such a strong reliance on China, these member countries will not allow ASEAN to jeopardize their relationships with China over a scenario in which they are not engaged (Raymond, G., 2021).

This situation has become one principal obstacle in achieving consensus on a coherent ASEAN response to China's actions in the South China Sea. As mentioned by Sheldon W. Simon (2012), "ASEAN states take varying positions on the SCS dispute; Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar lean towards China; Malaysia and Indonesia are cautious about US involvement; Thailand and Singapore are neutral; while both Vietnam and the Philippines welcome an American role."

ASEAN calls for "peaceful resolution of disputes" in the South China Sea; however, it has not been effective so far in preventing China from asserting its territorial claims. Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei are the claimants (O'Neill, 2018). Indonesia, even though it does not have any active territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea, is involved in a dispute with China over the Natuna Islands, and it also claims the Exclusive Economic Zone in the resource-rich waters around these islands (Wong, 2017). Lately Indonesia has intensified patrols around the Natuna islands following the detection of Chinese and US vessels near these international waters (Aljazeera, 2021).

Therefore, ASEAN countries like Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia are very much pro-China, since their own economic development is highly dependent on Beijing, while some others have cooler relations, like Singapore and Malaysia. Then, there are ASEAN security-concerned countries that feel threatened by China, such as the Philippines and Vietnam (Raymond, G., 2021). With some member states being economically dependent on China, it would be challenging for ASEAN to take a firm stance against or in favour of the situation, even if it ever desired.

### **ASEAN–Quad Countries Relations**

Individually and collectively, the Quad countries have been engaging with the members of ASEAN and affirmed their strong support for ASEAN centrality as



well as ASEAN-led regional architecture, particularly for ASEAN's efforts in developing an Indo-Pacific outlook (Quad backs ASEAN-led system, 2019). ASEAN, though it is not officially part of the Quad, is central to the Indo-Pacific strategies of the US and its allies. However, there is no single, agreed-upon position in Southeast Asia about the Quad. Despite, some would say, strong incentives, most Southeast Asian governments are neither officially embracing the Quad nor are they actively seeking to resist or reject the emerging conversation (Laksmana, E. A., 2020).

Views toward the Quad vary by country. However, most ASEAN states remain uneasy about the four-country grouping, viewing it as a challenge to "ASEAN centrality," the idea that ASEAN serves as the fundamental platform for regional organizations. Simply stated, the Quad has raised concerns about ASEAN's standing in the developing regional architecture (Stromseth, J., 2021). Looking into more specific cooperation between the Quad member countries, despite their wariness of what the Quad might mean for its centrality, ASEAN has generally praised efforts by the United States to broaden the grouping's scope beyond security to include new vaccine cooperation and working groups on climate change and emerging technologies (Stromseth, J., 2021). Back in 2009, the United States launched sub-regional and bilateral initiatives to boost ties with Southeast Asia, including the Lower Mekong Initiative to deepen cooperation between the United States and ASEAN members Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam on issues related to the environment, health, education, and infrastructure development (Mekong-US Partnership, 2021).

Japan and ASEAN adopted a number of activities aimed at reducing the impact on the present economy and increasing economic resilience in the post-COVID-19 period, including initiatives in the digital economy and supply chains (Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan, 2020). Former Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga chose Vietnam and Indonesia as his first overseas destinations to visit in 2020. In Vietnam, he delivered a remark and stressed that Japan and

ASEAN would continue to work next to each other as equal partners to increase connectivity, people-to-people interaction, and human resource development. He further emphasized that the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which ASEAN approved in 2019, has essential conceptual overlap with Japan's FOIP (Miyake, K., 2020). ASEAN Mekong River country leaders have previously reaffirmed the importance of FOIP after Japan agreed to promote quality infrastructure projects along the Mekong River (Sim, 2018). In addition, the Philippines has also agreed to work toward this strategy (Kyodo, 2019).

In Narendra Modi's (the Prime Minister of India) Act East policy, he is also keen to strengthen ties with ASEAN members in developing maritime cooperation (Chand, 2018, p. 128). Considering India's size and military prowess, India could be the right partner for ASEAN (Wagle, 2018). Such partnership has been underway, for instance, the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) proposed by New Delhi at the 14th East Asia Summit in Bangkok in November 2019. This partnership has been seen as a game-changer in driving rigorous interaction between India and ASEAN based on the integration of strategic interests in political-economic and socio-cultural fronts while ensuring safety, maritime security, and stability in the vital Indo-Pacific region (Chirathivat, S. and De, P., 2020). In the meeting between India and Indonesia in May 2018, both countries also agreed on the importance of a free, open, transparent, rules-based, and peaceful Indo-Pacific region (Kaura, 2018).

Indonesia, with its geography as a gateway between the Asian continent and Oceania, as well as between the Pacific and Indian oceans (the critical Malacca Strait being an oil supply bottleneck), seems to be comfortable with the Indo-Pacific concept. In January 2019, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs stated the country's interest in leading other ASEAN countries to build a framework for FOIP (Lee, 2019), and up to this day, the cooperation under the FOIP framework is still being established and worked on. The current demands of Indonesia under Joko Widodo, are varied and diverse, but mostly revolve

around economics. Indonesia needs both the United States and China. Given China's status as Indonesia's top economic partner, the US remains economically and strategically important to the country, particularly as a counter-balance to China's influence and strength. In addition, noting the increasingly negative opinion from the Indonesian public towards China (Tarahita & Rakhmat, 2019), there is the possibility that Indonesia will end up leaning more towards the Quad side, or even aligning with AUKUS or the Quad.

Furthermore, Vietnam is a good example of a Southeast Asian country that is willing to build up its defence relationship with the Quad. Vietnam engaged in pandemic-related talks with Quad members and other partners. The US under Biden has continued to follow Trump's approach of building closer ties with Vietnam on security matters, while also rhetorically shifting to a more confrontational approach toward China (Tran, B.T., 2021). A joint statement with India has also been issued to uphold freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea. Japan has also come into the discussion, and maritime cooperation was deepened by allowing a Japanese submarine first port in Vietnam (Grossman, 2018). More and more, it seems more a question of when will, rather than if, Vietnam will sign up to the Quad.

### **Quad Countries–China Relations**

The Quad countries share a common interest regarding their concern on the rise of China. The US and its Quad allies have been discussing FOIP in response to China's Belt and Road Initiative. China's strategy has caused these liberal stakeholders to invest in the maintenance of FOIP itself (Foreign Policy Research Center, 2018, p. 8). The significant threat comes from the Chinese military, as indicated by its assertive pursuit of territorial claims in South Asia, the South China Sea, and the East China Sea. On the other hand, it is also economic and scientific. China is a key stakeholder in international supply chains, most notably

now as a vaccine provider, a significant worldwide investor through the BRI, and a rapidly developing technology power (Kutty, S.N. and Basrur, S., 2021).

China has been undoubtedly challenging the hegemonic status of the United States in the global power structure. China has always considered the Quad as an American-led effort to control and undermine its global expansion. Despite the polarisation of politics in the United States, with deep animosity growing between the two parties, Democratic President Joe Biden has so far indicated that he would have a similar approach to China as the former Republican President, Donald Trump (although Biden rejects Trump's unilateral instincts, and favours multilateralism). This strategy, which emphasizes strong collaboration between the US and its strategic allies, has been defined by Biden as the foundation of his China policy since he came to power. The Biden cabinet also intends to keep Trump's tariffs on Chinese imports to a large extent, though it will reopen an exclusion procedure to grant exemptions for some commodities. In other words, key aspects of Trump's China trade strategy will remain intact (Chalfant, M., 2021).

The relationship between India and China has primarily resulted in disagreements, and it has been worsening in recent months. The latest conflict was the border dispute in Ladakh in the Himalayan border area. Tens of thousands of troops, backed by artillery, tanks, and jet fighters, are now stationed along the de facto frontier known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The LAC connects the Himalayan territory of Ladakh in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in India's east, which China claims entirely. In 1962, India and China waged a devastating war over the border that spanned for 3,500km (2,200 miles) (Westcott, S. P., 2021). India is forced to rethink China's vision of an Asian structure with India since Beijing has surpassed India and other powers on many accounts to improve its "comprehensive national power" (Panda, 2018, p. 102). China has also interfered in what India considers as its spheres of influence.

Japan is still engaged in the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute in the East China Sea. Tensions between Japan and China have lately risen in 2020, when Japan claimed that China has “relentlessly continued attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by coercion in the sea area around the Senkaku Islands,” and “Japan cannot accept China’s actions to escalate the situation” (Mochizuki, M. and Han, J., 2020). There are also deep anti-Japanese sentiments within China which have not dissipated following World War 2, and a recent survey showed that 66.1% of Chinese people have a negative impression of Japan (The Japan Times, 2021). Moreover, a more assertive Chinese military has also threatened Japanese security and maritime strategic interests, since Japan relies on the Malacca Strait as well as the free passage in the seas for its energy imports (Panda, 2018, p. 101).

As for Australia, the government declared that it would “stand up” to China in the latter part of 2016. In early October 2021, the US, UK, and Australia announced the AUKUS pact, a security agreement designed to counter China. Recently, Beijing has launched a trade disruption campaign that has affected over a dozen Australian exports, ranging from coal to wine. Moreover, in April 2020, Australian political leaders gave the impression of conspiring with the Trump administration to launch an assault on China in response to the COVID-19 outbreak (The Washington Post, 2020). There has also been a lot of anxiety among the public and especially the media over the encroaching Chinese influence in Australian politics and society (Thiessen, 2019).

Despite all of this ill-feeling and resentment, these four countries are heavily tied to the Chinese economy. China’s Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has funded many infrastructure projects in India, making India the second-largest shareholder in the AIIB and its largest borrower (Iwanek, 2021). China is Japan’s biggest trading partner (Ezrati, 2019). Japan has also enjoyed Chinese tourists’ “explosive buying” on such things as cosmetics and health-care supplements (Ryall, J., 2015). China has been one of Boeing’s most vital

customers in recent years (Thomas, 2019). More than other Quad country, Australia has maintained strong economic ties with China, with Beijing remaining Canberra's largest trading partner, and Chinese visitors make up 15% of Australian international tourists as of 2019. (Thiessen, 2019).

### **ASEAN Dissolution**

The reactions of Southeast Asian states towards China's rise as well as the Quad countries with their FOIP strategy are diverse. Beijing's commercial influence is powerful in most mainland ASEAN countries, while maritime states are more concerned about their security issues. While this situation itself has brought into question ASEAN unity, it may deteriorate further with the response from Vietnam and Indonesia, the nations that appeared to be the most supportive of FOIP, particularly viewed in the light of both countries' deepened defence relations with the Quad members. If ASEAN remains incoherent in forming a united position regarding China on the South China Sea dispute, eventually, one or more of these ASEAN states adjacent to the South China Sea might align with the Quad, and the Quad would be delighted to see this happen, which would then deepen the cracks within ASEAN.

ASEAN centrality worked well during the Cold War as the original five founding countries had no territorial/political disputes with either of the world's two superpowers, the US and USSR. The current ASEAN members that were parties of the second and third Indochina wars (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) only joined ASEAN in the 1990's, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, spelling an end to the Cold War. Moreover, the Soviet Union was never a major part of the global economy, much less ASEAN's main trade partner as China currently is. There did not exist diverging economic interests between the nations of southeast Asia as there are now. Mainland southeast Asia is deriving greater and greater gains in investment and loans from partnering with China, whereas

maritime southeast Asia looks to lose overall from China's assertive expansionist actions in the South China Sea. As mentioned, these nations have strong economic ties with China too, but the economic loss these countries would suffer from having access to the rich resources of the South China sea withheld from them would far outweigh these trade and investment links, still less the de facto loss of sovereignty that would follow from such a scenario, which would be disastrous. Even if the elites of these nations could be monetarily coerced into accepting this new paradigm, it would put them in a precarious position politically, with no one wanting to appear as content with placing their nation under the suzerainty of Beijing. If one examines the ASEAN Declaration, it states that the aims of the Association are:

1. to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region
2. to promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries in the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter (ASEAN, 2020).

It is economic growth that the former aim places an unspoken emphasis on, with sociocultural links largely stated as window dressing. As argued above, if some countries are set to gain and some are set to lose economically (as well as politically) from the rise of China and all of the implications that come with it, then this will open up a chasm of diverging interests within ASEAN, and ultimately resentment and animosity that would create institutional paralysis. As for the latter aim, if China merely upholds support for multinational organizations when it works to its advantage and ridicules them when it does not, such as the UNCLOS judgment in favour of the Philippines over the South China Sea Arbitration, then ASEAN will eventually have to confront China when it does not abide by international law, or bow to it and abandon this ambition.

ASEAN member states have espoused fundamental principles in their relations with one another. Among these is mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity of all nations (ASEAN, 2021a). If some ASEAN countries do not respect the sovereignty of other members, even if indirectly through passive approval or even non-alignment with their fellow members with regard to territorial disputes with 3rd parties such as China and effectively cooperate on it (another principle), then ASEAN has no future.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, the existence of the Quad may clearly exasperate the pre-existing institutional indisposition of ASEAN. China has indeed become ASEAN's largest trading partner, but maritime countries adjacent to China have become increasingly insecure due to the South China Sea dispute, which threatens their economic lifelines coming from the West. Moreover, though China also shares economically beneficial relationships with the Quad members, it seems that these four countries' primary intention is to watch over China's Rise, making sure that China will not become the sole superpower in the Indo-Pacific region. Quad only arose as a counterweight to China, thus, it could be an essential factor in maintaining the regional balance of power. If some ASEAN states decide to join the Quad or act against it, this will lead to the dissolution of the multinational body, and in the worst-case scenario, cause a proxy war between the Southeast Asian nations, if a second cold war were to develop between China and the Quad.

Power, for better or worse, remains the essential element in global politics. ASEAN countries might have thought that the institution would have reshaped their internal relations with the external major powers. In lieu of that, the major powers, including China and the Quad members, were actually reshaping the relationship between ASEAN member states. As a final remark, it seems obvious



that ASEAN would have greater autonomy, power, and relevance if it could speak in one voice surrounding these issues, particularly on such salient issues of core power as territorial integrity and coercive force. If ASEAN cannot do this, and soon, it will fracture into subgroups where interests align more readily and in a nightmare scenario, fracture into a geopolitical context akin to the Iron Curtain that emerged in post war Europe.

### **Bibliography**

- Acharya, A. (2017). The Myth of ASEAN Centrality? Contemporary Southeast Asia, 39(2), 273-279.
- Aljazeera. (2021, September 17). Indonesia adds patrols after detecting ships in South China Sea. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/9/17/indonesia-increases-sea-patrols>.
- ASEAN. (2012). Overview of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations. ASEAN Secretariat Information Paper.
- . (2020). The ASEAN Charter.
- . (2021). Joint Statement on Cooperation in Support of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework.
- . (2021a). ASEAN Fundamental Principles. <https://asean.org/what-we-do/>.
- Beeson, M. (2016). Can ASEAN Cope with China? Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, 35, 1, 5–28.
- Chalfant, M. (2021, October 19). Biden holds Trump's line when it comes to China. The Hill. <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/577319-biden-holds-trumps-line-when-it-comes-to-china>.
- Chand, N. (2018). The Quad and Future of Indo-Pacific Security. Centre for Land Warfare Studies Journal, 127-136.
- Chirathivat, S., & De, P. (2020). Editorial. Journal of Asian Economic Integration, 2(2), 135–139.
- De Castro, R. C. (2020). The Limits of Intergovernmentalism: The Philippines' Changing Strategy in the South China Sea Dispute and Its Impact on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, 39(3), 335–358.
- Ezrati, M. (2019, March 27). Still The Wrong Answer in Japan. Forbes Media. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/miltonezrati/2019/03/27/still-the-wrong-answer-in-japan/?sh=6fc88fe77573>.
- Feldwisch-Drentrup, H. How WHO Became China's Coronavirus Accomplice. Foreign Policy. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/02/china-coronavirus-who-health-soft-power/>.

- Foreign Policy Research Centre (2018). The QUAD- Stakes and Stakeholders. FPRC Journal 2018(3).
- Global Times. (2021, July 5). High complementarity to boost China's investment in ASEAN. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202107/1227895.shtml>.
- Grossman, D. (2018, October 2019). The Quad is not Enough. Foreign Policy. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/10/19/to-balance-china-call-vietnam-malaysia-philippines/>.
- Iwanek, K. (2021, June 14). Amid Tensions with China, India Proceeding With AIIB-funded Projects. The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/06/amid-tensions-with-china-india-proceeding-with-aiib-funded-projects>.
- Kaura, V. (2018). India-Indonesia Relations and Indo-Pacific Security. Asia Pacific Bulletin, 437.
- Kutty, S.R., and Basrur, R. (2021, March 24). The Quad: What It Is – And What It Is Not. The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/03/the-quad-what-it-is-and-what-it-is-not/>
- Kyodo (2019, June 01). Japan and Philippines agree to work toward free and open Indo-Pacific. The Japan Times. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/06/01/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-philippines-agree-work-toward-free-open-indo-pacific/>.
- Laksmana, E. A. (2020). Whose Centrality? ASEAN and the Quad in the Indo-Pacific. The Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs Vol 3 No 5, 106-117.
- Lee, J. (2019, February 16). Indonesia key to ASEAN centrality. The Jakarta Post. <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2019/02/16/indonesia-key-to-asean-centrality.html>
- Mekong-US Partnership. (2021). The Mekong-U.S. Partnership and the Friends of the Mekong: Proven Partners for the Mekong Region. <https://mekonguspartnership.org/2021/08/19/the-mekong-u-s-partnership-and-the-friends-of-the-mekong-proven-partners-for-the-mekong-region/>.
- Miller, M.C. (2021, October 13). The Quad, AUKUS, and India's Dilemmas. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/article/quad-aukus-and-indias-dilemmas>.

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC. (2021, September 16). Overview Of China-ASEAN Economic And Trade Relations, Opportunities And Challenges--Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Huang Xilian, Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines.
- Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan. (2020). ASEAN-Japan Economic Resilience Action Plan.
- Miyake, K. (2020, October 20). Suga in Vietnam: Talking about China without naming it. The Japan Times. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2020/10/20/commentary/japan-commentary/yoshihide-suga-vietnam-china/>.
- Mochizuki, M. and Han, J.(2020, September 16). Is China Escalating Tensions With Japan in the East China Sea? The Diplomat. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/09/is-china-escalating-tensions-with-japan-in-the-east-china-sea/>.
- O'Neill, D. C. (2018, October 15). China just Asserted Its Hold Over the South China Sea. Will Asian Nations Push Back. The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/15/china-just-asserted-its-hold-over-the-south-china-sea-will-other-asean-nations-push-back/>.
- Panda, J. P. (2018). India's Call on China in the Quad: A Strategic Arch between Liberal and Alternative Structures. *Rising Powers Quarterly*, 3(2), 83-111.
- Raymond, G. (2021). Jagged Sphere: China's Quest for Infrastructure and Influence in Mainland Southeast Asia. Lowy Institute Analysis.
- Ryall, J. (2015, December 2). Bakugai! Japan's new term for 'explosive' Chinese shoppers. SCMP. <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/east-asia/article/1886280/bakugai-japans-new-term-explosive-chinese-shoppers>.
- Sam, D. T. & Van H. T. H. (2015). ASEAN-China Relations since Building of Strategic Partnership and Their Prospects. *International Journal of China Studies*, 6(2), 187-194.
- Sim, W. (2018, October 09). Japan Vows Quality Infrastructure in Mekong Region in Push for Free and Open Indo Pacific. The Straits Times. <https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/japan-vows-quality-infrastructure-in-mekong-region-in-push-for-free-and-open-indo>.

- Simon, S. W. (2012). Conflict and Diplomacy in the South China Sea: The View from Washington. *Asian Survey*, 52, 6, 995–1018.
- Smith, S.A. (2021, May 27). The Quad in the Indo-Pacific: What to Know. Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/quad-indo-pacific-what-know>.
- Stromseth, J. (2021, September 23). ASEAN and the Quad: Strategic impasse or avenue for cooperation? Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2021/09/23/asean-and-the-quad-strategic-impasse-or-avenue-for-cooperation/>.
- Tarahita, D. & Rakhmat, M. Z. (2019, June 06). Understanding Indonesians' Souring Sentiment Toward China. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/06/understanding-indonesians-souring-sentiment-toward-china/>.
- The Hindustan Times. (2019, June 01). Quad backs Asean-led system for Indo-Pacific. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/quad-backs-asean-led-system-for-indo-pacific/story-v35mQzHcV4Mv8yH6iuOS1O.html>.
- The Japan Times. (2021, October 21). Chinese people's impression of Japan worsens, survey shows. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/10/21/national/china-japan-survey/>.
- The Washington Post. (2020, December 5). Australia is standing up to China's bullying. It needs U.S. support. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/australia-is-standing-up-to-chinas-bullying-it-needs-us-support/2020/12/04/666475fa-3656-11eb-8d38-6aea1adb3839\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/australia-is-standing-up-to-chinas-bullying-it-needs-us-support/2020/12/04/666475fa-3656-11eb-8d38-6aea1adb3839_story.html).
- Thiessen, T. (2019, March 27). What's driving China conspiracy theories in Australia? SCMP. <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/geopolitics/article/3003327/whats-driving-china-conspiracy-theories-australian-media>.
- Thomas, N. (2019, February 26). For Company and For Country: Boeing and US-China Relations. Macropolo, Paulson Institute.
- Tran, B.T. (2021, June 3). No Trade-Off: Biden Can Both Deepen U.S.-Vietnam Ties and Promote Human Rights. CSIS. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/no-trade-biden-can-both-deepen-us-vietnam-ties-and-promote-human-rights>.

- Wagle, A. A. (2018, October 24). How will ASEAN balance a tug of power between China and US-led 'Quad' in the Indo-Pacific? The Jakarta Post. <https://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2018/10/24/how-will-asean-balance-a-tug-of-power-between-china-and-us-led-quad-in-the-indo-pacific.html>.
- Westcott, S. P. (2021). Seizing a Window of Opportunity? The Causes and Consequences of the 2020 Sino-Indian Border Stand-off. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, 8(1), 7–32.
- Wong, C. (2017, May 03). After Summit ASEAN Remains Divided on South China Sea. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/after-summit-asean-remains-divided-on-south-china-sea/>.
- Xu, B. & Fan, Y. A New Journey for China-ASEAN Relations. *China International Studies*, 56, 64-84.



<http://ejournal.fisip.unjani.ac.id/>