

Australia's Defense Strategy in Dealing With Potential Threats From China in The Asia Pasific Region

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Abstract

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The AUKUS alliance, a three-way strategic defence partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States, was announced with the aim of building a nuclear submarine fleet. The research method used in this analysis is a qualitative approach, focusing on foreign policy studies and literature reviews related to geopolitical relations in the Asia-Pacific region. The author uses the concept of foreign policy to understand how the threat from China affects Australia's security strategy. The strategy aims to better position Australia to contribute to regional security and stability, as China's increasing self-sufficiency and the risk of military conflict between major powers in the Indo-Pacific region increase. The document provides a grim assessment of security in the Pacific and sets out a massive increase in defence expenditures to restructure the Australian military to cope with the changing security environment in Asia-Pacific. The review also focuses on the operationalization of a deterrence by a denial strategy, which includes the acquisition of a more powerful and lethal long-range attack capability and the upgrading of Australian northern bases to force rotations. This strategy emphasizes the importance of suppressing China's "competitive tactics" through a combination of military capabilities, diplomacy and alliances with traditional partners.

I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, Australia has focused on the Asia-Pacific, focusing on economic integration and maintaining relationships with major economies, especially the US and China. Its position in the region has changed significantly as a result of changes in its strategic importance and relationship with major players in the region. Australia has used the Indo-Pacific concept to describe its strategic environment in recent years. The changing geopolitical landscape led to this action. India's strategic importance to the Indian Ocean is becoming more important, and India sees the Indian Ocean as a strategic point for planning and competition (Nindyawati,2020). Australia's strategy depends on its relationship with China. Although China is Australia's largest trading partner, tensions are rising over issues such as Chinese investment in Australia and its Pacific neighbours, allegations of foreign interference in Australian politics, and a sting.

As a result of this tension, Australia's strategic importance and Australian views on the region are being re-examined. Their relationship has been unstable in recent years, as Australia has raised various human rights issues with China, such as freedom of expression, religious freedom, torture, the death penalty and the treatment of political and ethnic minority prisoners. lawyers and civil rights activists. Australia also criticised China's attitude towards the South China Sea dispute and the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these conflicts, the Australian government remains committed to mutually beneficial and respectful relations with China, as the two countries have different histories, societies and political structures, as well as differences of opinion on a number of important issues. The two countries continue to make bilateral visits and discussions, and scientists, researchers, and politicians regularly talk to each other. Prior to the ratification of the AUKUS Defence Pact, growing concerns about China's expansionism in the South China Sea and aggression against Taiwan. The Indo-Pacific region, an important shipping route stretching from India to Japan and south to Australia, has become more vulnerable to China in recent years. Because of its ability to travel long distances, speed, and improved fighter capabilities, nuclear-powered submarines are considered better precautions in this regard. The innovative three-way strategic defence alliance between Australia, Britain, and the United States, known as AUKUS, announced that its goal was to build a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines. Maintaining the “free and open Indo-Pacific” and dealing with the “current strategic environment” are the main reasons why the project is being implemented in the Asia Pacific region.

Previously, Australia had a complicated relationship with China, characterized by economic co-operation and strategic tensions. This country sees its relationship with China as the most important,

based on mutual interests and mutual respect. The economic ties between the two countries are very strong and China is Australia's largest trading partner and export market. However, due to China's growing political and strategic influence, as well as its actions in the South China Sea and against Taiwan, the two countries' political ties are deteriorating. However, efforts are being made to involve strategic and defence issues through high-level visits and discussions. The AUKUS Defence Pact is seen as a strategic step to counter China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region and to strengthen the security of Australia and its allies in this regard.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fajar Oktavianto's dawn in his journal entitled "Implikasi AUKUS Terhadap Hubungan Ekonomi Australia dan Tiongkok Tahun 2021-2022" Economic relations between Australia and China 2021–2022 are discussed in this journal as a result of Australia's respective defence pacts in AUKUS. In this study techniques of national importance, for qualitative, and neorealism work. The results mean that the Australian Economic Community with China is flooding Australia's foreign policy of joining AUKUS. China protested Australia's trade value by halting imports of some Australian commodities in 2021. The journal also discusses the development of economic communication between Australia and China before and after a standard diplomatic conference. The study used secondary literature and data, with an emphasis on ideas important to the nation.

"Potensi Ancaman Kebangkitan Kuasa Ekonomi dan Ketentaraan China dalam Rantau Asia Pasifik" written by Intan Suria Hamzah in this journal discusses the threats that may arise due to China's economic and military rise in the Asia-Pacific. Although China's military power has not had a significant impact on the international order, this article discusses how China became a global economic power after joining the WTO. Some of the key topics discussed include: China's growing economic power in the Asia-Pacific, China's economic and military threats to regional security, China's efforts to strengthen economic ties with surrounding countries, its influence on the global capitalist system, China's perception of ASEAN as a hegemonic threat and security threats from China's nuclear program. In short, the rise of China scared many countries, especially the United States, because this is expected to end the dominance of the United States in the Asia-Pacific and create limited economic and military threats.

"Konstruksi Strategi Kompartementalisasi Australia Dalam Hubungan Diplomatik Dengan Republik Rakyat Tiongkok Masa Kepemimpinan Scott Morrison" by Stefanus Hendri Putra, This journal analyzes how the separatism strategy initiated by Prime Minister Bob Hawke under his leadership, applied under Prime Minister Scott Morrison, uses a constructive approach. This magazine

generally says that the method of partialization successfully used by Hawke is no longer relevant to Morrison's use. Because the conditions and dynamics of relations between Australia and the People's Republic of China (PRC) differ during their respective leadership periods. In Hawke's time, the China was seen as a country with great potential for exploitation, so an effective separation strategy could separate sensitive economic issues from commercial issues. However, in Morrison's day, RRT had turned out to be a major force seen as threatening Australia's national interests, so Morrison tended to take a more confrontational stance on the China.

The journal also highlights how important it is for leaders to communicate and understand each other well when managing complex bilateral relations. A good personal relationship with the China leader helped in managing sensitive issues in Hawke's time, but under Morrison's leadership, this relationship did not exist. Overall, the journal presents a comprehensive analysis of changes in Australia-China bilateral relations. The diary also discusses how Australia's diplomatic strategy changes as global political leadership and the global situation change. Furthermore, the constructive approach used in this journal provides an interesting understanding of how non-material components such as communication, identity, and perception influence the direction of a country's foreign policy.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

State decision makers use strategies or action plans to deal with other states or international political entities as foreign policy. National interests determine the control of this policy. Although the government of a country makes foreign policy to serve the interests of its national community, we must remember that the rulers at that time often influence the determination of that national interest. States and national actors often work together in various forms, such as bilateral, trilateral, regional, and multilateral, to national interests. Rosenau stated that foreign policy refers to the attempt of a country to seize and benefit from its external environment through all its actions and attitudes. As he said, the purpose of preserving the existence of a country is a foreign political goal. Rosenau continued, reflecting on a country's foreign policy brings us to a very broad and complex phenomenon, covering aspects of internal life and external needs, including aspirations, national attributes, cultures, conflicts, abilities, institutions, and daily activities aimed at profit. and preserve the social, legal and geographical identity of a country as a nation (Rosenau, 1974). In this study the author uses this article because the threat coming from China affects Australia's foreign policy because Australia feels threatened by China's presence in the Asia-Pacific Region, so Australia makes a policy to formulate the strategies needed to confront China in the Asian Pacific Region.

IV. METHODS

The research method use in this paper is qualaitative research analysize method, qualitative research analysis method involves the collection, analysis, and thorough interpretation of the collected data to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. In his book "Research Design", John W. Creswell says that qualitative research is one type of method for identifying, studying, and understanding meanings ascribed to social or humanitarian problems. This method leads the author to address the problems that occur about How Australia is dealing with the threat from China in the Asia-Pacific region. According to the author, qualitative research analysis has succeeded in providing the ability for the author to be able to explore the problems contained in this paper. Qualitative analysis provides an opportunity for the author to be able to describe the problematics that occur in this problem and also provides an opportunity for the author to be able to explain the process that occurs in the discussion above.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND CHINA

Since the early 1900s, bilateral relations between China and Australia have become complex and dynamic. In the early 1900s, Australia had economic and political interests in Asia-Pacific, while China remained independent. However, they became Japanese allies during World War II, starting bilateral relations. Australia and China began the process of normalizing their diplomatic relations after the war, in the 1950s and 60s. When Australia recognized the RRT, they expanded economic and cultural co-operation by signing the first trade agreement. China accepts investment and trade with Australia, while Australia has diplomatic relations with RRT. Investment and business cooperation are also increasing. During the 1990s and 2000s, the economic and cultural co-operation between the two countries became stronger as a result of the era of globalization. Australia and China signed an increasingly comprehensive trade agreement after joining the WTO. The relationship continued with more active involvement in the 2010s. The two countries signed an investment agreement to expand business cooperation and join regional forums such as APEC.

Australia and China continue to strive to maintain stable and productive bilateral relations, even though in recent years they have faced problems such as conflict in the South China Sea. Economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries is still very important. Under Prime Minister Scott Morrison, relations between China and Australia deteriorated. Morrison is known to support harsh policies against China, such as sanctions against Huawei and a ban on the supply of 5G. This raises concern and anger in China, which sees Australia intimidating Chinese-Australian citizens and threatening its interests in the Pacific, like calling for an independent investigation into Chinese imports, triggering protests and higher Chinese tariffs. Moreover, his strong support for the "One China" policy

increased tensions between China and Australia during Morrison's leadership. Morrison's harsh policy against China is believed to worsen bilateral relations and increase tensions in the Pacific. Since taking office in May 2022, the Anthony Albanese government has been trying to calm down the conflict between China and Australia. It pushed Beijing to cancel import regulations of Australian coal, barley, beef, and cotton. Australian copper exports, which typically account for 5% of Australian commodity sales to China, also increased, reaching \$60.5 billion in the first quarter of 2023. Besides, the Australian prime minister since the Albanians is trying to improve the intense ties between Australia and China. COVID-19 pandemic 19. In November 2023, he made a state visit to China, which was seen as an important step towards enhancing relations. During the visit, the Albanians met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Qiang. This meeting paves the way for the return of good relations between China and Australia.

CHINA'S THREAT TO AUSTRALIA IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

China's growing power and influence in the Asia-Pacific region has been a major problem for Australia, especially in terms of military advances. China's rapid economic growth and military modernization have increased tensions and competition with other countries in the region, including Australia. To offset China's increasing influence, Australia has strengthened defence ties with other countries, such as the United States and Japan. This includes Australia and Japan signing the Reverse Access Agreement (RAA) to enhance defense cooperation and military interoperability. Australia sees the RAA as a strategic step to boost its military capabilities to counter the threat from China. Australia is deeply concerned about China's military expansion in Asia-Pacific. China has increased its military presence in the region, including placing naval ships and aircraft in disputed areas such as the South China Sea, which has sparked tensions with other countries, including Australia, which strongly condemns China's actions. To offset China's growing influence, the Australian government has sought to strengthen its military capabilities and alliances with other nations. This includes enhancing its military capabilities, such as buying new warships and expanding its military base in the area. In addition, Australia has strengthened its defense ties with the United States through the AUKUS agreement, which aims to enhance defence cooperation and military interoperability between the three countries.

In addition to this military development, Australia is also concerned about China's economic impact in the region. China's economic presence in Asia-Pacific, including investment in infrastructure and natural resources, has raised concerns about its ability to use its economic power to influence other countries in the region. In addition, Australia has increased investment in education and technology, including information and communication technology (ICT), biotechnology, and renewable energy. It

is expected that this investment will help the Australian industry make more innovative products and become more competitive in the global market.

NEW DEFENCE STRATEGY TO FIGHT CHINA'S "FORCED TACTICS"

In Australia's new defence strategy, "coercive" refers to the use of tactics that go beyond conventional diplomatic and economic means to strategic goals, with particular emphasis on preventing China's "forced tactics" in the Asia-Pacific region, which are considered unjustifiable. It's capable of causing conflict. It can include geopolitical, economic, military and cybersecurity information, as well as activities designed to suppress or influence the actions of other nations. Australia is concerned about China's rigour and coercive tactics in the Indo-Pacific region, which is seen as a threat to Australia's regional security. This new defence strategy focuses on preventing these coercive tactics and puts Australia in a better position to support regional security and stability, as Australia no longer has a ten-year strategic warning window for conflict (Japan Times, 2024). The document gives a poor assessment of security in the Pacific and predicts a sharp increase in defence spending to re-equip Australian forces to cope with security changes in the Indo-Pacific.

Developing a large fleet of surface combat, tripling missile capabilities, and a hidden nuclear-powered submarine fleet is an important part of this strategy. Further, the plan emphasizes the use of AUKUS and other security alliances to enhance ties with conventional allies, such as the United States, Britain, and Japan. Furthermore, it suggests that the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) be transformed from a "balanced force" to a "focused force". This is intended to increase the ADF's capacity in long-range attacks and exploit bases in the north for forced rotation. It recognizes that China is a significant strategic competitor and that China has a rapidly expanding military capability, with a special emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region where Australia is located. It also acknowledges that the Indo-pacific is the biggest security challenge Australia is currently facing.

The main components of Australia's new defence strategy include:

1. Blocking China's "Forced Tactics": The strategy focuses on blocking China's "forced tactics" in the Asia-Pacific region, which is seen as prone to conflict. It includes a major focus on protecting Australia's interests in its nearest territory, with a focus on developing a hidden nuclear-powered submarine fleet, doubling the capabilities of major missiles, and developing large surface combat fleets.
2. All-nation efforts: This strategy calls for all-national efforts by extending defence policy to include diplomacy, in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands.

3. Deepening Relations with Allies: The Strategy emphasizes the importance of deepening relations with traditional allies, such as the United States, Britain, and Japan, through the implementation of AUKUS and other security relations.
4. Re-configure the ADF: This strategy recommends the re-configuration of the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) from a “balanced force” to a “focused force,” designed to respond to various possibilities. This includes focusing on long-range attack capabilities and increasing the base in the north to force rotation.
5. Operating the Prevention Strategy with Disengagement: This strategy seeks to better position Australia in contributing to regional security and stability by acquiring stronger and more lethal long-distance attack capability as well as increasing Australia's bases in the North to force Rotation.
6. Accelerating the Development and Acquisition of Disruptive Technology: This strategy highlights the need to accelerate the development and acquisition of disruptive technology, including autonomous systems, underwater warfare, and hypersonic missiles.
7. Structural changes in the Navy, Air Force, and Army: This strategy recommends the restructuring of the navy, air force, and army, as well as the expansion of Australian industrial capacity. (Lam Tran, 2023).

REMOTE AND AUKUS ELECTRICAL POWER PROJECTIONS

In Australia's defence strategy, the concept of long-term power projection and AUKUS is crucial. Long-term power projection refers to the military's ability to project power and its influence over distances, typically using advanced technology. (Dr. Marcus Hellyear, Andrew Nicholls.2022). Instead, AUKUS is a trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United States, and Britain. This includes cooperation in nuclear-powered submarines and other defence technologies. (2023). Military strategies known as long-term power projections involve the use of advanced technology to project military power and influence over long distances. In Australia's defence strategy, long-term force planning is seen as a sensible way to protect against threats from countries like China. Although Australia is far from the center of a global military conflict, its strategic situation has changed significantly in recent years due to the increased likelihood of a significant escalation of conflict and conflict in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia must be able to project a force outside its territory if it wants to better defend itself and maintain peace in the indo-pacific area. This is crucial in view of China's increasing military power and control over the South China Sea, which threatens the legal system that is Australia's backbone in terms of security and economic growth. AUKUS, a trilateral agreement in which Britain and the United States will supply nuclear-powered submarines to Australia, will be used as a major projection of Australia's power. However, Australia must also enhance its port and base in the north, which extends from the

Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean to the town of Townsville in the North-East, and increase its long-range attack capabilities with a variety of Australian-made weapons. AUKUS, also known as the Australia-UK-US security partnership, is a trilateral agreement between Australia, the US, and the UK (J. Vitor Tossini, 2024). Announced on September 15, 2021, this partnership aims to share technology and capabilities of nuclear-powered submarines, as well as defence and security-related areas such as electronic and cybernetic warfare, quantum technology, artificial intelligence, submarine capability, hypersonic weapons, and innovation. The primary objective of AUKUS is to maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region as well as protect Australia's security from growing threats. Considered as a strategic enhancement, this cooperation aims to respond and block China's aggression and plans in the Indo-Pacific region.

The focus on future energy projections is driven by Australia's strategic and geographical situation. For the survival, peace and prosperity of the nation, the Australian maritime approach is crucial. It's because Australia is an island state. The Navy is responsible for Australian maritime security and the lives of Australian citizens depend on maritime communication routes. However, conventional submarines are becoming more vulnerable with increased technology and surveillance capabilities as well as increased competition in the field. Therefore, Australia wants to buy a nuclear-powered submarine, which has a better capability, resilience to maritime attacks, and strength projection (USSC, 2023).

Seen as a way to enhance Australia's independent defence capabilities, share information and integrate capability with allies, AUKUS collaboration is seen as the way to that goal. Australia has gained access to British and American nuclear-powered submarine technology and an opportunity to conduct joint exercises thanks to an information-sharing agreement on a nuclear power fleet. As part of wider defence technology cooperation, Australia plans to build a nuclear-powered submarine base off the east coast (Australia Satake, T, 2023).

GOVERNMENT-WIDE EFFORTS AND PRIORITIES

Australia's defence strategy covers the efforts and priorities of the entire government. The overall concept of government efforts means that various departments and government agencies work together to combat possible threats, including those coming from China. This approach is intended to facilitate the continuity of themes, messages, and strategic actions horizontally and vertically throughout the United States. The government's overall approach to defence strategies refers to the coordination and integration of various government institutions and departments to ensure that their efforts work together to counter potential threats. In terms of Australia's defence strategy, a whole-government approach is

crucial to combating China's expansion and military power in the Indo-Pacific region. This strategy recognizes that to go beyond conventional military capabilities requires a comprehensive approach, including diplomatic, economic and information activities (Holmes,2013). The Australian Defence Strategy acknowledges that the entire government effort is vital to counter Chinese military expansion in the Indian and Pacific region.

Another important component of Australia's defence strategy is priority setting. The objective of this strategy is to counter Russia's gray zone actions, undertake attacks, gain allies and partners, and adopt a more global power posture. The National Defence Strategy outlines the importance of Australia's position in supporting regional security and stability by strengthening bases in the north to force rotation and acquire far more powerful and dangerous long-range attack capabilities.

The 2023 Strategic Defence Review (DSR) continues to emphasize the importance of government-wide efforts and priorities. DSR recommends changing the position of the Australian Defense Forces (ADF) from a "balanced force" to a "concentrated power" to address the possibilities. In addition, the review focuses on the implementation of rejection prevention strategies; this includes raising bases in the north to force rotation and gaining stronger and more lethal long-range attack capabilities.

VI. CONCLUSION

The new defence strategy emphasizes the importance of blocking China's "forced tactics" through a combination of military capabilities, diplomacy, and alliances with traditional partners to prevent military conflict between major nations in the Indo-Pacific region, while Australia is more supportive of regional security and stability. The Australian defence strategy includes two main components: long-term strength projections and AUKUS. Long-term power projections are driven by Australia's geographical and strategic circumstances, while the AAKUS partnership is seen as a way to enhance Australian defensive capabilities and share technology with other nations. The Australian defence strategy involves coordination of various departments and government agencies and prioritizing capabilities and strategies so that Australia can make a better contribution to regional security and stability. This strategy allows Australia to counter potential threats from China and other enemies in the Indo-Pacific region.

I suggest that Australia secure a position conducive to the existence of Asia-Pacific security and joint stability in the following ways: Objectives of regional cooperation: Australia must continue to cooperate in defence matters with neighbouring countries in the Asia-Pacific region to build a

collective force to enhance control; Greater diplomacy: Australia is experiencing multilateral development and expansion of cooperation networks with strategic partner countries; and considerations for technological development: Australia should enhance its position in multilateral diplomacy and expand its network of collaboration with its strategic partners.

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