

# Asia's Competitive "Strategic Geometries": The Australian Perspective<sup>1</sup>

WILLIAM T. TOW

*Recent changes of government in Australia and Japan, and a pending one in the United States, signifies a historical crossroads in these three allies' security politics in the Asia-Pacific region. In recent years, all three countries have tended to rationalize their strategic collaboration on the need to build innovative and competitive-oriented "strategic geometries" as a means to counter China's growing power and to meet new types of threats in the region. Yet the Australian Government under John Howard simultaneously pursued a hedging strategy, exploiting its growing economic relationship with China while strengthening its diplomatic and strategic profile with the United States. Despite Tokyo's own substantial economic relationship with Beijing, recent Japanese leaders were unable to pursue the same type of "dual track" strategy to the same extent as Howard. With Kevin Rudd's election as the new Australian Prime Minister and Yasuo Fukuda's ascent to power in Japan, prospects for Australia and Japan to cultivate more independent politico-security ties with Beijing have strengthened. If so, the evolving regional security postures of both these US allies may compel the United States to reassess its own traditional skepticism towards multilateral security groupings in the region.*

**Keywords:** security architectures, strategic geometries, multilateralism versus multipolarity, hubs-and-spokes, Australian-Japan Joint Security Declaration.

WILLIAM T. TOW is a Professor in International Security at the Australian National University's Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS), and a Chief Investigator for the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security (CEPS).

World politics is ultimately determined by landmark changes in state-centric power configurations and the contemporary international security environment is proving to be no exception.<sup>2</sup> Europe, the Middle East and Asia collectively form the vortex of geopolitical rivalry in our time and the United States, the “hyper-power”, whose strategic commitments dominate and whose resource needs bestride all three regions, is increasingly strained to project effective control over how these regions will shape the evolution of international security. This is particularly true as the forces of globalization become more complex and as the scope of security policy concerns broadens. In such an environment post-war US allies like Australia are challenged with how to determine whether their own national security interests and policies correspond with or diverge from American expectations and demands.

In this context, Australia stands at a historical crossroads. For nearly eighty years after Federation in 1901, that country pursued an unmitigated strategy of alliance politics, relying initially upon its erstwhile colonial power, Great Britain, and since 1942 upon the United States for protection and, ultimately, for survival against real or potential regional predators. Over the last twenty to thirty years, however, Australia has pursued a more complex, dual track, strategy to guarantee its security and prosperity. The two main elements comprising this strategy are: (1) a comprehensive regional engagement with its Asian neighbours, designed to pursue community-building and avoid security dilemmas, complemented by (2) a continuation and, most recently, an intensification of its alliance with the United States.<sup>3</sup> This approach was perhaps most graphically characterized by then Prime Minister John Howard in a wide-ranging speech delivered in August 2001 when he insisted that: “...it (is) not necessary [for Australia] to choose between our relationships with Asian countries, and those in Europe and North America — to choose between our history and our geography”.<sup>4</sup>

In retrospect, the formula of pursuing politico-strategic equilibrium — “build(ing) and maintain(ing) links with all the major centres of global power and influence, while ensuring that [Australia’s] key regional relationships were kept vibrant and strong” can be viewed as successful.<sup>5</sup> Over the past decade, Australia’s economy grew steadily through its cultivation of an insatiable China market and preservation of viable trading and investment relationships with more traditional Asian economic partners (particularly Japan and South Korea). It simultaneously entered into a comprehensive free trade agreement with the United States, strengthened its access to

US defence intelligence and weapons technology and intensified its diplomatic profile with US officials.<sup>6</sup> While Australia's military involvement in Iraq has been undoubtedly controversial, its casualties among defence personnel serving in that war-torn land have been remarkably light to date. The newly elected Rudd government pledged throughout the late 2007 federal election campaign that it would remove all Australian combat forces from that theatre. He was careful, however, to qualify this declaration with the caveat that the US would be "fully consulted" prior to withdrawing what is, in fact, a very modest number (around 550) of Australian combat forces. Nearly 1,000 Australian military personnel would remain stationed in Iraq, however, to carry out naval missions, help train the Iraqi army and to provide other forms of logistical support for remaining coalition (mostly US) forces deployed there.<sup>7</sup> Adopting a fundamentally balanced or "symmetrical" approach to geopolitics has therefore served Australia very well during the twenty-first century's first decade.

Given the success it has had in adopting geopolitical symmetry as a core part of its overall security posture, it is puzzling that a countervailing policy trend emerged during the Howard government's last three to four years of office that signalled a return to Australia's unqualified strategic reliance on its "great and powerful American friend". The Australian-American alliance, of course, was formalized in late 1951 as part of the Tripartite Security Treaty (more commonly known as Australia-New Zealand-United States or ANZUS) binding the three countries into an arrangement primarily intended to preserve the West's favourable strategic balance of power against communist forces (the Korean War was raging in Northeast Asia at the time) or against the unlikely prospect of a rearmed Japan emerging to threaten Asia-Pacific stability. The termination of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union appeared to override the premise of superpower competition that previously underscored the strategic rationale for sustaining an American-led security network in Asia — the so-called "hub and spokes" system of bilateral alliances the United States maintained with Japan, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines and Australia.<sup>8</sup> However, multilateral regional "security architectures" have recently emerged in the Asia-Pacific as a potential successor to that network, although they have yet to prove viable alternatives to the region's security order-building.<sup>9</sup>

Why Australia has returned to promoting variants of the competitive geometry that was so dominant during the Cold War as a means to pursue contemporary regional security strategy will be

analysed here. Australia's inability to steer a consistent middle path in its strategic relations between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Japan (as opposed to its spectacular success in achieving just such an equilibrium in the economic sector), appears to have swayed the Howard government to modify Australia's previously successful strategy of pursuing cooperative regional security politics in the region while maintaining alliance relations with the United States. It did so assuming that Australia's remarkable economic and trade relations with China and throughout Asia would be unaffected. The second part of the article will explore both the perceived advantages and drawbacks of this strategic policy shift. It will be argued, as well, that the newly elected Australian Government led by Kevin Rudd and the Japanese Government under Yusuo Fukuda are both likely to downplay competitive strategic geometry — viewing it as too destabilizing to serve Australia's evolving diplomatic interests in Asia and as unnecessarily provocative towards China and the countries belonging to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). A caveat to this argument, however, is that democratic security coalitions in the region may yet “prevail by default” if China shifts from projecting its currently viewed mostly benign regional security posture to one that is more aggressive due to its frustration over Taiwan or to the intensification of other regional flashpoints. A final section will consider what policy options the Rudd and Fukuda governments can best pursue to preserve and strengthen a preferred dual strategy of regional engagement and alliance affiliation.

### **The New Strategic Geometry**

John Howard's government ascended to power in early 1996 believing that its predecessor had created an imbalance between Australia's relations with Asia and its alliance with the United States that advantaged the former at the latter's expense. While insisting that the Asia-Pacific remained Australia's “highest priority”, the Howard government's 1997 foreign policy white paper, *In the National Interest*, argued that bilateral relationships were the basic “building block” for effective regional and global strategy, that Australia's multilateral agenda must be inherently “selective” and that maintaining and strengthening alliance ties with the United States buttressed whatever influence Australia had established with its Asian neighbours.<sup>10</sup> Howard moved quickly to consolidate what he felt were previously neglected alliance ties with Washington by issuing the 1996 “Sydney Declaration” that reaffirmed ANZUS as the

bedrock of Australian defence policy, by upgrading the intensity and extent of Australia-US bilateral military relations and by accepting the Clinton administration's mandate for Australia to become the guardian of Western security interests in an increasingly volatile South Pacific and in various parts of maritime Southeast Asia that together formed the so-called "arc of instability".<sup>11</sup>

Several developments interceded over the following decade, however, that led to the Howard government adopting a more balanced geopolitical position between Asia and the United States. The extent to which Australia's booming trade with China grew after a brief setback in Sino-Australian relations occurred over the March 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis and over the cancellation of an Australian Development Import Finance Facility (DIFF) programme in China was unanticipated. The Clinton administration's hard line response to the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-98 and its initial reluctance to provide combat support to Australian Defence Forces spearheading the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET) military intervention in late 1999 combined with trade tensions between the two allies to temper Howard's initial aspirations for pursuing closer strategic ties with Washington. Until a change in American leadership transpired in early 2001 to a more "Australia-friendly" George W. Bush administration, the Howard government shared resentment with Japan and other traditional US allies in Asia that the Eurocentric Clintonites had viewed, and had interacted with, China as the only significant actor in the Asia Pacific. Richard Armitage, soon to be the Bush Administration's Deputy Secretary of State, led an influential study group that authored a widely discussed report in late 2000. It pointed to the need for the United States to pay more attention to Japan and, by extension, to Australia and other Asia-Pacific traditional security partners.<sup>12</sup> He also, however, issued a warning to Canberra that if a future Taiwan Straits crisis set the US against China, Australia would be expected to support US forces.<sup>13</sup> He portrayed an American ally that was simultaneously aloof from providing substantial resources to Australian military interventions in the arc of instability and unforgiving in regard to Sino-Australian economic ties providing sufficient basis for Australia's future neutrality in a future East China Sea contingency. This provided the impetus for Canberra to look increasingly towards Tokyo as a key strategic partner and hedge against minor but evident Australian-American economic and political-strategic differences.<sup>14</sup>

The mechanisms Australia employed to bridge increasingly significant security relations with Japan were clear-cut but low-

key and several of them were instituted well before the Howard government came to power.<sup>15</sup> The two countries' defence ministers began exchanging regular visits in 1990 following the upgrading of intelligence exchanges and naval exercises over the previous two decades. Annual Political-Military and Military-Military Consultations were established in 1995 and Australia-Japan relations clearly accelerated during the late 1990s. In August 1997, the Australia-Japan Ministerial Committee's "Partnership Agenda" (initially negotiated by the government of Paul Keating using more general language in May 1995) foreshadowed the further expansion of security collaboration in three areas: (1) regular and systematic dialogue between defence ministers and other key national security officials; (2) greater collaboration on peacekeeping; and (3) upgraded intelligence exchanges.<sup>16</sup>

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington provided further rationales for strengthening defence ties between America's two key Pacific allies. Both Australia and Japan contributed forces to Operation *Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan (although Japanese forces did not participate in actual combat operations and joined that operation only in Afghanistan's reconstruction period) against Taliban and al-Qaeda strongholds there. Both either directly participated in the Iraq War (Australia) or in its peacekeeping phase (Japan). Both also contributed to the international "Core Group" of regional military forces, coordinated under the US-led Combined Support Force, in its disaster relief missions undertaken after the 26 December 2004 Asian tsunami.<sup>17</sup> In February 2005 the Australian Defence Force (ADF) dispatched 450 personnel to Samawah in Iraq's southern Al Muthanna province to protect Japan Self Defense Force (JSDF) engineers and other personnel deployed there to spearhead reconstruction efforts.<sup>18</sup> Ballistic missile defence research and development was also undertaken by Australia and Japan after 9/11 in support of US efforts in this sector as North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities became more formidable.

### **Burgeoning Bilateral Benchmarks**

All this activity was symbolically capped by two further declarations foreshadowing intensified bilateral Australian-Japanese security cooperation: (1) the September 2003 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Exchanges between the Japan Defense Agency and the Australian Department of Defence (also known as the "Australia-

Japan Security Agreement"); and (2) the March 2007 Japan-Australia Joint Security Declaration (JSD). Neither document had the force of an actual security treaty or alliance. Both, however, were intended to formalize key aspects of the two countries' security collaboration as a means of strengthening what Japanese officials and analysts in particular viewed as the "weak [Australian-Japanese] third leg" of the Australia-Japanese-American trilateral security significant strategic geometry following 9/11.

The September 2003 Australia-Japan Security Agreement was actually a memorandum of understanding that committed its signatories to "explore new areas of cooperation for promoting and deepening the defence relationship", regarding counter-terrorism and countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>19</sup> It thus formalized and legitimized the Trilateral Security Dialogue (TSD) that had commenced at the vice-ministerial level in 2002.<sup>20</sup> TSD was upgraded at a meeting in Sydney between the three allies' foreign ministers in March 2006 — a process that was characterized as "non-threat-centric" by those officials. The "Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Statement" released at the end of the Sydney meeting, for example, "welcomed China's constructive engagement in the region. It emphasized the value of enhanced cooperation with other parties such as ASEAN and the Republic of Korea". The Dialogue was also characterized as mainly a consultative instrument to weigh counter-terrorism strategy (against undesignated sources) and to coordinate "pressing non-traditional security issues, such as the response to major pandemics" while simultaneously "... (s)upporting the emergence and consolidation of democracies and strengthening cooperative frameworks in the Asia-Pacific region".<sup>21</sup> American and Australian officials have since expended considerable effort to discourage China's perceptions that this was a threat-centric instrument directed against it. Illustrative were remarks by R. Nicholas Burns, the United States' Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, offered when attending a TSD vice-ministerial session convened in Canberra during December 2007. He insisted that consultations with his Australian and Japanese counterparts were directed towards "how we can cooperate with China in a number of ventures ... there is no reason for China to have any concerns about this dialogue".<sup>22</sup>

Various observers, however, have been skeptical that these comparatively benign representations mirrored the real agenda underlying the TSD. Just prior to leaving Washington to attend the TSD meeting, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice signaled that China's growing military power would be a focus of the consultations

and that the three allies had a “responsibility to try and produce conditions under which China’s emergence will be a positive, not negative, force in international politics”.<sup>23</sup> The *China Daily* responded by insisting that Beijing had a defensive military policy and observed that Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer had countered Rice’s views by arguing that “a policy of containment of China would be a very big mistake”.<sup>24</sup> Independent Western observers cite other factors that led them to conclude that the TSD is ultimately “galvanised in its *primary phase* above all else by a sense of mutual threat”.<sup>25</sup> Threats shaping TSD behaviour have been characterized as both “asymmetric” and “strategic”. Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation and regional instability emanating from failed states constitutes the first typology.<sup>26</sup> A revisionist China striving for regional hegemony or a deepening Great Power competition involving China, Russia, India and Japan fit into the second, more complicated, typology.<sup>27</sup>

### **The March 2007 Joint Security Declaration**

The Japan-Australia Joint Security Declaration (JSD) was signed in Tokyo by Prime Minister Howard and Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on 13 March 2007. A major factor underlying its endorsement was the rising power of Japan’s right wing political factions, culminating with the election of Abe in September 2006 as head of his country’s Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and as its Prime Minister. Abe came to office with a vision of forging a “broader alliance of democracies” that would include Australia, India, Japan and the United States. This vision dovetailed with a growing Australian concern that, due to China’s rapid economic and military growth, Japan feels increasingly isolated — and increasingly defensive — rather than more secure. The JSD, from the perspective of at least some Australian policy-planners, was a move to counterbalance the type of Japanese insecurity that could lead to Japan’s increasingly powerful conservative political factions to embark on rash and destabilizing foreign policy agendas in Northeast Asia and beyond. It was viewed as encouraging Japan’s “normalization” to unfold in ways that would preclude extremist Japanese foreign policies from prevailing.<sup>28</sup> Critics of this approach view it as being too cute by half and argue that such conditioning tactics could hardly impact upon a country such as Japan that so steadfastly competes with China on a variety of strategic issues.<sup>29</sup>

Some conjecture about the Howard government's domestic motives underlying its security diplomacy with Japan was prompted by Alexander Downer's dismissal of Labor Party concerns that China would be become increasingly alienated by the JSD. The Australian Foreign Minister insisted that Australia "never had a better relationship with China" than under the Howard government's watch and that it need not "be patronized by the Labor Party ... I think Labor's approach is always to kowtow to other countries — we're on Australia's side".<sup>30</sup> In various informal discussions with this author, however, Australian policy-makers involved in or highly knowledgeable about Australia's security diplomacy with Japan have insisted that domestic political considerations had little impact on Howard's decision to upgrade and formalize more explicitly Australia's security relationship with Japan. The imperative of signalling to Tokyo that its strategic importance was recognized and valued by Australia independently of any "China factor" was a far more salient policy consideration.

The JSD was the first post-war security agreement involving defence collaboration that Japan reached with a country other than the United States. Described in some press reports as a "ground-breaking pact", the document was reportedly a compromise between at least some officials in Australia that wanted a formal defence treaty and those in Japan who precluded any such agreement due to constitutional constraints.<sup>31</sup> It nevertheless symbolized an important "subsidiary pillar" in US security architecture. It reflected an increasing US preference for maritime and southward strategic alignments over direct confrontation of Chinese power in Northeast Asia. This American geopolitical orientation can be partially explained by recent difficulties in US-South Korean relations. But it can also be interpreted as a response flowing from what Washington believes to be an imperative for strengthening offshore allied counterweights to recent Chinese and Russian coalition-building initiatives on the Asian land mass such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). It was also a response to China's increasingly self-confident diplomacy directed towards a maritime buildup along Southeast Asia's peripheries. The JSD, it could be argued, embodies a strategy adopted by the United States, Australia and other regional allies to engage in symbolic, "soft balancing" in a region not yet calcified into competitive great power alignments. Triangular security politics, as reflected in the JSD and TSD, signals the readiness of each ally — including an increasingly "normalized" Japan and a United States otherwise preoccupied with

the Middle East and Central Asia — to engage in such regional order-building.<sup>32</sup>

Another line of thought advanced by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is more "functionalist" and less geopolitical in context: that this latest Australian-Japanese security collaboration: is a "functionalist" exercise to better coordinate bilateral cooperation over an array of broader security issues.<sup>33</sup> Convergence of Australian and Japanese strategic interests and operations in the broader areas of security politics could certainly provide some explanation of why an intensification of defence cooperation between the two countries is now occurring over and above their respective, long-standing, respective alliances with the United States. Critics, however, note that all of this is occurring in any case without the need to declare it in a formal memorandum. They are concerned that a formal declaration of security cooperation — while not an actual security treaty — posits a sufficiently provocative image to China and other regional neighbours as to negate whatever long-term diplomatic and geopolitical benefits might be gained from initiating it. The Chinese Government's warning about bilateral security measures needing to "take into account the concern and interests of other countries in the region" intensifies such concerns.<sup>34</sup> A month after the signing of the Declaration, the Chinese newspaper *People's Daily* cited Hou Minyue, a professor of Australian Studies at the Shanghai-based East China Normal University, who insisted that the "pact is a step forward toward the emergence of a US-led NATO-like organization in Asia, which will clearly grow to be the biggest potential threat to China's regional security environment".<sup>35</sup>

### Quadrilateral Geometry?

Various analysts have asserted that the timing and context of the JSD's signing was actually linked to an American initiative to promote a quadrilateral security coalition of the TSD participants and India. Those supporting this perspective differ, however, on whether the major impetus for such an alignment was provided by Abe or by US Vice-President Dick Cheney's summit diplomacy when he visited Australia and Japan in February 2007.<sup>36</sup> Abe published a best selling book, *A Beautiful Country*, prior to becoming Prime Minister. In it he speculated that Indian-Japanese relations could supersede US-Japan or China-Japan relations within a decade due to both countries' growing interest in shaping a new regional power

equilibrium if US power were to wane in the Asia Pacific. Cheney's motives were predicated on the assumption that the United States would stay and compete with China for regional primacy. The quadrilateral coalition he had in mind would be designed to limit China's geopolitical and ideological influence as its economic and military power increased. His remarks in Sydney that "(t)he growing closeness among our three countries [Australia, Japan and the United States] sends an unmistakable message — that we are united in the cause of peace and freedom across the region" could be easily linked to a neo-conservative blueprint that envisions the TSD partners and India, the world's most populous democracy, coalescing to neutralize rising Chinese power.<sup>37</sup>

Ideological factors aside, India's desire to access US military technology and know-how led it to engage in joint naval exercises (with two destroyers and one supply ship) for the first time involving both US Navy and Japan's Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF) units in April 2007. India interacted four months later with US, Japanese, Australian and Singaporean maritime elements in exercises conducted in the Bay of Bengal.<sup>38</sup> Abe had agreed that Japan would participate in this exercise during a meeting with his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh in December 2006. In true non-aligned fashion, however, other Indian naval contingents simultaneously maneuvered with the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) Northern Sea Fleet off the eastern coast of China. This exercise conformed with a May 2006 bilateral memorandum of understanding calling for increased military cooperation between India and China (relatively modest naval exercises between the two countries have been conducted since 2003).

On the diplomatic front, an informal Trilateral Strategic Dialogue session was convened in early September 2007 (a week after the Bay of Bengal maneuvers) by President Bush with Abe and Howard at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Sydney to "focus on India and the importance of that country ... to the broader geopolitics of the Asia-Pacific region".<sup>39</sup> Australia's subsequent effort to accommodate President Hu Jintao's demands for establishing a bilateral "strategic dialogue mechanism" between China and Australia was accepted by Howard but Beijing's suspicions that a de facto containment initiative against China was being pursued by the three allies remained evident.<sup>40</sup> When questioned about the Abe-Bush-Howard meeting, China's Assistant Foreign Minister Cui Tankai maintained that discussions between the three allies should be "more transparent".<sup>41</sup> In early August, analysis cross-compared

contending security architectures for Asia appeared in the official Chinese Communist Party-run international *Global Times* (Huanqiu Shibao). They noted that Chinese diplomats handed notes to their Australian, American, Indian and Japanese counterparts demanding an explanation for why they would be meeting on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) ministerial talks in Manila to talk about more intensive quadrilateral security cooperation. The article specifically noted that the depth and breadth of the military and security cooperation between Australia and Japan has been raised to an unprecedented level. It claimed that the latest Australian Defence Update went to unusual lengths to justify Australian defence cooperation with Japan in response to China's military modernization. Interestingly, it concluded that China could best defuse such concerns by projecting a "rest assured" diplomacy designed to achieve greater transparency and to set these countries' minds at rest that China's intentions are defensive and benign rather than offensive and nefarious. The article's underlying message was clear: Japan was engaging in provocative and needlessly destabilizing diplomacy to create a regional security dilemma that is very much avoidable and Australia would do better not to swallow the bait.<sup>42</sup> The momentum of the quadrilateral concept waned during the last months of 2007 as the Indian Government faced unexpectedly stiff domestic opposition to the ratification of a landmark US-India nuclear energy agreement and as Kevin Rudd's ascendancy to power in Australia underscored the Labor Party's public opposition to the concept.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, the Howard government took pains to emphasize that while they valued stronger economic, cultural and political ties with India, "we do not wish to have a formal quadrilateral strategic dialogue in defence and security matters".<sup>44</sup> The Howard government was keen to solidify recent initiatives to strengthen the Japan security relationship before formally expanding further those competitive strategic geometries with which Australia was already involved.<sup>45</sup>

### **Australia's Competitive Geometries: Advantages and Drawbacks**

There are some obvious advantages that both Australia and Japan can pursue based on a growing convergence of strategic interests apart from "the China factor". The TSD can be used by Australia and Japan to institutionalize geopolitical reassurance from the United States and to maintain alliance affinity with the Americans at a time when US strategic commitments and resources beyond the Middle

East and Central Asia are becoming increasingly fluid.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, Washington's key Asia-Pacific security partners are relatively much stronger today than when the hub and spokes system was originally created more than a half century ago. They are thus in a position to undertake the type of genuine defence burden-sharing which Washington would require to successfully maintain a power equilibrium in the world's most populous, and arguably its most prosperous, region. Mechanisms such as the TSD could assure three-way cooperation on both regional power-balancing and order-building issues and on global or transnational security issues transcending normal state-centric politics.<sup>47</sup>

There is no shortage of functions and challenges that could be subject to trilateral or multilateral coordination. Japanese troops exercising and training in Australia for an expanded role in international peacekeeping efforts could build upon past, arguably positive, nation-building collaboration and interaction in Cambodia, East Timor and Iraq — particularly in future contingencies that might occur in the so-called "arc of instability". Maritime security collaboration with ASEAN for selected operations against piracy or involving responses to natural disasters could be tightened. In this context, the aforementioned disaster relief mission and "Core Group" of donor states established in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami and involving close coordination of Indian, Japanese, Australian and American military contingents in rescue operations serves as a useful precedent. Closer operational coordination on such multinational initiatives as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) could also be facilitated and, following on from this, more systematic coordination of intelligence exchanges might be achieved over the longer-term. Finally, while incurring European members' resistance to date, it is possible that Japan, Australia and New Zealand could eventually coordinate their policies more closely on global security issues within NATO. Washington has signalled its support for such an arrangement.<sup>48</sup> All of these areas of Australian-Japanese security collaboration can be rationalized outside the orbit of geopolitical responses *vis-à-vis* China.

Critics of emerging competitive geometries in Asia are justified, however, in warning about the potential downsides of more intimate Australia-Japan defence ties or multilateral successors to the US bilateral hub and spokes network. The basic concern is that any conversion of the post-war network of US security alliances to an American-dominated multilateral alliance system must be rationalized on something other than a "threat-centric" rationale. Otherwise

any such architecture would not likely enjoy the support of such traditional US security partners as South Korea, Thailand or even the Philippines. It would alienate a China that would inevitably perceive any such framework as directed against itself. Indeed, Chinese analysts have already argued that there can be no other designated general interest in revising the American hub and spokes system into new competitive geometry than to pursue some variant of an “Asian NATO”.<sup>49</sup> Under such circumstances, critics argue, any opportunity to build a more benign, less threat-centric Asia-Pacific security order will have been squandered by the de facto crystallization of a new system of regional security blocs predicated on “China versus the democracies”.

Bloc politics and the militarization of Australian and Japanese foreign policies that it would underpin, moreover, are incompatible with the major trend dominating both Australia’s and Japan’s economy — the booming expansion of economic ties with the PRC. Australia is confronting a situation where its major economic partner is not the same as its major security ally, creating a difficult and possibly intractable element of contradiction and division of Australian national security policy. Japan likewise risks alienating a China whose economy increasingly dominates Japanese trading interests (in 2007, for example, China surpassed the United States with respect to Japan’s total trade volume).<sup>50</sup>

### **Continuities and Pitfalls**

Australia’s current Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, and his Japanese counterpart, Yusuo Fukuda (who replaced an ill Shinzo Abe as Japan’s Prime Minister in September 2007), are both aware that any regional order-building process must be a protracted and nuanced affair. Two weeks after taking office, Rudd announced that he was concerned that Sino-US tensions had accelerated over Taiwan (allegedly leading to China refusing US naval vessels access to Hong Kong on a port visit) and that he would like to assume a role in “bridging the gap between China and the West”. Simultaneously, the new Australian leader reiterated the American alliance’s central role to Australia’s own security, has pledged to sustain current Australian military commitments in Afghanistan and has glossed over the incoming Australian Labor Government’s differences with Washington over Iraq and global warming as “tactical”.<sup>51</sup> Fukuda has continued Shinzo Abe’s initial efforts to defuse Sino-Japanese bilateral tensions (and has even intensified that process by thus far declining to visit

the Yasukune Shrine which houses the remains of Japanese war criminals). In November 2007, Fukuda's discussions with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao were noteworthy by the Japanese leader's conscious efforts to steer clear from discussing historical and territorial disputes or Chinese military spending. In return, China has been less critical towards recent Japanese moves to become a more "ordinary country" in the defence policy sector, declining to criticize the upgrading of the Japan Defense Agency to a full ministry or the move to establish a formal National Security Council.<sup>52</sup> Both allied leaders are careful and deliberative policy-makers who embrace a "low-risk" approach to international security. Both also understand the dynamics and growing influence of Chinese "soft power" and the need to sensitize the United States to its ramifications whenever possible.

Taiwan remains the most potent test case for determining the ultimate effectiveness of emerging strategic geometries. Taiwanese nationalism continues to intensify much to the chagrin of a PRC leadership that has drawn "red lines" assigning limits to Taiwanese political autonomy *vis-à-vis* China beyond which Taiwan's ruling Democratic People's Party cannot venture. Taiwan's presidential election scheduled for March 2008, complete with referendums on Taiwan joining the United Nations as a separate polity, and commensurate prospects of higher-level US arms sales to bolster the island's self-defence capabilities and to correct an increasingly disparate military balance in the Taiwan Straits, could prove to be vital determinants of how intense the China-Taiwan security dilemma could become. Japan has publicly supported the United States in "2+2 talks" involving the two allies' foreign and defence ministers in stating its "concern" over events in the Taiwan Straits (earning China's concentrated wrath by doing so). Australia would come under immense US pressure to intervene militarily in support of the United States if a conflict erupted in the East China Sea. This scenario would represent Australia's worst foreign policy nightmare.<sup>53</sup>

It would be too easy, however, to conclude that Asian multipolarity is rapidly and invariably calcifying into rival geopolitical blocs. In fact, the general regional trend appears to conform to the old adage "appearances can be deceiving". Several factors mitigate worst-case conclusions. These include: (1) latent but still very real strategic competition between Russia and China who are both vying for greater access to Western economic markets to fuel the basic fundamentals for their economic modernization programmes; (2) India's heritage of non-alignment is still alive and well as evidenced by recent tensions

to reach closure with the United States over nuclear energy and by its fervent desire to get a larger share of the China market; (3) the nearly united Asia-Pacific perception that international terrorism in Thailand, the Philippines and Central Asia constitutes part of a larger global threat which will require integrated cooperation to defeat; and (4) a general impression that as a result of American preoccupation with that threat, Washington's is not engaging in any viable hegemonic cooperation with China any more than China, whose growth is largely entwined with the health of the American economy, is keen to supplant US power in the broader Asia-Pacific region anytime soon. The irony here is that China's own evolution towards greater democratic practices is as probable — if not more so — than an effective prospect of an alliance of self-declared democratic societies. The Australia-Japan security declaration and the quadrilateral defence initiative — along with their limitations — should be read in this context. This overall process of alignment and counter-alignment might best be characterized as “everyone hedging against everyone else in every direction”.

### **Conclusion: Future Directions**

It is highly unlikely that the regional security geometries that have recently evolved in the Asia-Pacific security environment will give way to less competitive security architectures over the short-term. As long as the United States remains preoccupied with its “long war” against international terrorism, with sustaining primacy in the Persian Gulf against such challengers as Iran and with the rise of “peer competitors” such as China, the prospect that Washington will fully climb aboard the multilateral bandwagon of regional security-building is not great. The danger of this outcome is that structural competition will prevail by default, with a multilateral alliance intensification taking place along predictable and highly destabilizing lines. The aforementioned naval exercises in the Bay of Bengal occurring less than two weeks after the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's *Peace Mission 07* exercises involving troops from Russia, China and four Central Asian countries is illustrative of this trend. As *Newsweek International* noted at the time:

... the Malabar [naval exercise involving Australia, India, Japan, Singapore and the United States] and Peace Mission exercises point to a potentially dangerous reality taking shape: the emergence of two competing security camps in Asia. On the one hand stands the United States, still the area's dominant military power; traditional

allies such as Japan and Australia; and a few new friends, such as Mongolia and, potentially, India. On the other stands China, which is using its rapid economic growth and accelerating defense spending, as well as close ties to Russia, Pakistan, the Central Asian states, Burma, and Cambodia, to raise its own profile and to develop a sphere of influence. As the competition accelerates, more and more states are finding themselves forced to choose sides.<sup>54</sup>

Barring an immediate and unexpected crisis escalation in the East China Sea, Kashmir or the Korean Peninsula, however, both the timing and environment seem appropriate in the Asia-Pacific for the United States and its allies to focus more on building and participating in those multilateral security networks now emerging in the region. The East Asian Summit (EAS) or a revived APEC are particularly suitable architectures for concentrating such efforts. The EAS has survived early attempts by China and Malaysia to render it an "exclusivist" or narrowly East Asian-centric grouping.<sup>55</sup> It now incorporates Australia and India as well as Japan within its membership and a more American role, initially through shaping a Northeast Asian Security Dialogue and then integrating that entity with the EAS seems logical. APEC is the only multilateral organization that attracts Asia-Pacific heads of states to meet annually for negotiating economic and politico-strategic issues and thus enjoys a natural "comparative advantage" as a foundation for multilateral security politics grouping directed specifically towards addressing regional confidence-building and preventive diplomacy. To date, however, it has been proven difficult to generate fully-fledged American commitments to strengthening the ARF's infrastructure and largely Southeast Asian-centric agendas (as evidenced by the Bush Administration's Secretary of State missing several of its recent ministerial meetings and Washington's continuing preoccupation with stabilizing Northeast Asia and the East China Sea). Without attracting greater US strategic investment in its evolution, the ARF may eventually need to reconstitute its missions and purview or weigh ceding its current mandates to new forms of regional security organization.<sup>56</sup>

Whatever regional grouping does emerge as the Asia-Pacific's primary regional security forum, it should work to modify, whenever possible, those trappings implying geopolitical rivalry. Continued American preferences for cultivating such trappings will only harden Beijing's tendency to entertain "worse-case" threat perceptions about US and allied geopolitical intensions. They will also precipitate "exclusivist" policy reactions by East Asian regional players such as

South Korea and the ASEAN states that portray the United States, Japan and Australia as outside players in the ongoing East Asia community-building process.<sup>57</sup>

US policy-planners therefore need to work effectively with their Japanese and Australian allies to identify how traditional alliance politics can be reconstituted to accommodate the monumental structural change now taking shape in the Asia-Pacific. Washington's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) as a precondition for its direct participation in the EAS would appear to be a logical and constructive first step. Its support for converting the ad hoc, but evidently successful, Six Party Talks grouping into a more formal Northeast Asian security architecture would be productive. Engaging directly with China on regional arms control questions (incorporating efforts to curb militarization and weaponization in outer space) would be a third component of strategic reassurance where US policy could be usefully adjusted.

Such catch-phrases as "coalitions of the willing" that imply an automatic allied readiness to support American military operations around the world seem distinctly inappropriate to apply in a post-hub and spokes Asian setting where Australia is visibly hedging against a conflict in the Taiwan Straits and Japan is moving to forge independent security agendas with India, Australia and the Korean peninsula. The fluidity of domestic political trends in allied states' domestic political arenas, the substantial momentum in China's regional growth and influence and the growing momentum of regionally indigenous multilateralism all militate against traditional threat-centric strategies and architectures. The United States' preoccupation with international terrorism, the Middle East and Central Asia appears fated to endure for years, if not decades, to come. By default, future US administrations will need to positively consider cooperative Asia-Pacific multilateral instrumentalities. Without relinquishing realist thinking to the historical dustbin, the United States, as well as Washington's two most important regional allies Australia and Japan, need to weigh new and non-confrontational approaches for pursuing their joint interests and ensuring their collective security in what are increasingly uncertain times in the Asia-Pacific.

## NOTES

- 1 This article is a substantially expanded and revised version of my "The Australia-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and Asia-Pacific Strategic Geometries", Australia Policy Forum 07-16 A Nautilus Institute at

- RMIT, 6 September 2007 at <<http://www.globalcollab.org/Nautilus/australia/apsnet/policy-forum/2007/the-japan-australia-joint-declaration-on-security-cooperation-and-asia-pacific-strategic-geometries>>. Accessed 14 December 2007.
- 2 A sophisticated update of the most influential studies on power balancing is Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), especially pp. 251–87 which assesses the contemporary power setting.
  - 3 For background on various aspects of this dual strategy, see Mohan Malik, ed., *Australia's Security in the 21st Century* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1999) and John Ravenhill and James Cotton, eds., *The National Interest in a Global Era: Australia in World Affairs 1996–2000* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Institute of International Affairs, 2001).
  - 4 "Ready for the Future: Australia's International Relations". Speech given by Prime Minister John Howard at the Canberra Convention Centre, 22 August 2001 reprinted in *AustralianPolitics.Com* at <<http://australianpolitics.com/news/2001/01-08-22.shtml>>. Accessed 24 November 2007.
  - 5 Ibid.
  - 6 Paul Dibb, perhaps Australia's most eminent defence analyst, has argued that "the closeness of Canberra and Washington today is without precedent. Australia is today America's second closest ally in the world, after the United Kingdom." See Dibb, "Alliance relationships: Asia Pacific Democracies Working Together — An Australian View". Paper prepared for the Pacific Symposium, National Defense University, Washington, D.C., 8–10 June 2005 at <<http://209.85.173.104/search?q=cache:TN6N-D8vSdUJ:www.ndu.edu/inss/symposia/Pacific2005/Dibb.pdf+paul+dibb+pacific+symposium+national+defense+university+2005&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=au>>. Accessed 24 November 2007.
  - 7 Tim Johnston, "Australia's prime minister confirms troop withdrawal from Iraq", *International Herald Tribune*, 23 December 2007.
  - 8 For a comprehensive account of this development see William T. Tow, *Asia-Pacific Strategic Relations: Seeking Convergent Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
  - 9 Nick Bisley, "Asian Security Architectures" in *Strategic Asia 2006–07* (Seattle and Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2007), pp. 341–69.
  - 10 Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *In the National Interest* (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 1997), pp. vi–vii. Accessed at <<http://australianpolitics.com/foreign/elements/whitepaper.pdf>> 25 November 2007.
  - 11 The term "arc of crisis" was coined by Paul Dibb. See his "The Strategic Environment in the Asia-Pacific Region", in Robert D. Blackwill and Paul Dibb, eds., *America's Asian Alliances* (Cambridge, MA: Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 2000), p. 12. On the upgrading of US-Australian alliance ties during the first years of Howard's government, see William T. Tow, "Australia and the United States", in Ravenhill and Cotton, eds., *The National Interest*, op. cit., pp. 171–94.
  - 12 *The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership*, INSS Special Report Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, October 2000.

- 13 Peter Hartcher, "US and Them: China warns Australia over Taiwan", *Australian Financial Review*, 5 November, 1999.
- 14 Michael Wesley, "The Trilateral Strategic Dialogue's Institutional Politics", in William T. Tow, Mark J. Thompson, Yoshinobu Yamamoto and Satu P. Limaye eds., *Asia-Pacific Security: US, Australia and Japan and the New Security Triangle* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 40–41.
- 15 Desmond Ball has traced the nascent evolution of Australia-Japan security ties. See his "Security Cooperation Between Japan and Australia: Current Elements and Future Prospects", in Brad Williams and Andrew Newman eds., *Australia-Japan Defence Cooperation* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 164–85 and his "Whither the Japan-Australia security relationship?" Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Australian Policy Forum 06-32A 21 September 2006 at <[http://www.nautilus.org/~rmit/forum-reports/0632a-ball.html#\\_ftn1](http://www.nautilus.org/~rmit/forum-reports/0632a-ball.html#_ftn1)>. Accessed 27 November 2007.
- 16 Ball, "Whither the Japan-Australia security relationship?" and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, "Joint Foreign Ministers' Press Conference on the 14th Japan-Australia Ministerial Committee Meeting", 1 August 1997 at <[http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/ja\\_com.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/ja_com.html)>. Accessed 27 November 2007. Also see Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, "Joint Declaration on the Australia-Japan Partnership", 26 May 1995 at <[http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/join\\_au.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/join_au.html)>. Accessed 27 November 2007.
- 17 Ralph A. Cossa, "South Asian Tsunami: U.S. Military Provides 'Logistical Backbone' for Relief Operation" in US Department of State, Bureau of International Information Programs, *eJOURNAL USA* (November 2004) at <<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itps/1104/ijpe/cossa.htm>>. Accessed 11 January 2008.
- 18 Further background is provided by Brendan Taylor and Desmond Ball, "Historical Overview", in Tow et al., *Asia-Pacific Security*, op. cit., pp. 15–26.
- 19 Cited in Ball, "Whither the Japan-Australia Security relationship?", op. cit.
- 20 Thomas S. Wilkins, "Trilateralism and cooperation on asymmetrical threats", in Tow et al., *Asia-Pacific Security*, op. cit., pp. 165–77.
- 21 Office of the Spokesmen, US Department of State, "Trilateral Strategic Dialogue Joint Statement", 18 March 2006, Sydney, Australia at <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/63411.htm>>. Accessed 27 November 2006.
- 22 US Department of State, Office of Public Affairs, Canberra, "Media Roundtable Discussion in Australia", 5 December 2007 at <<http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/2007/96226.htm>>. Accessed 8 December 2007.
- 23 David Gollust, "Rice in Sydney for US-Japan-Australia Security Talks", *GlobalSecurity.org*, 15 March 2006 at <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2006/03/mil-060315-voa03.htm>>. Accessed 27 November 2006.
- 24 "Look at China's military spending objectively: FM Spokesman", *China Daily*, 17 March 2007 reprinted at <<http://www.chinaembassy.org.in/eng/zgbd/t240873.htm>>. Accessed 27 November 2007.
- 25 Thomas S. Wilkins, "Towards a 'Trilateral Alliance?' Understanding the Role of Expediency and Values in American-Japanese-Australian Relations", *Asian Security* 3, no. 3 (2007): 264.
- 26 Thomas S. Wilkins, "Trilateralism and cooperation on asymmetrical threats", in Tow, et al., *Asia-Pacific Security*, op. cit., pp. 164–77.

- 27 Wilkins, "Towards a "Trilateral Alliance?," p. 266 and Hugh White, "The limits of optimism: Australia and the rise of China", *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 59, no. 4 (December 2005): 469–80. The security dilemma theory underpinning this policy calculus remains Glenn Snyder's "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics", *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984): 461–95.
- 28 Paul Kelly, "Howard's Decade: An Australian Foreign Policy Reappraisal", Lowy Institute Paper 15 (Sydney: The Lowy Institute for International Policy, December 2006), p. 65.
- 29 See, for example, Purnendra Jain, "Japan–Australia Security Ties and the United States: The Evolution of the Trilateral Dialogue Process and Its Challenges", *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 60, No. 4 (December 2006): 521–35.
- 30 "China unconcerned by new pact: Downer", *Sunday Times*, 15 March 2007 as cited in John Lee, "Issues in Australian Foreign Policy: January to June 2007", *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 53, no. 4 (December 2007): 608.
- 31 Sushil Seth, "Australia, Japan enter a new phase", *Taipei Times*, 23 March 2007 and Aurelia George Mulgan, "Australia-Japan Relations: New Directions", *Strategic Insights* (Canberra: Australian Strategic Policy Institute, July 07), p. 3.
- 32 See, in particular, Subhash Kapila, "Japan-Australia Defence Agreement: Perspectives", South Asia Analysis Group Paper no. 2191, 4 April 2007 at <<http://www.saag.org/%5Cpapers22%5Cpaper2191.html>>. Accessed 7 December 2007 and Rod Lyon, "Japan, Australia and the changing security order in Asia", *ASPI Policy Analysis*, 28 March 2007.
- 33 The Hon. Alexander Downer, MP, "Australia and Japan into the future". Speech delivered to the Japan Institute of International Affairs, Tokyo, 6 June 2007 at <[http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/2007/070605\\_japan\\_institute.html](http://www.foreignminister.gov.au/speeches/2007/070605_japan_institute.html)>. Accessed 8 December 2007 and Taylor and Ball, "Historical Overview", in Tow, et. al., *Asia-Pacific Security*, op. cit., p. 19.
- 34 "Foreign Ministry Spokesman Qin Gang's Regular Press Conference on March 13, 2007" at <<http://www.fmcoprc.gov.hk/eng/zgwjsw/t303512.htm>>. Accessed 8 December 2007.
- 35 "Downer: Security Pact does not target China", *People's Daily Online*, 6 April 2007 at <[http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200704/06/eng20070406\\_364174.html](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200704/06/eng20070406_364174.html)>. Accessed 8 December 2007.
- 36 Representative of the first perspective is Brahma Chellaney, "New Great Game", *Asian Age*, 2 June 2007 at <<http://chellaney.spaces.live.com/blog/cns!4913C7C8A2EA4A30!351.entry>>. Accessed 8 December 2007. The second line of argument has been developed by Alan Dupont, "Quadrilateral alliance runs counter to post Cold War multilateralism", *The Australian*, 26 March 2007.
- 37 "Vice President's Remarks to the Australian-American Leadership Dialogue", Sydney, 23 February 2007 at <<http://canberra.usembassy.gov/irc/us-oz/2007/02/23/wh2.html>>. Accessed 8 December 2007.
- 38 "Trilateral naval exercise in Pacific Ocean", *World Affairs Board, International Conflict and Geopolitics* 16 April 2007 at <<http://www.worldaffairsboard.com/naval-forces/38334-trilateral-naval-exercise-pacific-ocean.html>>. Accessed 8 December 2007. Also see "U.S. Naval Exercise Under Way in Bay of Bengal", *Eagle World News*, 9 August 2007 at <<http://www.eagleworldnews.com/2007/09/08/us-navy-exercise-underway-in-bay-of-bengal/>>. Accessed 8 December 2007.

- 39 Citing Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer in “U.S.-Japan and Australia in 3-way meeting discuss engaging India”, *International Herald Tribune*, 8 September 2007.
- 40 The Chinese account of Hu’s proposal is found in “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Jiang Yu’s Regular Press Conference on 6 September 2007” at <<http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/zt/fyrth/t359857.htm>>. Accessed 8 December 2007. Hu’s initiative reportedly contained four parts: (1) to enhance close high-level exchanges and establish strategic dialogue; (2) to deepen economic cooperation and trade for mutual benefit and “win-win” results; (3) to expand people-to-people exchanges so as to increase the friendship between the two peoples; and (4) to strengthen communication and coordination with a view to building a harmonious Asia-Pacific.
- 41 “Chinese President Hu to sign energy deals on trip to Australia”, *China Post*, 28 August 2007 at <<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/headlines/2007/08/28/48639/Chinese-President.htm>>.
- 42 Siddharth Varadarajan, “Four power meeting drew Chinese demarche”, *Global Research*, 20 June 2007 at <<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=6100>>. Accessed 9 December 2007.
- 43 Paul Kelly, “Staking a claim among giants”, *The Australian*, 19 September 2007.
- 44 See The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, MP, Minister for Defence, “Doorstop [Press Conference]”, New Dehli, 11 July 2007 at <<http://www.minister.defence.gov.au/2007/120707.doc>>. Accessed 11 January 2008.
- 45 Dennis Shanahan, “Pacific allies to enlist India”, *The Australian*, 15 March 2007.
- 46 See William T. Tow, “Conclusion”, in Tow et al., *Asia-Pacific Security*, op. cit., p. 190.
- 47 Derek Cholet, “Time for an Asian NATO?”, *Foreign Policy*, no. 123 (March–April 2001), pp. 91-92 and Nick Bisley, “The Real Pacific Solution: A NATO for Asia”, Nautilus Institute at RMIT, 15 June 2006 at <<http://www.nautilus.org/~rmit/forum-reports/0620a-bisley.html>>. Accessed 9 December 2007.
- 48 Patrick Goodenough, “NATO Eyes Partnerships in the East”, *CNS NEWS.COM*, 28 April 2006, <<http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewForeignBureaus.asp?Page=/ForeignBureaus/archive/200604/INT20060428a.html>>. Accessed 9 December 2007. For a Japanese perspective, see Masashi Nishihara, “Can Japan Be a Global Partner for NATO?” RIPS Policy Perspectives No. 2, Tokyo: Research Institute for Peace and Security, December 2006. For a dissenting view on the advantages of a “transregional NATO”, see Nikolas K. Gvosdev, “NATO Is Regional For A Reason”, *Atlantic Community*, 21 September 2007 at <[http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/articles/view/NATO\\_Is\\_Regional\\_For\\_A\\_Reason](http://www.atlantic-community.org/index/articles/view/NATO_Is_Regional_For_A_Reason)>. Accessed 9 December 2007. Gvosdev, editor of *The National Interest*, was responding to a proposal by Republican presidential candidate Rudolph Giuliani to expand NATO’s membership to other, non-European democracies.
- 49 See “US Dreams of an Asian NATO”, *China Daily*, 17 July 2003 at <[http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2003-07/18/content\\_246008.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2003-07/18/content_246008.htm)>, accessed 9 December 2007 and “Blueprint for ‘Asian NATO’”, *People’s Daily Online*, 3 June 2004 at <[http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200406/03/eng20040603\\_145233.html](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200406/03/eng20040603_145233.html)>, accessed 9 December 2007.

- 50 JETRO, "Japan's Trade with China Sets Eight Straight Record in 2006", *News Press and Releases*, 8 March 2007 at <<http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/news/releases/20070308982-news>>. Accessed 9 December 2007.
- 51 "Rudd 'concerned' over U.S.-China tensions", *The Australian*, 8 December 2007 and Michael Fullilove, "America's New Mate Down Under", *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 December 2007.
- 52 Shinichi Kitaoka, "Insights Into The World: Japan-U.S. ties vital in dealing with China", *Daily Yomiuri Online*, 26 November 2007 at <<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/world/20071126TDY08001.htm>>, accessed 9 December 2007 and Ayumu Tsuda, "Fukuda takes softly-softly approach", *Daily Yomiuri Online*, 23 November 2007 at <<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/20071123TDY03103.htm>>, accessed 9 December 2007.
- 53 Michael Horowitz, "'Don't Take Canberra for Granted: The Future of the U.S.-Australian Alliance'", *Orbis* 48, no. 3 (Summer 2004), especially pp. 475–76 and Hugh White, "The limits to optimism: Australia and the Rise of China", *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 59, no. 4 (December 2005): 469–80.
- 54 Christian Caryl, "Asia's Dangerous Divide; Beijing and Washington are building new alliances throughout the continent", *Newsweek International*, 10 September 2007 at <<http://www.mywire.com/pubs/Newsweek/2007/09/10/4400075>>. Accessed 10 December, 2007.
- 55 Mohan Malik, "The East Asian Summit: More Discord than Accord", *YaleGlobal*, 20 December 2005 at <<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=6645>>. Accessed 11 January 2008.
- 56 For a recent and highly skeptical assessment of how Southeast Asian multilateral politics has evolved to date, see David Martin Jones and Michael L.R. Smith, "Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian Regional Order", *International Security* 32, no. 1 (Summer 2007): 148–84.
- 57 This argument is expanded in the case of Japan and Australia by Mark Beeson and Hidetaka Yoshimatsu, "Asia's odd men out: Australia, Japan and the politics of regionalism", *International Relations of Asia-Pacific* 7, no. 2 (2007): 227–50 and, as it pertains to the United States, by Ralph Cossa, "East Asia Community-Building: Time for the United States to Get on Board", *Policy Analysis Brief*, The Stanley Foundation, September 2007 at <<http://www.stanleyfoundation.org/resources.cfm?id=259>>. Accessed 9 December 2007.