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Strategic Balance in the Indo-Pacific:
A Role for Maritime Democracies?

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ABOUT US

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(Photographs top to bottom)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets US President Donald Trump and Japan PM Shinzo Abe at the first Trilateral Summit between the three countries on November 30, 2018. Source: Twitter/PMOIndia.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Michael R. Pence, Vice President of the United States of America in Singapore on November 14, 2018. Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/meaindia/32000575778/in/album-72157703475004414/>

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Hemant Krishan Singh and Arun Sahgal

1. The State of Play

Takeaways from the EAS and APEC Summits

Past weeks have witnessed another unremarkable but testy EAS summit, followed by a rather dramatic summit of the APEC economies, with both events foreshadowing the disruption that great power confrontation in the Indo-Pacific may bring. As the US and China have openly jostled for primacy and influence, it is evident that the Indo-Pacific churn has accelerated and regional architecture, both politico-security (EAS) and economic (APEC), will be impacted.

The regional standing of a divided ASEAN, with its characteristic lack of urgency (and agency) to uphold a rules-based regional order, is continuing to lose ground. The sovereignties of ASEAN nations are falling under the shadow of China's manipulation and coercive pressure. ASEAN deliberations and the outcomes of its annual summits are increasingly circumscribed by China. The EAS remains ineffective as a strategic forum for progressing a rules-based regional order.

At the same time, China's hegemonic assertions are no longer unchallenged. China has been called out by the US in unprecedented terms over its South China Sea expansionism (at EAS) and its "constricting belt or a one-way road" (at APEC). China was put on the defensive at the APEC gathering, which broke up in rancour without a concluding statement, apparently over China's objection to a single phrase: "We agreed to fight protectionism including all unfair trade practices." President Xi Jinping's grandstanding as the champion of globalisation is losing an audience.

The US and its two major Asian allies – Japan and Australia – are stepping up their coordination on regional security (Manus Island naval base), connectivity and infrastructure building (Papua New Guinea electricity grid).

Consistent with policies enunciated in the National Security Strategy unveiled in December 2017, the US has made it clear that it will remain a foundational Indo-Pacific power and leverage its formidable political, military and economic strengths to maintain geo-political advantage in the region.

The US also continues to reach out toward India as a strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific, but it remains to be seen if this promise will translate into expanded India-US defence and maritime security cooperation across the expanse of the Indian Ocean, which is emerging as the new theatre for China's political, economic and military assertions.

It would appear that as far as the US is concerned, the "Asia Pacific" has given way to the "Indo-Pacific". The size of the geographic canvas for seeking a stable rules-based regional order has expanded, together with India's role as an integral component for achieving strategic balance in the Indo-Pacific.

India-US convergences on the Indo-Pacific construct have grown. This is amply borne out by a comparison of their respective visions for the Indo-Pacific, from a rules-based regional order and security challenges to trade and connectivity, which is annexed to this paper (Annexure 1).



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Michael R. Pence, Vice President of the United States of America in Singapore on November 14, 2018.

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/meaindia/32000575778/in/album-72157703475004414/>

US Repositioning in the Indo-Pacific

The recently concluded EAS and APEC summits (November 15-18, 2018) witnessed the forceful participation of US Vice President Mike Pence and his forthright assertions that the US will remain a foundational Indo-Pacific power, will not cede ground to accommodate China's dominance and will seek changes in Chinese behaviour across the domains of security, connectivity and trade. After a quarter century marked largely by strategic engagement and accommodation of China's rise, it would appear that the US is signalling a new phase of overt competition and possible confrontation with China.

“It stands for a free, open, inclusive region, which embraces us all in a common pursuit of progress and prosperity. It includes all nations in this geography as also others beyond who have a stake in it.”

(Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Shangri La Dialogue, June 1, 2018)

“Free and Open – a place where sovereign and independent nations with diverse cultures and many different dreams, can all prosper side by side, and thrive in freedom and in peace.”

(President Donald Trump at the APEC Summit, November 10, 2017)

ASEAN: Declining “Centrality”

The recent ASEAN and EAS summits (November 13-15, 2018) indicate that uncertainty and incoherence surrounding ASEAN's regional role has deepened, not least because of ASEAN's continued ambivalence about the “Indo-Pacific” where it asserts – or rather demands – “ASEAN centrality”. This “centrality” is now more conceptual than real. As borne out by documents emanating from these summits, ASEAN decisions and discourses over both security constructs and economic integration are now largely delimited by China.

To begin with, the ASEAN summit once again recognised the ASEAN-Plus-Three framework (APT) – dominated by China – as a “main vehicle to promote peace, security, stability and prosperity in East Asia”. The APT does not include the US, India, Russia, Australia and New Zealand. Nevertheless, for ASEAN, APT is the primary focus while the East Asia Summit (EAS) remains secondary. The EAS is defined as a “leaders-led forum for dialogue and cooperation on broad strategic, political and economic issues of common interest and concern”, in other words a half-day (plus lunch) talking shop.

Thirteen years after its founding, the EAS has failed to emerge as the premier regional forum for addressing strategic challenges to regional security and stability and upholding a rules-based order, and is burdened with an agenda overloaded with sundry global and non-traditional security issues befitting a talking shop. According to ASEAN, the EAS will “continue to be an integral component of the evolving regional architecture”, which is a work in progress through a “developing dialogue”. Rigidities surrounding “ASEAN centrality” have prevented ASEAN from broad-basing stake-holding in the EAS, leveraging the role and presence of major, emerging and middle powers to grow the EAS into effective security architecture that can call to account the behaviour of regional states. ASEAN should not have needed US Vice President Mike Pence to remind participants of the real purpose of this annual Leaders’ summit.

This merely confirms that as far as ASEAN is concerned, the EAS forum will likely remain in limbo indefinitely.

This stasis is also part of a larger pattern which has been evident for some time. ASEAN has failed to uphold a principled and cohesive approach to check China’s expansionist assertions in the South China Sea (SCS), which is now a militarised Chinese “blue water territory” – in contravention of international law. None of the original traditional security concerns that arose when China’s territorial aggrandisement began with the occupation of Mischief Reef in 1995, in particular a clear geographic definition of disputes in the SCS, restraint on military and island grabbing/building activities and binding redressal/dispute resolution mechanisms, are likely to be addressed by the “Single Draft COC Negotiating Text” under discussion with China.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the 13th East Asia Summit Plenary Session in Singapore, November 15, 2018. Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/meaindia/44071805990/in/album-72157703475004414/>

As far back as 2004, ASEAN conceded China's demand that DOC/COC discussions be held on a China+10 basis, not on an ASEAN-China basis. Five ASEAN states have no territorial stake in the SCS. None of the non-ASEAN members of the EAS have any say or role in this COC negotiation underway even though it involves a critical international waterway which impacts all and where China has introduced, through the single negotiating text, elements which are contrary to UNCLOS and international law. ASEAN lacks military power and collective security arrangements which can provide some deterrence to ward off China's coercive power.

The upshot is that in terms of regional security architecture in ASEAN's own backyard of Southeast Asia, the claim of "ASEAN centrality" is a misnomer. Now, ASEAN also runs the risk of undermining international law and UNCLOS by negotiating a COC on China's terms. China on its part has not only pocketed the benefits of UNCLOS, but also claims jurisdiction over the SCS as historical waters in direct contravention of UNCLOS and defiance of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling.

As for the geography of the Indo-Pacific, ASEAN can rightly lay claim to a central positioning. However, the Indo-Pacific extends from the western shores of America to the east coast of Africa, North-East Asia to Australia and the Pacific Islands. This expansive region comprises at least three distinct strategic arenas: East Asia/Pacific, South East Asia and the Indian Ocean/South Asia. ASEAN's regional outlook and decision making approach is predominantly ASEAN-centric, so it is difficult to make the case for "ASEAN centrality" in the entire Indo-Pacific region.

Without question, ASEAN remains the most successful exponent of Asian regionalism over the last half century. But it can equally be argued that ASEAN has not evolved from its gradualistic and consensus-driven "ASEAN way" to cope with the more pressing challenges to regional order, security and stability which have been in evidence for the past several years. ASEAN has also not recovered from the loss of unity and cohesion, under China's pressure, in 2012. Having ceded both security and economic space to accommodate China's primacy over ASEAN's regional diplomatic posture, it is not difficult to understand why ASEAN seemingly regards even the "Indo-Pacific" terminology, as indeed the continuing mid-official level Quadrilateral (or "Quad") dialogue, as "confrontational" or part of "containment" strategies, directed against China.



*Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 13th East Asia Summit, November 15, 2018, Singapore,
Source: Twitter/ Narendramodi*

2. Security Dynamics

China's Assertions

China is undertaking major economic, infrastructural and military initiatives aimed at consolidating its strategic periphery and securing economic and military domination of Asia. The main components include:

- Undermining ASEAN autonomy and cohesion through political intimidation, predatory economics (MSR) and trade/supply chain domination. ASEAN nations are as a consequence adopting hedging or accommodating strategies, mindful of both Chinese coercion and the countervailing US pressure.
- Militarisation of the South China Sea and a China-imposed Code of Conduct that seeks to exclude extra-regional powers from exploitation of SCS resources and conduct of military exercises. China's aim is to tighten its grip over the SCS and dominate this economically vital waterway to break through the First and Second Island Chains into the Pacific and the Indian Oceans.
- Extending its de facto dominance of continental Asia to include ascendancy over the Asian Rimland that forms the core of regional economic and political power in the Indo-Pacific.
- Developing equities in the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and along the critical SLOCs of the Indian Ocean, thereby extending its influence from South East Asia into the Indian Ocean.

China's intention behind this geo-political power play is not so much military conquest, but leveraging its political influence, economic heft and military capability to coerce all Rimland States, from Southeast Asia to East Africa, to align their future with Chinese interests.

“Above all, we see assertion of power over re-course to international norms.”

(Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Shangri La Dialogue, June 1, 2018)

“We hold that empire and aggression have no place in the Indo-Pacific and that progress is built on a foundation of independence and partnership.”

(Vice President Mike Pence at the EAS, November 15, 2018)

US Response

Over the past two years, the Trump administration, through its decisions and policy statements such as the National Security Strategy (December 2017), has progressively hardened its posture towards China, which the US now regards as a revisionist power seeking regional hegemony in the Indo-Pacific, with the longer-term aim to displace the US as the pre-eminent global power. Since the details are already well documented, it would suffice to draw reference in this regard to Vice President Mike Pence's address at the Hudson Institute on October 4, 2018, his statement at the EAS Summit on November 15, 2018 and his address during the APEC Summit on November 17, 2018.

The US appears to be adopting a three-pronged approach to deal with China: compete, constrain and contain. Apart from policy measures announced by the Trump administration to handle the perceived challenge from China, the US has also re-energised trilateral and quadrilateral dialogues to operationalise joint Indo-Pacific strategies in conjunction with allies (Japan, Australia) and partners (India). These include broad areas of cooperation on regional security and connectivity aimed at establishing a robust rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific, which can both contest and constrain Chinese assertions.



APEC leaders pose for a photo during the APEC Summit in Port Moresby, November 18, 2018.

Source: APEC

ASEAN Vulnerability

In this emerging security scenario, as brought out earlier, ASEAN remains a weak link. ASEAN includes both rimland states and archipelagic nations that

are economically and strategically vital to the security of the Indo-Pacific and also provide the critical link between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. However, these ASEAN states remain fence-sitters in their security outlook, mainly because of their overwhelming economic dependence on China but also on account of an inherent lack of unity and deterrent capacity. Unsurprisingly, the contours of ASEAN thinking about the Indo-Pacific remain blurred. Any regional security architecture in the Indo-Pacific would be incomplete without the participation of the ASEAN states as stakeholders. Reducing ASEAN vulnerability to China is a clear and pressing need.

India's Security Challenges in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

India, as the major Indian Ocean rimland power of Asia, continues to face a hostile continental security environment which is marked by legacy territorial disputes, inimical neighbours acting in collusion and cross border terror. China's successful inroads along India's eastern and western borders in search of warm water access to the Indian Ocean act as pincers to constrict India's strategic space and further vitiate its security environment.

In addition to these longstanding and formidable continental challenges, there is a discernible shift in India's security focus towards its maritime domain, largely due to its rapid economic growth, growing trade and increasing demand for energy and resources. As a result, the entire Indian Ocean and its contiguous Asian rimland, as also the Arabian Peninsula, have become central to India's security.

India's main challenges as a credible naval power in the Indian Ocean are threefold.

First, the IOR littoral island nations, in particular in the western Indian Ocean, have acquired large oceanic resources as a result of UNCLOS but possess negligible capability to exploit or protect their marine and terrestrial assets. This unstable environment among small island and littoral nations, from the Maldives to Sri Lanka, is being exploited by China through its BRI and MSR initiatives, by offering development and infrastructural assistance or financing - mostly on opaque, predatory terms and with strings attached. Indebted economies of Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Myanmar and increasingly Pakistan are the prime examples of this neo-colonial exploitation.

The second challenge is China's increasing military presence and inroads in the Indian Ocean. China, which is strategically constrained in the Pacific, has begun to expand westward towards the Indian Ocean to access markets in Europe and Africa and secure its energy and resource needs. The principal

SLOCs of the IOR are increasingly critical for the Chinese economy and this has provided the rationale for China's development of military base facilities such as Djibouti, as well as a string of potential dual-use ports like Gwadar and Hambantota, through the Indian Ocean.

India's security scenario is further exacerbated by China's close military and strategic nexus with Pakistan, which can lead to an Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) strategy for the western Indian Ocean by integrating Pakistan-based assets with those deployed along the East Coast of Africa. China has mounted as many as 30 naval patrols in the IOR over the last decade, at the rate of at least three per year¹, underscoring the possible challenge of a South China Sea-type of maritime territorial expansion, island building and subsequent militarisation in the IOR.



Ship carrying Chinese military personnel departs Zhanjiang for the Chinese support base in Djibouti, July 11, 2017. Source: CNBC

The third element is the lack of regional equities or cooperative security arrangements in the Indian Ocean to help India in meeting the emerging challenges which have been highlighted. Significantly, apart from the American logistic facility in Diego Garcia and the French naval presence in the Reunion Islands, there is no presence of the Quad or India's other strategic partners that can mitigate this situation.

¹ "China's Reach Has Grown; So Should The Island Chains" by Wilson Vorndict, Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, October 22, 2018 <https://amti.csis.org/chinas-reach-grown-island-chains/>

3. Security Architecture

Arena of Strategic Competition

The Indo-Pacific, which has emerged as a principal arena for strategic and economic contestation, comprises three distinct theatres: East Asia/Pacific, South East Asia and the Indian Ocean/South Asia. In each of these sub-regions, the following strategic balance prevails:

- East Asia/Pacific: US military capabilities, along with those of its alliance partners, provide credible deterrence against China's expansionist designs. However, this balance remains under challenge from North Korea's nuclear and missile threats and China's intimidation of Taiwan.
- South East Asia: With limited deterrent capability and no collective security arrangement, the region is open to China's coercion through creeping militarisation and grey zone operations. South East Asia is central to China's maritime power projection ambitions, particularly its westward expansion.
- Indian Ocean/South Asia: India's maritime capability is the sole resident deterrent to China's expansionism, but faces an increasingly challenging task in maintaining India's asymmetric geographical advantage. This advantage can be fully leveraged only through capacity and capability enhancement and credible security partnerships.

It is important to bear in mind that given the geographic size and diversity of the Indo-Pacific and the wide disparity in military/deterrent capabilities of regional states, a single overarching security architecture for the Indo-Pacific would be unworkable.

Indo-Pacific Rules-based Order

The US, India, Japan and Australia have already enunciated their broadly converging positions on a rules-based order for the Indo-Pacific. In sum, rules-based security architecture must address the following challenges:

- Ensuring that the entire Indo-Pacific region remains free and open and any further attempts at territorial expansion and military coercion against the sovereign interests of regional states are effectively checked. There must be no repeat of the SCS type of occupation and militarisation by China, even if this reality cannot be rolled back.

- Ensuring that there is no aggressive posturing to limit freedoms of navigation and overflight, from the SCS to the archipelagic straits of Indonesia and the Indian Ocean beyond.
- Addressing critical governance issues such as the peace and security of SLOCs and non-traditional security challenges, such as harnessing the blue economy, sustainable resource exploitation, illegal fishing and transnational crime.

“We should all have equal access as a right under international law to the use of common spaces on sea and in the air that would require freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.”

(Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Shangri La Dialogue, June 1, 2018)

“The United States also seeks an open Indo-Pacific, where commerce and culture flow freely; where the seas and the skies are accessible to all with peaceful aims; where disputes are resolved without conflict or coercion; where nations trade with one another, gathering as much as they give; and where we embrace a future of endless possibility for all who call this region home.”

(Vice President Mike Pence at the APEC Summit, November 17, 2018)

The purpose of the rules-based regional order must also be to uphold national sovereignty and allow all regional actors to make decisions based on national interest, without external interference.

If the four members of the Quad are to carve out a security architecture that leads to a free and open Indo-Pacific, they must progress the alignment of their respective political, security and economic interests to a much higher plane from currently prevailing levels.

Potential Role of Maritime Democracies

The four leading maritime democracies of the Indo-Pacific comprise a global super power, a longstanding Asian power, an emerging leading power and a very capable medium power. By acting together across the Indo-Pacific, they can become an important vehicle to defend the centrality of a regional liberal order that supports political independence, territorial status quo, peaceful resolution of disputes and freedom of the maritime commons.

However, as we have argued in an earlier Policy Paper on the Indo-Pacific², significant challenges still limit the actual potential of the Quad. This continues to be evident from the mid-official level Quad meetings and the separate statements that emanate from them in which caution is writ large. Annexure 2 provides a comparative summary of statements after the latest Quad meeting held in Singapore on November 15, 2018.

Overall, “perception” management about the purpose of the Quad is something its members have not been able to handle with any degree of conviction or consistency. As a result, they all fall into the trap of China’s game playing and propaganda, which advantages only Beijing.

For India, Trilaterals with its principal Indo-Pacific strategic partners constitute the mainstay. The India-Japan-US Trilateral is the key anchor for security coordination, and this forum has been elevated to the summit level at the G-20 meeting on November 30, 2018. The India-Japan-Australia Trilateral is progressing well at the top-official level. The underlying strength of these trilateral partnerships, however, continues in turn to be determined by the quality of bilateral relations. India and Japan hold annual summits and a senior official-level 2+2 dialogue; the India-US defence and security partnership is driven by a Ministerial-level 2+2 dialogue; and the India-Australia security partnership is moving forward with a senior official-level 2+2 dialogue.

Coming back to the Quad, this is a Three-plus-One forum, as India is not in alliance with the others while it is a strategic partner of all. The US and its two allies, Japan and Australia, have the capability to maintain order and security in the East Asian theatre. Their military, security and economic focus is still predominantly “Asia Pacific” in nature. India, on the other hand, is a standalone rimland power astride the Indian Ocean, with moderate but growing capabilities. India can credibly meet its present security challenges in the

² “The Indo-Pacific: A Realist Indian Perspective” by Hemant Krishan Singh and Arun Sahgal, DPG Policy Paper, Vol.III, Issue 12, July 12, 2018
http://delhipolicygroup.org/uploads_dpg/publication_file/the-indo-pacific-a-realist-indian-perspective-1105.pdf

Indian Ocean, but will need to progressively develop greater maritime and strategic power to meet growing challenges over the next decade, which will include China's deployment of major task forces to bases and facilities in the Indian Ocean.

Members of the Quad still have a long way to go to ensure that their respective approaches to regional security architecture actually cover the entire Indo-Pacific, not just their own defence and security priorities. The US is the only member of the Quad which can play a decisive balancing role in all three distinct theatres comprising the Indo-Pacific. We believe that India and the United States must together take the lead to first strongly align their security perspectives bilaterally and then broad-base their strategic understandings to the level of the Quad.

Currently, the focus of Quad interactions remains limited to building complementary visions of a rules-based order for the Indo-Pacific, connectivity initiatives and counter terrorism. If the Quad, whose strength will always be defined by its weakest link, is to progress further, it also needs to seriously consider some of the following areas of cooperation:

- Developing complementary MDA and ISR capabilities backed by supporting logistics; intensifying military interoperability and exercises to deal with regional contingencies, both traditional and non-traditional.

Figure 1: Maritime Security Chains in the Indian Ocean.



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- Developing cooperative security perimeters along three maritime chains in the Indian Ocean: the first chain stretching from Australia to Indonesia, India's Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the eastern seaboard of India; the second extending from western peninsular India southward to Sri Lanka and the Maldives and then onward to Diego Garcia, Seychelles and Mauritius; and the third extending from Bahrain down the Arabian Peninsula up to Djibouti in the Horn of Africa, linking US CENTCOM and US AFRICOM (see Figure 1).

We would like to propose much more, but would welcome even a modest start to Quad cooperation on some of these lines, to be gradually scaled up if the geopolitical bandwidth permits.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets US President Donald Trump and Japan PM Shinzo Abe at the first Trilateral Summit between the three countries on November 30, 2018.

Source: Twitter/PMOIndia.

4. Conclusions

Given the geographic expanse and diversity of the Indo-Pacific and disparities in the capabilities of regional states, configuring strategic balance and a stable, rules-based regional security architecture will pose complex challenges in the years ahead.

In the medium term, the high stakes US-China geopolitical competition is likely to sustain. President Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party will fall short in addressing the fundamental concerns of the US relating to China's state-led economic model, its authoritarian structures and revisionist assertions. Attempts at partial deal making or mitigating the geo-strategic rivalry will continue but prospects for a grand bargain are even less likely today than the attempt at forging a G-2 proved a decade ago.

ASEAN will need to re-imagine its role and invest in higher levels of unity and resilience if it is to restore the credibility of "ASEAN Centrality", address economic and security challenges and help create stable architecture in the Indo-Pacific.

As China's "Go West" maritime strategy unfolds and its military presence and base facilities expand into the Indian Ocean, India must show greater purpose in building adequate maritime capabilities as well as advancing strategic cooperation on security architecture in the Indian Ocean with likeminded states, from the Quad to other regional partners.

The immediate challenge for the major maritime democracies of the Indo-Pacific is to address growing vulnerabilities in Southeast Asia and develop a deterrent military and maritime security posture in the Indian Ocean. For Quad cooperation to be viable, its members will need to orient their thinking to include the entire Indo-Pacific.

India and the US share increasingly convergent visions of the Indo-Pacific. It is important that they continue to align their security perspectives and build robust mechanisms for defence cooperation that enhance India's capacity and address mutually shared challenges, particularly in the Indian Ocean.

Annexure 1: India and the United States: Converging Visions of the Indo-Pacific

	Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Keynote speech at the Shangri La Dialogue (June 01, 2018)	Vice President Mike Pence's statements at the EAS (November 15, 2018) and APEC (November 17, 2018) Summits
India-US Relations	<p>"India's global strategic partnership with the United States has overcome the hesitations of history and continues to deepen across the extraordinary breadth of our relationship. It has assumed new significance in the changing world. And, an important pillar of this partnership is our shared vision of an open, stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region."</p>	<p>"And the United States has placed renewed emphasis on our strategic partnership with India. India is a major defense partner, and we are addressing security issues across the region together." (EAS)</p> <p>"As the world's oldest democracy, the United States also feels a kinship with the world's largest democracy, India. And our strategic partnership with India is a key component of our vision. As we speak, we're increasing our security collaboration with our major defense partner. We're strengthening our trade relationship with India and promoting our shared values across the region." (APEC)</p>
Indo-Pacific Vision	<p>"It stands for a free, open, inclusive region, which embraces us all in a common pursuit of progress and prosperity. It includes all nations in this geography as also others beyond who have a stake in it."</p> <p>"We believe that our common prosperity and security require us to evolve, through dialogue, a common rules-based order for the region. And, it must equally apply to all individually as well as to the global commons. Such an order must believe in sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as equality of all nations, irrespective of size and strength. These rules and norms should be based on</p>	<p>"Free and Open – a place where sovereign and independent nations with diverse cultures and many different dreams, can all prosper side by side, and thrive in freedom and in peace." (President Donald Trump at the APEC Summit, November 10, 2017)</p> <p>"We seek an Indo-Pacific in which all nations, large and small, can prosper and thrive – secure in our sovereignty, competing fairly with one another, free from coercion and domination, and upholding the principles, values, and norms that have enabled the region's rise." (EAS)</p> <p>"We will forge a future where nations large and small can prosper and thrive across the Indo-Pacific." (APEC)</p>

	<p>Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Keynote speech at the Shangri La Dialogue (June 01, 2018)</p>	<p>Vice President Mike Pence’s statements at the EAS (November 15, 2018) and APEC (November 17, 2018) Summits</p>
	<p>the consent of all, not on the power of the few. This must be based on faith in dialogue, and not dependence on force. It also means that when nations make international commitments, they must uphold them. This is the foundation of India’s faith in multilateralism and regionalism; and, of our principled commitment to rule of law.”</p> <p>“We will promote a democratic and rules-based international order, in which all nations, small and large, thrive as equal and sovereign. We will work with others to keep our seas, space and air ways free and open; our nations secure from terrorism; and our cyber space free from disruption and conflict.”</p>	
<p>US as an Indo-Pacific Power</p>		<p>“The United States’ commitment to the Indo-Pacific is steadfast and enduring. In all that we do, the United States seeks collaboration, not control. And together with our allies and partners, we are advancing the vision that is shared by the vast majority of the region.” (EAS)</p> <p>“The United States is an Indo-Pacific nation, and this is where our future lies. Our commitment to the region is steadfast and enduring – and it has never been stronger.” (EAS)</p> <p>“As an Indo-Pacific nation, the United States is proud to be a part of this great story.” (APEC)</p>

	Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Keynote speech at the Shangri La Dialogue (June 01, 2018)	Vice President Mike Pence's statements at the EAS (November 15, 2018) and APEC (November 17, 2018) Summits
ASEAN "Centrality"	<p>"ASEAN unity is essential for a stable future for this region."</p> <p>"And, each of us must support it, not weaken it. I have attended four East Asia Summits. I am convinced that ASEAN can integrate the broader region. In many ways, ASEAN is already leading the process. In doing so, it has laid the foundation of the Indo-Pacific Region. The East Asia Summit and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership – two important initiatives of ASEAN – embrace this geography."</p> <p>"The ten countries of South East Asia connect the two great oceans in both the geographical and civilizational sense. Inclusiveness, openness and ASEAN centrality and unity, therefore, lie at the heart of the new Indo-Pacific. India does not see the Indo-Pacific Region as a strategy or as a club of limited members."</p>	<p>"ASEAN is at the centre of our Indo-Pacific strategy." (EAS)</p>
East Asia Summit	<p>"During the ASEAN-India Breakfast Summit, which was attended by leaders of all ASEAN Countries, he emphasized on the salience of ASEAN's unity and centrality in India's "Act-East Policy". He commended the consensus-driven approach of ASEAN and advocated for an open and</p>	<p>"There is no better forum than the East Asia Summit to discuss the Indo-Pacific's strategic issues. Here, nations of all sizes have a voice as we shape the region's future. Here, all nations are equal partners." (EAS)</p> <p>"The United States will work to strengthen this summit and maintain its focus on political and security matters. The challenges we face are many; we are</p>

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	<p>inclusive Regional Security Architecture based on ASEAN Centrality.”</p> <p>“Referring to his Shangri-la dialogue address earlier this year at Singapore, Prime Minister observed that the principles outlined by him on the Indo-Pacific has found wider resonance and acceptance within the region.”</p> <p>“The Prime Minister also attended the 13th East Asia Summit, which is a premier Leaders-led forum in the Indo-Pacific Region. In his intervention at the Plenary, he underlined the centrality of trade and investment in enhancing prosperity and security of the Indo-Pacific.”</p> <p>(Official statement on Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Singapore to attend ASEAN-India Breakfast Summit, the 13th East Asia Summit and relating meetings on November 14-15, 2018)</p>	<p>determined to solve them together with you.” (EAS)</p>
<p>Like-minded Partners / Regional Security Role</p>	<p>“It is normal to have partnerships on the basis of shared values and interests.”</p> <p>“We will work with them (partners), individually or in formats of three or more, for a stable and peaceful region. But, our</p>	<p>“The United States has also continued to stand with likeminded nations to ensure security and peace across the Indo-Pacific.” (APEC)</p> <p>“We’re also forging new and renewed security partnerships, as shown by our recent trilateral naval exercises with India and Japan. And today, it’s my privilege to announce that the United States will</p>

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	<p>friendships are not alliances of containment.”</p> <p>“In the Indian Ocean region, our relationships are becoming stronger. We are also helping build economic capabilities and improve maritime security for our friends and partners. We promote collective security.”</p> <p>“India Armed Forces, especially our Navy, are building partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region for peace and security, as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. They train, exercise and conduct goodwill missions across the region. For example, with Singapore, we have the longest un-interrupted naval exercise, which is in its twenty fifth year now.”</p> <p>“We will start a new tri-lateral exercise with Singapore soon and we hope to extend it to other ASEAN countries. We work with partners like Vietnam to build mutual capabilities. India conducts Malabar Exercise with the United States and Japan. A number of regional partners join in India’s Exercise Milan in the Indian Ocean, and participate in RIMPAC in the Pacific.”</p>	<p>partner with Papua New Guinea and Australia on their joint initiative at Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island. We will work with these nations to protect sovereignty and maritime rights of the Pacific Islands as well.” (APEC)</p>

	<p>Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Keynote speech at the Shangri La Dialogue (June 01, 2018)</p>	<p>Vice President Mike Pence's statements at the EAS (November 15, 2018) and APEC (November 17, 2018) Summits</p>
<p>Threats to Regional Order</p>	<p>"We see growing mutual insecurity and rising military expenditure; internal dislocations turning into external tensions; and new fault lines in trade and competition in the global commons. Above all, we see assertion of power over re-course to international norms. In the midst of all this, there are challenges that touch us all, including the unending threat of terrorism and extremism. This is a world of inter-dependent fortunes and failures. And, no nation can shape and secure it on its own."</p>	<p>"We hold that empire and aggression have no place in the Indo-Pacific and that progress is built on a foundation of independence and partnership. Our vision excludes no nation, requiring only that they treat their neighbors with respect." (EAS)</p> <p>"Authoritarianism and aggression have no place in the Indo-Pacific." (APEC)</p> <p>"We will never allow radical Islamic terrorists to establish a foothold in the Indo-Pacific." (APEC)</p> <p>"We will continue to stand with our allies as well and our partners to protect our borders on land and sea, and in the digital domain." (APEC)</p>
<p>China</p>	<p>"No other relationship of India has as many layers as our relations with China... we have displayed maturity and wisdom in managing issues and ensuring a peaceful border."</p> <p>"Strong and stable relations between our two nations are an important factor for global peace and progress... Asia and the world will have a better future when India and China work together in trust and confidence, sensitive to each other's interests."</p>	<p>"The United States seeks a relationship with China that is based on fairness, reciprocity and respect for sovereignty. We have documented the difficulties that the United States and other nations face with China, and China knows where we stand." (EAS)</p> <p>"So let me be clear: The United States seeks a better relationship with China, based on fairness, reciprocity, and respect for sovereignty." (APEC)</p> <p>"The difficulties that the United States and other nations face with Beijing have been well documented by our administration. China knows where we stand. But as President Trump has said, in his words, we want to "strengthen the relationship between our two countries and improve the lives of our citizens." (APEC)</p> <p>"And as the President prepares to meet with President Xi at the G-20 Summit in Argentina, we believe that progress could be made – progress could be made</p>

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		<p>between our two nations, even as the United States remains in a strong position.” (APEC)</p> <p>“And let me be clear again: China has an honored place in our vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific if it chooses to respect its neighbors’ sovereignty; embrace free, fair, and reciprocal trade; uphold human rights and freedom. The American people want nothing more; the Chinese people and the entire Indo-Pacific deserve nothing less.” (APEC)</p>
<p>Global Commons and the South China Sea</p>	<p>“We should all have equal access as a right under international law to the use of common spaces on sea and in the air that would require freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law. When we all agree to live by that code, our sea lanes will be pathways to prosperity and corridors of peace. We will also be able to come together to prevent maritime crimes, preserve marine ecology, protect against disasters and prosper from blue economy.”</p>	<p>The United States will continue to stand with our allies and partners to uphold the order that we helped build, and we will defend freedom of the seas and skies. This is especially important in the South China Sea.” (EAS)</p> <p>“Let me be clear: China’s militarization and territorial expansion in the South China Sea is illegal and dangerous. It threatens the sovereignty of many nations and endangers the prosperity of the world.” (EAS)</p> <p>“For our part, the United States will continue to fly and sail wherever international law allows and our national interests demand. Harassment will not deter us; it only strengthens our resolve.” (EAS)</p> <p>“As I said during our summit with ASEAN today, it’s time to adopt a meaningful and binding Code of Conduct for the South China Sea – one that protects the freedoms of navigation and overflight, resource exploration and development, and nations’ ability to establish partnerships of choice, as well as respects the rights of third parties.” (EAS)</p>
<p>Connectivity</p>	<p>“Connectivity is vital... There are many connectivity initiatives in the region. If all these have to succeed, we must not</p>	<p>“As we speak, as we’re all aware, some are offering infrastructure loans to governments across the Indo-Pacific and the wider world. Yet the terms of those loans are often opaque at best. Projects</p>

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	<p>only build infrastructure, we must also build bridges of trust. And for that, these initiatives must be based on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, consultation, good governance, transparency, viability and sustainability. They must empower nations, not place them under impossible debt burden.”</p>	<p>they support are often unsustainable and of poor quality. And too often, they come with strings attached and lead to staggering debt.” (APEC)</p> <p>“Not long after our War of Independence, my nation’s first President, George Washington, warned of the dangers that could undermine all that we had achieved: debt and foreign interference. And so today, let me say to all the nations across this wider region, and the world: Do not accept foreign debt that could compromise your sovereignty. Protect your interests. Preserve your independence. And, just like America, always put your country first.” (APEC)</p> <p>“Know that the United States offers a better option. We don’t drown our partners in a sea of debt. We don’t coerce or compromise your independence. The United States deals openly, fairly. We do not offer a constricting belt or a one-way road. When you partner with us, we partner with you, and we all prosper.” (APEC)</p>
<p>Trade</p>	<p>“This region, and all of us, have benefitted from globalisation... But, there is growing protectionism – in goods and in services... What we seek is a level playing field for all. India stands for open and stable international trade regime. We will also support rule-based, open, balanced and stable trade environment in the Indo-Pacific Region, which lifts up all nations on the tide of trade and investment. That is what we expect from Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. RCEP must be comprehensive, as the</p>	<p>“China has taken advantage of the United States for many, many years.” And those days are over.”</p> <p>“As the President has added, China has “tremendous barriers”; they have “tremendous tariffs”; and, as we all know, their country engages in quotas, forced technology transfer, intellectual property theft, industrial subsidies on an unprecedented scale. Such actions have actually contributed to a \$375 billion goods trades deficit with the United States last year alone. But as the President said today, “that’s all changed now.”(APEC)</p> <p>“We have taken decisive action to address our trade imbalance with China. We’ve put tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods and we could more than double that number. But we hope for better. The United States though will not change</p>



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	name suggests, and the principles declared. It must have a balance among trade, investment and services.”	course until China changes its ways.” (APEC)

Annexure 2: Comparison of statements issued by members of the Quad following their meeting on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit, November 15, 2018

1. Statements by Australia, Japan and USA say all countries reaffirmed shared commitment to maintain rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and shared complementary visions of the region. This is conspicuously absent in India's statement.
2. All talk of cooperation in connectivity, sustainable development, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, maritime and cyber security. Australia, Japan and USA in addition talk about importance of good governance, an aspect missing from India's statement.
3. All four talk about support for ASEAN centrality. Australia, Japan and USA in addition talk of supporting other institutions such as IORA and Pacific Islands Forum, which is missing from India's statement.
4. Australia, Japan and USA all talk of exchanging views on regional developments including in Sri Lanka and Maldives. India's statement limits itself to exchanging views and conspicuously fails to mention these two countries.
5. USA and Japan both looked forward to regular consultation on Indo-Pacific engagement and initiatives. Australia and India, in contrast, only agree to continue consultations.





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