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Navigating the Indo-Pacific: A Comparative Analysis of ASEAN and Quad Frameworks

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The Indo-Pacific region has experienced a notable surge in the establishment and consolidation of new multilateral and minilateral frameworks, largely driven by the shifting geopolitical landscape shaped by China's growing influence. Notably, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), consisting of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States, has advanced through intensive and regular cooperation to address pressing challenges in the region such as climate protection and health policy to maritime security. Concurrently, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a political and economic union representing 10 states in Southeast Asia, has progressively expanded its objectives to encompass the establishment of a shared security regime, in order to contrast political repression by member states, narcotics trafficking, and terrorism.

However, a noticeable research gap persists in the current literature regarding the ASEAN and Quad frameworks comparison. This paper aims to delve into the evolving dynamics within these two entities, meticulously scrutinizing the intricate interplay of differences, convergences, and emerging challenges within the evolving geopolitical landscape. The research will unfold in several key dimensions. Firstly, it will thoroughly examine the impact of changing geopolitical dynamics on joint military exercises, capacity-building efforts, and trainings for defense cooperation. Secondly, an in-depth analysis of existing charters and members' declarations will be conducted to illuminate the formal structures and commitments of both ASEAN and the Quad. Thirdly, the research will delve into the ASEAN-Quad bilateral relations with countries in the region—specifically South Korea, Mongolia, and Pakistan—providing a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness of these frameworks. Finally, the paper will undertake examine and analyze the interactions between ASEAN and the Quad. This comparative approach will shed light on the distinct roles, contributions, and potential collaborations between the two frameworks, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of defence cooperation dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region.

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