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Keynote Address by Associate Professor Andrew T. H. Tan, Macquarie University, Australia

Title: Asia's Strategic Environment

Abstract

Asia is today the most important region in the world as well as the center of the global economy, a fact acknowledged by President Obama in his seminal 'Asia Pivot' speech in Canberra, Australia, in 2011. The region contains two emerging Great Powers, namely, China and India (both nuclear powers), while Japan remains the third largest economy in the world. The United States has also been a key actor in the region since 1945. Asia however, is a problematic continent, riven by interstate tensions and rivalries, territorial disputes, arms races, terrorism and insurgent challenges, state fragility and the emergence of powerful states. The diverse and complex strategic environment in Asia is complicated by the absence or weakness of regional institutions and regimes that could manage conflict and other problems within the region. How can the smaller states in the region manage the evolving complex strategic environment?