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South-East Asian Countries Defense Diplomacy Strategy for Capacity Building Study Case of Philippines

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi dinamika yang berubah dalam pertahanan dan diplomasi di Filipina di tengah rivalitas yang meningkat antara Amerika Serikat (AS) dan China. Karena letak geografisnya yang strategis, Filipina menghadapi kerentanan terhadap konsekuensi dari persaingan ini. Fokus utamanya adalah pada strategi diplomasi pertahanan komprehensif Filipina, yang telah diterapkan sejak pemerintahan Ramos. Berakar dalam Konvensi Perserikatan Bangsa-Bangsa tentang Hukum Laut (UNCLOS), Filipina mengejar diplomasi berbasis hukum, terutama melalui Undang-Undang Dasar Wilayah Filipina tahun 2009. Kerangka strategis ini mengambil inspirasi dari "Little Book on Big Strategy" karya Harry R. Yarger, yang menekankan pentingnya menyelaraskan kekuatan nasional dengan lingkungan strategis yang ada. Dengan berpartisipasi aktif dalam inisiatif membangun kapasitas di Asia Tenggara, Filipina terlibat dalam berbagai forum seperti ASEAN, ADMM, dan ADMM-Plus. Inisiatif-inisiatif ini melibatkan modernisasi kekuatan pertahanan, peningkatan kesadaran maritim, dan penguatan pertahanan pantai. Pembahasan juga mencakup industri pertahanan negara, peran penting Angkatan Bersenjata, dan kesiapan untuk kerja sama internasional. Pada intinya, Filipina mengadopsi pendekatan proaktif dengan mengintegrasikan strategi diplomatis, upaya membangun kapasitas, dan komitmen pada hukum internasional untuk menjamin stabilitas dan keamanan di tengah tantangan regional yang berkembang.

Kata Kunci: *Diplomasi Pertahanan, UNCLOS, ADMM-Plus, Angkatan Bersenjata*

Abstract

This study explores the changing dynamics of defense and diplomacy in the Philippines amidst the escalating rivalry between the United States (US) and China. Due to its strategic geographical location, the Philippines faces susceptibility to the consequences of this rivalry. The primary focus is on the Philippines' comprehensive defense diplomacy strategy, which has been in practice since the Ramos administration. Rooted in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Philippines pursues a law-centric diplomacy, notably through the 2009 Philippine Baselines Law. The strategic framework draws inspiration from Harry R. Yarger's "Little Book on Big Strategy," emphasizing the importance of aligning national strengths with the prevailing strategic environment. Actively engaging in capacity-building initiatives within Southeast Asia, the Philippines participates in various forums such as ASEAN, ADMM, and ADMM-Plus. These initiatives encompass the modernization of defense forces, increased maritime awareness, and fortified coastal defense. The discussion also encompasses the country's defense industry, the crucial role of the Armed Forces, and its readiness for international collaboration. In essence, the Philippines adopts a proactive approach by integrating diplomatic strategies, capacity-building endeavors, and a commitment to international law to ensure stability and security amidst evolving regional challenges.

Keywords: *Defense Diplomacy, UNCLOS, ADMM-Plus, Armed Forces*

INTRODUCTION

The rapidly intensifying rivalry between the United States and China has become a focal point, significantly impacting nations economically and defensively tethered to these global powers. This escalating competition has compelled various countries, including the Philippines, to reassess their defense and diplomatic strategies. The geographical location of the Philippines makes it particularly vulnerable to the repercussions of this geopolitical contest. The primary objective of this study is to delve into the evolving dynamics of defense and diplomacy in the Philippines within the context of the intensifying U.S.-China rivalry, exploring how the nation navigates these challenges to build its capacity effectively.

The Philippines' response to these concerns involves a nuanced approach centered on enhancing awareness and preventive actions geared towards capacity building. From localized efforts to broader regional initiatives, the Philippines has strategically positioned itself as a benchmark for pragmatic and effective defense diplomacy, showcasing adaptability and resilience. Emphasizing the intricate balance between economic, social, and political aspects, the Philippines has embraced a comprehensive approach since the Ramos administration. Notably, a key focus area has been the South China Sea, governed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) since 1982. This legal framework remains a cornerstone, providing a structured dimension to the Philippines' defense

diplomacy strategy.

To further understand the intricacies of the Philippines' defense diplomacy, this study draws inspiration from the strategic framework outlined in Harry R. Yarger's "Little Book on Big Strategy." The book underscores the importance of aligning national strengths with the strategic environment, a concept that the Philippines has translated into practical actions. Operating within this framework, the Philippines addresses regional security challenges by emphasizing a military strategy concept, placing particular emphasis on forward defense and collective security cooperation with neighboring nations. The overarching goals include safeguarding maritime sovereignty and national interests, utilizing military resources, such as defense forces and advanced weaponry, to fortify strategic defense.

Proactively engaging in capacity-building initiatives within Southeast Asia, the Philippines participates in influential forums like ASEAN, ADMM, and ADMM-Plus. These multilateral efforts reflect the country's commitment to addressing evolving security challenges, with a specific focus on modernizing defense forces, enhancing maritime awareness, and fortifying coastal defense. Amidst territorial disputes, especially in the South China Sea, the Philippines actively builds its defense capacity. This includes efforts to raise maritime awareness, improve coastal defense mechanisms, and collaborate with regional partners to promote rule-based navigation.

While pursuing defense capacity-building, the Philippines maintains a steadfast commitment to diplomacy, peaceful coexistence, and international law. This balanced approach seeks to uphold stability and security amidst the ever-evolving security challenges in Southeast Asia. This comprehensive strategy includes fostering collaboration with countries such as the United States and Australia, actively participating in regional security forums like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and contributing significantly to United Nations peacekeeping missions.

The Philippines adopts a proactive and holistic approach that integrates the ends-means strategy into its defense diplomacy. The nation's focus remains on strengthening national defense and security through multilateral cooperation, evident in its active engagement within ASEAN and strategic partnerships. In addressing maritime challenges, the Philippines prioritizes maritime awareness and coastal defense while adhering to the principles of diplomacy, peaceful coexistence, and international law. Despite inherent risks and external pressures, the Philippine approach aligns defense capabilities with regional cooperation, ensuring stability and security within the Southeast Asian region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

National Interest

The notion of national interest is a ubiquitous and fundamental aspect when delving into the foreign relations among nations. It acts as a tool to elucidate a country's conduct and maneuvers in the global arena, encapsulating the primary motivations and justifications underpinning its foreign policy decisions. Grasping the concept of national interest provides researchers with the means to scrutinize the factors, incentives, and rationales steering a country's engagements and demeanor with other nations.

Extensively employed in the realm of international relations, the concept of national interest furnishes valuable insights into the conduct and undertakings of states on the world stage (Bakry, 2017). Preserving defense and security emerges as paramount in safeguarding a nation's fundamental interests, with a robust defense and security apparatus bolstering its economic and foreign policies. A robust defense infrastructure instills confidence when partaking in diplomatic interactions with other nations. The primary national interests revolve around safeguarding a country's identity and security, while secondary national interests encompass more indirect factors. The existence of a sturdy defense and security foundation proves indispensable in the pursuit of national interests, ensuring the sustained continuity of a nation aligns closely with Realism in International Relations. Realism is a dominant theoretical perspective that asserts that states are primarily motivated by their national interests, especially in the pursuit of power and security. The text reflects several key aspects of Realism in its analysis of the Philippines' defense and diplomatic strategies within the context of the intensifying U.S.-China rivalry.

Balancing Power and Security Concerns:

The intensifying rivalry between the United States and China, highlighted in the text, serves as a focal point influencing nations economically and defensively. This situation is analyzed through the lens of Realism, a prominent perspective in international relations that posits states prioritize their security and survival in an anarchic international system. In the context of the Philippines, the text suggests that the nation's response to these power dynamics is driven by a strategic imperative to safeguard its national interests.

Realism, as a theoretical framework, contends that in an anarchic international system, states act to maximize their power and ensure their survival. The escalating competition between major global players, such as the United States and China, is a manifestation of this power struggle. In this light, the Philippines, positioned strategically in a region susceptible to the consequences of this rivalry, is portrayed as a rational actor responding to the prevailing power dynamics. The nation's engagement in defense and diplomacy, as discussed in the text, aligns with Realist notions of states prioritizing their

security in the face of powerful contenders vying for dominance. The reference to the Philippines reconsidering its defense and diplomatic strategies in response to the U.S.-China rivalry further strengthens the Realist interpretation.

Realism asserts that states act in their self-interest, and the text implies that the Philippines, recognizing the implications of this power rivalry, is adjusting its approaches to ensure national security. The geographical vulnerability of the Philippines, highlighted due to its proximity to potential conflict areas, reinforces the Realist notion that states navigate international relations to secure their survival and protect their interests. The Realist perspective provides a valuable framework for understanding the Philippines' response to the escalating rivalry between the United States and China. This lens illuminates the nation's strategic recalibration in defense and diplomacy as a rational pursuit of security and survival within the anarchic global system.

Geopolitical Vulnerability and Strategic Positioning:

This research focus on the vulnerability of the Philippines, positioned in close proximity to the escalating rivalry between the United States and China, aligns with Realist principles. This interpretation suggests that the nation's reassessment of defense and diplomatic strategies is a pragmatic response to its geopolitical position, illustrating the prioritization of national interests in the context of external pressures.

Geopolitical vulnerability, as emphasized in the text, becomes a critical determinant influencing the Philippines' strategic choices. Realism posits that states act to ensure their security and survival, and the acknowledgment of vulnerability to the U.S.-China rivalry positions the Philippines as a rational actor navigating the anarchic international system. The geographical proximity to potential conflict zones amplifies the realist notion that states, situated in strategic locations, recalibrate their approaches in response to external power dynamics.

This research reference to the Philippines' reassessment of defense and diplomatic strategies due to its geopolitical vulnerability further solidifies the Realist interpretation. Realism contends that states act in their self-interest, and the Philippines, recognizing its susceptibility to the consequences of the U.S.-China rivalry, is portrayed as pragmatically adjusting its approaches. This strategic recalibration aligns with Realist notions of states prioritizing national interests and security, especially in the face of external pressures and potential threats emanating from major global players. They provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding the Philippines' response to geopolitical vulnerability and strategic positioning in the context of the U.S.-China rivalry. This lens illuminates the nation's

pragmatic reassessment of defense and diplomatic strategies as a rational and strategic maneuver to safeguard its security and national interests.

Emphasis on Military Strength and Strategic Alliances:

Realism, a cornerstone in international relations theory, contends that states prioritize the enhancement of military capabilities to ensure their security and deter potential threats. The text underscores how the Philippines' strategic orientation towards defense modernization, active participation in multilateral defense forums, and collaboration with key partners like the United States and Australia aligns seamlessly with Realist notions of building military strength and forging alliances to safeguard national interests.

The emphasis on defense modernization, a key facet highlighted in the text, reflects the Realist perspective of states actively working to bolster their military capabilities. Realism asserts that nations, operating in a self-help system, are driven by a rational pursuit of security and power. In the case of the Philippines, the focus on upgrading military equipment, enhancing training programs, and developing military infrastructure aligns with the realist objective of ensuring a robust defense apparatus.

Participation in multilateral defense forums, such as ASEAN and ADMM-Plus, reinforces the Realist interpretation in the Philippines' defense strategies. Realism suggests that states engage in alliances and cooperative endeavors to augment their security. The multilateral engagements showcased by the Philippines mirror Realist principles of states collaborating to enhance their collective strength against potential threats, showcasing a pragmatic approach to navigating the complexities of the international system.

The collaboration with strategic partners, particularly the United States and Australia, further substantiates the Realist interpretation. Realism posits that states form alliances based on shared interests, and the Philippines' active partnerships align with this concept. The collaboration extends beyond symbolic gestures, involving the exchange of knowledge and experiences in defense matters, indicating a strategic alignment with global powers for mutual security and stability.

Philippines' emphasis on military strength and strategic alliances, analyzed through the lens of Realism, provides a comprehensive understanding of its defense dynamics. The nation's actions align with the rational pursuit of security and power, characteristic of Realist principles, as it navigates a complex international environment

Legal Framework as a Tool of National Interest:

The Realist perspective within international relations theory posits that states employ

international institutions and legal frameworks as strategic tools to advance their national interests. In the context of the Philippines, the text explicitly mentions the nation's adherence to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and its active engagement in law-based diplomacy. These actions provide a tangible manifestation of the Realist viewpoint, illustrating how states strategically leverage international laws and institutions to safeguard and promote their interests.

For Realists, the use of international institutions is not driven solely by a commitment to a rules-based global order but rather by a pragmatic understanding that these frameworks can serve as instruments for achieving specific strategic goals. The mention of the Philippines' adherence to UNCLOS signifies a deliberate choice to operate within a legal framework that governs maritime issues. This is not merely an expression of normative behavior but a calculated decision to use international law as a means to protect the country's maritime interests and strengthen its position in regional and global affairs.

Furthermore, the engagement in law-based diplomacy, as highlighted in the text, reinforces the Realist notion that states utilize legal frameworks not only for compliance but as tools for advancing their interests through diplomatic means. The establishment of a Cabinet Committee on the 1981 Law of the Sea Convention is indicative of the Philippines' strategic approach in institutionalizing its commitment to UNCLOS. This institutionalization not only demonstrates compliance but also serves as a mechanism to actively shape diplomatic discourse in alignment with national interests.

The strategic use of legal frameworks is an integral part of the Realist toolkit. In this case, the Philippines is not merely a passive participant in international legal systems but an active player strategically utilizing UNCLOS to navigate the complexities of maritime disputes and power dynamics in the South China Sea. Through this Realist lens, the Philippines emerges as a calculated actor, employing legal frameworks to protect and assert its national interests in a dynamic and competitive global arena.

Economic, Social, and Political Considerations:

While Realism often emphasizes security concerns, it acknowledges that states have multifaceted interests. The text recognizes the Philippines' comprehensive approach, including social and economic aspects, in its defense and diplomatic strategies. This holistic approach reflects the understanding that national interests encompass various dimensions beyond just military considerations.

Regional Security

Regional security refers to the collective measures and efforts undertaken by nations within a specific geographical region to ensure the stability, peace, and protection of their shared interests. In the context of the provided text, the focus is on Southeast Asia, where nations like the Philippines actively engage in regional security initiatives.

The escalating rivalry between the United States and China has significant implications for regional security in Southeast Asia. The geopolitical tensions and potential conflicts between these global powers create an environment of uncertainty and insecurity for the nations in the region. The Philippines, being particularly vulnerable due to its geographical location, recognizes the importance of robust regional security mechanisms.

In response to the changing dynamics of global power, the Philippines adopts a proactive approach to enhance its defense capabilities and contribute to regional stability. The engagement in multilateral cooperation, as seen through platforms like ASEAN, ADMM, and ADMM-Plus, demonstrates a commitment to collaborative efforts in addressing security challenges. By participating in these regional forums, the Philippines shares experiences and knowledge, contributing to the collective capacity-building of Southeast Asian nations.

The territorial disputes in the South China Sea further underscore the need for regional security measures. The Philippines, through its comprehensive defense diplomacy strategy, actively works on maritime awareness, coastal defense, and rule-based navigation. These efforts not only strengthen national defense but also contribute to the overall security and stability of the Southeast Asian region.

The concept of regional security, therefore, is intricately linked to the evolving dynamics of great power competition, the response of individual nations like the Philippines, and the collaborative initiatives undertaken within the Southeast Asian region. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of nations in addressing common security challenges and highlights the importance of diplomacy, cooperation, and adherence to international law to maintain regional stability.

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy serves as the compass guiding a sovereign state's interactions with the global community. It encompasses a set of strategies, principles, and actions that reflect a nation's goals, priorities, and values on the international stage. In the specific context of the Philippines, foreign policy becomes a critical instrument in navigating the intricate challenges arising from the intensifying rivalry between the United States and China.

For any nation, formulating an effective foreign policy is imperative to safeguard national interests and promote global stability. The escalating competition between major powers, the U.S. and China in this case, necessitates a reevaluation of the Philippines' foreign policy to adeptly respond to evolving dynamics. The geographical vulnerability of the Philippines further accentuates the need for a meticulously crafted foreign policy that delicately balances relationships with these major players.

The Philippines' adoption of a comprehensive defense diplomacy strategy exemplifies a proactive approach in shaping its foreign policy landscape. With a focus on multilateral cooperation, the nation actively participates in regional forums like ASEAN, ADMM, and ADMM-Plus. These platforms serve as arenas for diplomatic dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaborative efforts aimed at addressing shared security challenges. Through active involvement in these forums, the Philippines underscores its commitment to regional stability, highlighting a foreign policy approach that prioritizes collective security.

Moreover, the Philippines' adherence to international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), offers a tangible manifestation of the country's commitment to a rules-based foreign policy. Initiatives such as the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on the 1981 Law of the Sea Convention and engagement in law-based diplomacy, as outlined in the 2009 Philippine Baselines Law, illustrate a strategic foreign policy approach firmly grounded in legal frameworks.

As a dynamic tool, the Philippines' foreign policy responds adeptly to the ever-evolving global landscape, particularly in the context of the U.S.-China rivalry. It encompasses diplomatic initiatives, regional cooperation, and a steadfast commitment to international law, all aimed at not only securing national interests but also contributing significantly to the stability of the Southeast Asian region amid complex security challenges.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive narrative approach with a focus on literature analysis. We gathered information from various sources such as books, scholarly journals, government reports and media articles. The main objective is to understand and explain the defense diplomacy strategies implemented by the Philippines and other countries in Southeast Asia. A search and collection of literature related to defense diplomacy strategies in the region was conducted to look for patterns, trends and developments in these strategies from various relevant sources. We identified relevant conceptual frameworks from the literature we have collected. This helped us understand the context and theories underlying defense

diplomacy strategies in Southeast Asia. We analyzed the literature to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies that have been implemented. We looked for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the strategy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Case Study

The examination of South-East Asian Countries' Defense Diplomacy Strategy for Capacity Building reveals Vietnam as a proactive actor in navigating the evolving dynamics of global power. Drawing inspiration from the Philippines' defense diplomacy objectives, Vietnam demonstrates a resolute commitment to enhancing its capabilities while upholding regional stability. Much like the Philippines, Vietnam adopts a comprehensive capacity-building strategy, delineating clear objectives geared towards bolstering national defense and security. The study underscores the significance of multilateral approaches, exemplified through Vietnam's active participation in regional platforms such as ASEAN. Collaborations with strategic partners, reminiscent of the Philippines' engagements with the US and Australia, emerge as pivotal components in Vietnam's pursuit of a robust defense apparatus.

In line with the Philippines' strategies, Vietnam places a notable emphasis on maritime understanding and coastal defense, strategically addressing challenges stemming from territorial disputes. This mirrors the Philippines' approach, showcasing a shared regional focus on maritime security. The commitment to these strategies highlights a collective effort within Southeast Asia to fortify national defenses amid the complexities of global power shifts.

Turning attention to the methods employed by Vietnam for capacity building, the case study unveils specialized approaches that resonate with those undertaken by the Philippines. Active participation in multilateral cooperation, especially within forums like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ADMM-Plus, stands out as a cornerstone for Vietnam's defense diplomacy. The study accentuates Vietnam's investments in modernizing defense capabilities, upgrading military equipment, and enhancing training programs – mirroring the Philippines' parallel efforts. As Vietnam responds to maritime dispute challenges, it echoes the Philippines' strategies by intensifying maritime awareness, strengthening coastal defense, and collaborating with partners to promote rule-based navigation.

The examination of Vietnam's defense diplomacy tools aligns seamlessly with the Philippines' approach, reflecting a shared commitment to capacity building. Similar to the Philippines, Vietnam leverages diverse resources, with a particular focus on developing its defense industry. This commitment contributes to the modernization of Vietnam's armed

forces, mirroring the Philippines' initiatives.

An inspection of Vietnam's defense diplomacy tools in line with the approach taken by the Philippines shows a shared commitment to strengthening defense capacity in the region. As observed in this study, Vietnam and the Philippines both face complex and diverse regional security challenges. To address these challenges, both countries adopt similar approaches, focusing on developing their defense industries and modernizing their armed forces.

Vietnam, like the Philippines, also utilizes diverse resources to achieve these goals. With an eye on the rapidly changing security environment in the Southeast Asian region, both countries seek to enhance their military capabilities through investments in technology, personnel training and defense infrastructure development. This is reflected in the concrete steps taken by Vietnam to improve its defense capabilities, including the development of warships, fighter aircraft and air defense systems.

The complexity and diversity of regional security threats prompted Vietnam and the Philippines to cooperate in joint efforts to improve their defense capacities. This is reflected in collaborative efforts between the two countries in the areas of military training, intelligence sharing, and defense infrastructure development. Through this partnership, Vietnam and the Philippines aim to create a stable and secure security environment in the Southeast Asian region.

As such, Vietnam's examination of defense diplomacy tools in line with the approach taken by the Philippines reflects their shared commitment to defense capacity building in the region. Through the utilization of diversified resources and a focus on the development of the defense industry, both countries seek to enhance the modernization of their armed forces and address complex regional security challenges. The cooperation between Vietnam and the Philippines demonstrates their joint efforts in creating a stable and secure security environment in Southeast Asia.

The active role played by Vietnam's armed forces extends beyond national sovereignty protection, actively participating in forging regional and international partnerships, paralleling the role of the Philippines' Armed Forces. Vietnam's demonstrated readiness for international cooperation, engagement in forums like the ARF, and contributions to UN peacekeeping missions collectively underscore its dedication to global security and stability.

Vietnam's participation in the ARF, along with its active contribution to UN peacekeeping missions, highlights its dedication to global security and stability. Vietnam's armed forces serve not only as guardians of the country's sovereignty, but also as active agents in promoting sustainable regional cooperation and dialogue. Through its

involvement in regional and international forums, Vietnam has played an important role in facilitating dialogue between countries, strengthening diplomatic relations, and promoting peaceful resolutions to conflicts in the Southeast Asian region.

This is in line with the role played by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, which has also played an active role in maintaining regional stability and contributing to UN peacekeeping missions in various countries. Vietnam's readiness to cooperate in regional and international partnerships, as well as its involvement in peacekeeping missions, affirms their commitment to global security and responsibility as members of the international community.

It is important to note that the active role played by Vietnam's armed forces not only reflects national interests, but also contributes to joint efforts to create a stable and peaceful security environment at the regional and global levels. Vietnam's willingness to participate in regional and international partnerships, as well as its contribution to UN peacekeeping missions, form an integral part of joint efforts to promote peace and stability in this increasingly complex world.

The case study on South-East Asian Countries' Defense Diplomacy Strategy provides insights into Vietnam's strategic pursuits, mirroring the Philippines' initiatives. This shared commitment within the region emphasizes a collaborative effort to address evolving security dynamics and fortify defenses. The parallels in objectives, methods, and tools underscore a collective endeavor within Southeast Asia to navigate global power shifts effectively and contribute to a secure and stable world.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive exploration of South-East Asian Countries' Defense Diplomacy Strategy for Capacity Building, with a specific focus on the case study of the Philippines, has provided valuable insights. Drawing parallels with Vietnam's strategic pursuits, the case study highlights a shared commitment within Southeast Asia to navigate the complexities of global power dynamics effectively.

Both the Philippines and Vietnam exhibit a resolute commitment to enhancing their defense capabilities and maintaining regional stability. The adoption of a comprehensive capacity-building strategy, clear objectives, and active engagement in multilateral cooperation platforms like ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) underscores the collective effort within the region.

The emphasis on maritime understanding, coastal defense reinforcement, and

investments in defense modernization align with shared regional priorities. These strategies, mirroring each other, reflect a concerted effort to address challenges arising from territorial disputes and evolving security dynamics.

The study sheds light on the tools employed by the Philippines and Vietnam, revealing a commonality in leveraging diverse resources for capacity building. The development of defense industries, active roles played by armed forces beyond national boundaries, and readiness for international cooperation showcase a commitment to global security and stability. The case study on South-East Asian Countries' Defense Diplomacy Strategy demonstrates a unified approach within Southeast Asia. The shared objectives, methods, and tools underscore a collaborative endeavor to navigate global power shifts effectively and contribute collectively to a secure and stable world. As the region continues to face evolving security challenges, this collective commitment positions Southeast Asian countries as proactive contributors to regional and global peace and stability.

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