

Introduction

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SECURITY NEED NOT BE VIEWED IN BINARY TERMS. BY CLOSELY EXAMINING THE VIEWS OF ADVERSARIES, AND BRINGING THEM TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE, DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO SECURITY CAN BE REACHED.

Welcome to *Common Security in the Indo-Pacific Region*, a new resource that builds directly on *Common Security 2022: For Our Shared Future* and on the earlier, foundational document *Policies for Common Security*.^{1,2} This collection of essays by scholars, national movement leaders, and others committed to peace and pluralist co-existence applies the insights of those earlier works specifically to the Indo-Pacific region, which is today a theater for intense competition, inter-state rivalries, and conflicts both old and new. We believe that the principles, proposals, and framing of common security are relevant here to show that alternative methodologies for security are possible and needed in this region.

Most of the writers in this collection hail from the Indo-Pacific and are rooted in the study of security issues specific to their region. Three organizations collaborated on producing *Common Security in the Indo-Pacific Region*: PEACEMOMO in South Korea; the Campaign for Peace, Disarmament, and Common Security in the United States; and the International Peace Bureau, which is based in Berlin.

This document adds to the security and strategic debates and narratives concerning the Indo-Pacific. We show that the dominant narrative on security has thus far excluded the perspectives of those most di-

rectly affected. Moreover, we argue that security need not be viewed in binary terms, and that by closely examining the views of adversaries, and bringing them to the negotiating table, different approaches to security can be reached.

These essays are also part of a global and ongoing conversation among peace and security analysts, policy makers, concerned people, and activists. As we witness an unfolding genocide in Gaza, with the spillover of additional unnecessary deaths and destruction in the West Bank, Lebanon, and the Middle East — and as wars escalate and threaten the wider region — our call for a ceasefire and common security is urgent and necessary. This plea for international cooperation, trust, and solidarity has been voiced by United Nations member states in the recently adopted Pact for the Future, which recognized the need for urgent and comprehensive action to safeguard our planet, our humanity, and our common destiny. The precarious international situation calls for a rational choice of sustainable and inclusive security. We hope to encourage this community to include the multiple narratives embedded in national and local realities of the Indo-Pacific in all discussion and discourses, in order to better understand the complexities of security and their common roots.



ABOVE: ACTIVISTS AT WORKSHOP ON CHALLENGES OF A COMMON SECURITY POLICY; BERLIN, SEPTEMBER 2019 (CREDIT: JOSEPH GERSON)

A Note on Terminology

With considerable reluctance, the authors of this collection have agreed to use the term “Indo-Pacific” to describe the important geographic area explored in their essays — rather than the term “Asia-Pacific,” which emerged from Japanese strategic discourse and predominated in strategic references to the region for much of the second half of the twentieth century. The term “Indo-Pacific” predated this phase, having been coined in the mid-nineteenth century to frame colonial Britain’s strategic planning for the region from the Gulf of Aden on the western flank of the Indian Ocean, across South Asia, to the eastern coast of China, where British hegemony was consolidated in the Opium Wars. The term reflects the ambitions of the United States and its allies across the Indian and Pacific Oceans and continental Asia. With Japanese concerns about the rise of China and its “string of pearls” military access to Indian Ocean ports — soon followed by China’s Belt and Road initiative — Japan sought to integrate India into its strategic planning. Australia, long a major Anglo-American ally in the eastern Indian Ocean, promoted the term to reinforce its own alliance with the United States. The term went through

several iterations during the Obama administration, and was finalized as Indo-Pacific under former president Donald Trump.

We have opted to use this term to help readers understand more deeply the dangerous great power and allied competition affecting an increasingly integrated region.

Endnotes

1. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (1983). *Policies for Common Security*. Taylor & Francis.
2. Olof Palme International Center, International Peace Bureau, & International Trade Union Confederation (2022). *Common Security 2022: For Our Shared Future*. Olof Palme International Center, International Peace Bureau, & International Trade Union Confederation.