



- Minilateralism in Asia & the Indo-Pacific has emerged as the foreign policy tool of choice by states competing for regional superiority.
- As a result, powers across the spectrum have engaged in deeper cooperation with “like minded” states, envisioning trilaterals, such as the India–Japan–Australia India–United States (US)–Japan and India–France–Australia or quadrilaterals, such as the India–Japan–US–Australia (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or Quad) process, currently Indo-Pacific’s most pivotal security dialogue.

WHAT IS AUKUS ?

- AUKUS is the trilateral security arrangement between Australia, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US), to promote a “free & open Indo-Pacific that is secure & stable.
- The sharing of the coveted naval nuclear propulsion technology for nuclear attack submarines (SSN) with Australia by the US & UK was the hallmark of the AUKUS agreement.
- Apart from enabling Australia to acquire eight SSNs, the three countries pledged to develop advanced capabilities in the areas of cyber technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI), quantum technologies and advanced underwater vehicles (AUVs).
- The AUKUS announcement was historic given that the last time such sensitive technology was shared was over six decades ago, as part of the 1958 UK–US Mutual Defence Agreement.
- For facilitating the sharing of this critical technology under AUKUS, a legally binding tripartite agreement known as the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement (ENNPIA) was signed in Canberra on 22 November 2021.

BACKGROUND

- The Australians first approached the British for help in building a fleet of nuclear-powered attack submarines; & then, the British approached the Americans, after having developed the concept of a new strategic partnership.
- Eventually, the Biden administration agreed to the pact.
- Australia, in 2016, had signed the submarine deal with France.
- However, since the initial signing, China stepped up pressure on Australia in many ways, including: undermining educational freedom at Australian universities; detaining Australian journalists; & implementing tariffs & other punitive economic measures on Australian imports.
- Australia called for an international investigation into the origins of COVID19.

- Australia, passed a law to prevent foreign interference, banning Huawei from developing the country’s wireless networks & cancelling a major infrastructure deal in the state of Victoria.
- When a threat emerges, there are two main strategies for a smaller state:
 - 1) Balancing against the threat by joining a benevolent great power; or
 - 2) Siding with the threatening great power, what is called “bandwagoning.”
- Canberra chose the opposite & used AUKUS to strengthen its counterbalancing strategy by moving closer to the two most powerful Western military nuclear states: the US and the UK.

THE MODEL OF AUKUS

- It encompasses the trilateral cooperation to four new verticals – hypersonics & counter-hypersonics, electronic warfare capabilities (EWC), Information Sharing & defence innovation.
- It includes the creation of a three-tiered governance framework for AUKUS.
- Below this, there are two joint steering groups to oversee the two parallel lines of efforts, namely, submarines & advanced capabilities.
- China has been steadfast in its opposition to the trilateral defence agreement.
- The SSNs of both the US & the UK use highly enriched uranium (HEU) to power their nuclear reactors.
- In comparison to reactors that run on Low Enriched Uranium (LEU), the HEU reactors have a longer shelf-life of nearly 30 years which is equivalent to the operational life of the submarine itself.
- Australia, through the AUKUS deal, is bound to receive similar nuclear propulsion technology that would involve the transfer of HEU.
- Security analysts recommended India, to go for similar arrangements, through QUAD, to garner an advantage for its nuclear submarine programme.
- The AUKUS agreement is unequivocally meant to counter Chinese naval power in the South China Sea & the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- Australia is also a strategic partner in the US security arrangements in the Pacific.
- According to Prof. Michael Keating, AUKUS may erode the Australian sovereignty, leading it to take stand against China, even if it is not in its own interest .
- American obsession with “Pactomania” is reflected in multiple multilateral arrangements it went in recent times.
- China alleged that, the AUKUS is a violation of Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime.

- In an increasingly complex multipolar world order, an insulated & restricted alliance has its limitations; a more inclusive forum within AUKUS' unilateral setting can therefore be imperative to overcome obstacles and have a greater impact.
- The announcement of AUKUS resulted in a diplomatic spat between Australia & France as it led to the scrapping of their multi-billion dollar deal for the construction of conventional submarines (SSK).
- Australia's neighbour New Zealand, expressed strong criticism of AUKUS citing nuclear proliferation concerns in the South Pacific.
- These three member countries have chosen, SSN, over other naval platforms like aircraft carriers or the joint naval exercises, which is part of India's conventional naval ventures.

The features of the AUKUS agreement involves following key feature

- 1) Integrated civilian & military personnel training beginning in 2023.
 - 2) Forward deployment of the US & UK submersible ship nuclear (SSNs) to Australia from 2027 to facilitate the training of Australian navy personnel.
 - 3) Selling three Virginia-class submarines to Australia with an option to sell two more. It is not known how the US will overcome its own domestic difficulties in increasing production.
 - 4) Delivery of the first UK-built AUKUS-SSN to Australia in the late 2030s.
 - 5) Delivery of the first Australian-built AUKUS-SSN in the early 2040s.
- From the year 2006, anti-submarine warfare capability of the carrier strike group is under debate, seeing the presence of Chinese submarines in Indian ocean & Japan sea, which overshadowed the presence of American aircraft carrier Ronald Reagan (Stefan-Gady 2015).
 - US realises the limitations of the CSG, especially when countering the Chinese threat that also includes anti-ship ballistic missiles.
 - The AUKUS with a projected cost of \$368 billion, claims the delivery of first Australian-built submarine by, the early 2040s.
 - The design & production of a nuclear submarine is a high tech & complicated work. While Australia has experience of production of the Collins-class

submarine., which itself underwent delays due to operational and problems of personnels.

- The Swedish design team, has experience to work in temperate waters but not having experience of Australian tropical waters.
- Essential equipments like, combat system will be supplied by foreign suppliers Rockwell & electric generators by French suppliers, may bring delays.
- The fixed price contract, may face the problem due supply side delays.
- In the endeavours to bring the AUKUS in, Australia cancelled a \$ 90 billion, deal with France, for 12 Barracuda attack class submarines.
- Australia lacks the industrial base to support nuclear submarines so, it will need more involvement of American & British firms.
- France's increased military excursions in the region – such as the 2021 edition of the multinational naval exercise La Perouse, led by the French Navy with participation from all four Quad states
- Furthermore, as the first European state to adopt an Indo-Pacific strategy,
- Paris has been critical in driving & shaping a more active & committed Indo-Pacific policy for the EU.
- Trans-Atlantic relations worsened during Trump's administration - his "America First" approach showed a deep mistrust of allies - especially among North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), states.
- French President Emmanuel Macron has long been an advocate of promoting European "strategic autonomy," wherein Europe would pursue a defense policy independent of the US; AUKUS will only refashion such a belief.
- France considers itself a resident Indo-Pacific power on account of its significant territories in both the Indian and Pacific Oceans, which are home to 1.6 million citizens.
- The British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), an archipelago of 58 islands covering some 640,000 sq km of ocean, is a British Overseas Territory. It is administered from London and is located approximately halfway between East Africa and Indonesia.
- It lies about 1770 km east of Mahe (main island of the Seychelles) Diego Garcia, the largest and most southerly island, is 44 sq km.

OVERSEAS FRANCE



OVERSEAS BRITAIN



- These territories give France the world's second largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the region, which form the basis of French interests in the region.
- So far, NATO does not have a China strategy.
- AUKUS will draw the UK and the US permanently into Indo-Pacific geopolitics. This is because AUKUS provides the framework for the UK to transfer its nuclear submarine hull technology to Australia, while the US will transfer nuclear reactor technology and weaponry, not least in the form of long-throw cruise missiles
- In June 2022, the Australian Govt announced an AUD 585 million settlement with France's Naval Group as compensation for scrapping the SSK contract.
- New Zealand's stance towards AUKUS has undergone rapid transformation since its announcement.
- On 28 March 2023, New Zealand's Defence Minister Andrew Little expressed his government's interest to collaborate with AUKUS in the non-nuclear domains of quantum computing and AI.
- The scope of trilateral security agreement goes beyond just SSNs
- Challenges that lay ahead of AUKUS :- The limited industrial base in Australia for the construction of SSNs - the inevitable capability gap in RAN that will be created with the retirement of its Collin-class SSKs in the early 2030s – & the compromising of Australia's strategic autonomy.
- Under San Diego Roadmap, (2023 –2027), the Australian military & civilian personnel are to be integrated within the submarine industrial bases of the US & UK.
- In the second stage beginning in early 2027, the navies of the US & UK are to establish Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-West).
- The second phase of the roadmap envisages the sale of three to five Virginia Class SSNs to Australia pending approval of the US Congress in the early 2030s.

PROGRESS OF AUKUS

- Under the San Diego AUKUS roadmap of March 2023, which was attended by US President, Prime Ministers of the UK and Australia, unveiled the much-anticipated constructive programmes.
- The areas of cooperation in advanced technologies were expanded to include the development of hypersonic technology, defence innovation, information sharing and Electronic Warfare Capabilities (EWC).
- There were a number of initiatives and high-level visits that laid the foundation for building Australia's capacity to build and operated SSNs.
- For training RAN's officers aboard American SSNs, the Australia–US Submarine Officers Pipeline Act was introduced in the US Congress on 15 June 2022.
- Meanwhile, the relations between France and Australia have considerably improved.

- The final phase of the roadmap envisages the development and delivery of an entirely new class of submarines SSN-AUKUS.
- A critical challenge will be the US's Cold War-era export control regimes for the transfer of critical technologies. The most notable among these regimes is the International Trade & Arms Regulations (ITAR) enacted in 1976.
- Many prominent US scholars have opined that without revising the outdated ITAR, AUKUS cannot achieve its ambitious goals of co-developing critical technologies like SSNs and hypersonic missiles.
- This is due to the fact that the ITAR creates bureaucratic bottlenecks that cause months of delay.
- It is ostensibly for this purpose that US Congress on 22 March 2022 passed a bill for ensuring swift & seamless technology transfers under the AUKUS partnership.

INDIAS CONCERN

- According to Ashley Tellis, the only provision under AUKUS available to India is, to garner assistance from France, for India's nuclear submarine programme as US support cannot be given (Unnithan 2021c).
- But it may turn India, into a strategic appendage or pivote of US, as alleged by China in recent past. It may bring us in direct conflict with Russia & China,, which in turn giving rise to a bipolar world
- Overshadowing these risks, the Indian think tanks are advising to build a strong anti-China stand . This concern is important in the light of a fact, that India is the only country, with which China has not resolved its border dispute.
- It can be a serious matter of concern if, the vested interests are at play in keeping the unstable status quo.
- According to Tellis, Indian strategic community opposed the second India - US nuclear deal.
- After the minister level dialogue in the wake of nuclear test sealed India's nuclear programme (Karnad 2002).
- Despite the so-called technology transfer of the Scorpene project, we are still in no position to build conventional submarines, as revealed by the RFI for the P75I programme, which is in the public domain.
- Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat ensured that India's nuclear submarine programme was on track in 1997 after being a mere concept for decades (Prahlanan 2017).
- Since then its progress is very slow, due to the limitations of the platform & missile ranges .(Pandit 2020; Peri 2020; Unnithan 2021a)
- Indian Navy's obsession with aircraft carriers may be affecting the indigenous SSN project which has been stalled due to a lack of Cabinet Committee on Security approval (Bhagwat 2020a, 2022; Unnithan 2021a, 2021c).

- Nevertheless, the naval leadership, continues to highlight the carrier as a solution to counter China as part of the "Indo-Pacific strategy," and also four LPDs (landing platform dock ships meant for expeditionary operations) despite these being neither viable budgetary nor military options (*Diplomat* 2023; Bhagwat 2020b).
- It is relevant to mention that China has already sidestepped the Malacca dilemma through its long-term agreements with Russia (Power of Siberia pipeline, investment in Yamal & Arctic LNG-2 projects) for energy (Bhagwat 2020b, 2021b).
- In 2022, oil was supplied to China for the first time from the Arctic. Considering that we have a Parliamentary Standing Committee (Bhagwat 2021), which is not actively involved in the defence procurement planning process unlike in the US.
- The Ministry of Defence and the Office of the Chief of Defence Staff will need to do a serious operational analysis of the utility of aircraft carriers versus SSNs in the Indian context of competing priorities given the fact that we have a stronger adversary.
- India has the third largest defence budget in the world after the US and China but a relatively low share of capital expenditure.
- A survey of military capabilities & conflicts reveals that weaker powers always choose a "sea denial" strategy.
- Even in the maritime domain, the Ukraine conflict has highlighted the threat of unconventional tactics & emerging technologies, vulnerability of surface ships against shore-based missiles (sinking of the Moskva) and critical undersea infrastructure vulnerabilities. (Guardian 2022; Bhagwat 2022)

AUKUS PLUS :- A VIABLE MODEL ?

- The formation of AUKUS & the unilateral cancellation of the \$90 billion Franco-Australian submarine deal severely affected the transatlantic relationship.
- To make matters worse, the AUKUS announcement overshadowed the launch of the European Union's "Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific," the bloc's autonomous attempt to enhance its Indo-Pacific footprint.
- This unfortunate timing, which caught the EU unaware, was an embarrassing moment for Europe.
- It not only caused a rift between long-standing partners but also strengthened calls for greater strategic autonomy within the EU.
- The United States & Europe share a long history & shared values, perceptions, and challenges; it is therefore unlikely that the rift will be permanent.
- The secretary general of NATO has said that the pact was not "directed against NATO or Europe, & NATO would continue to work closely with its Indo-Pacific partners, namely New Zealand, Australia,

Japan, and South Korea on cyber and maritime security, among other issues.

- Biden has also made efforts to reach out to Europe, especially France, to smooth ties and attempt to find new common ground to sustain transatlantic ties.
- In the future, cooperation between AUKUS and NATO – the bedrock for European security – cannot be ruled out, particularly as Europe faces “new challenges” from Russia and China.
- North Korea, China, New Zealand, Indonesia and Malaysia, Japan also raised question about its nuclear focus.
- The nuclear focus of AUKUS, has been controversial, triggering concerns in allies & rivals alike over the possibility that AUKUS will spur an arms race and lax non-proliferation standards in the Indo-Pacific.

JAPAN

- Indicating that it remains uncomfortable with the nuclear aspect and its potential implications. Here, engaging with regional powers through a ‘Plus’ framework can help ally regional security concerns and make AUKUS a more accepted framework in the region.
- Japan, particularly, shares a security treaty with the United States & close security ties with Australia and the U.K.; it would hence be a natural addition to an AUKUS Plus forum.
- Japan’s ambassador to Australia, Yamagami Shingo, has already hinted that Tokyo would be willing to participate in AUKUS initiatives on AI & cybersecurity
- Japan has a constitutional commitment to pacifism.
- This could , include collaboration in efforts to patrol the East & South China Seas.
- As a step in this direction, Japan & Australia recently inked a landmark defense agreement that builds on the AUKUS deal.

INDIA

- India has neither officially welcomed nor criticized, the deal. Instead, New Delhi has maintained a wary distance while emphatically delinking the Quad – which includes Australia, India, Japan, and the U.S. – from AUKUS.
- However, from the viewpoint of New Delhi, AUKUS has had a direct bearing on India’s regional engagement by compromising the recently-launched France-Australia-India trilateral.
- Nevertheless, more from a geopolitical calculus, considering China’s recent military tactics in Ladakh, AUKUS’ focus on Chinese expansionist tendencies comes in India’s favor; it could serve to ease pressure on New Delhi and help restore strategic balance in the region.
- Even so, given that AUKUS stands as an anti-China military alliance, and India’s uneasiness with treaty

ties that may compromise its strategic autonomy, engagement between the two may be complicated.

- Nevertheless, India can build on its already strong existing ties with AUKUS states and collaborate on broader defense-related areas such as cyber and quantum technologies & AI.
- India & Australia are set to enhance their joint capacities and interoperability after upgrading their strategic partnership in 2020.
- Since the AUKUS launch, India and the United Kingdom have already taken steps to enhance interoperability, with a focus on the digital realm.
- Despite India’s current delinking, the potential inclusion of Japan and India into a plus network will certainly bolster the Quad-AUKUS synergy.

SOUTH KOREA

- While South Korea, an U.S. ally & NATO partner, has not released any official statement on AUKUS, but highlighted the pact as a contributor to regional stability and supported Australia’s decision to acquire submarines.
- Seoul not been allowed to develop, nuclear-powered submarines because of its nuclear cooperation agreement (123 Agreement) with the United States that limits applications to “peaceful uses.
- In May 2021, however, the two allies agreed to terminate the Revised Missile Guidelines, which had limited Seoul’s missile development capacity.
- South Korea & Australia also expanded their cooperation through a recently-inked \$717 million defense contract.
- On the other hand, should AUKUS (and the United States particularly) continue to exclude Seoul and refuse transfer of nuclear tech, South Korea may be pushed to partner with France in developing nuclear-powered submarines.

ASEAN & OTHERS

- A large part of the disgruntlement among Asian states is due to the exclusive nature of the military alliance, which has the veneer of yet another imperial attempt by Anglosphere powers to decide Asia’s future without any consultations with or regard for regional states.
- The absence of an Asian voice in an Indo-Pacific security alliance does not bode well for the “like-minded cooperation” that the United States seeks in order to rebuild its diminishing status in the region
- Apart from dialogues with Japan, India, and South Korea, AUKUS will also need to focus on ASEAN and its member states, especially Indonesia, which is a direct neighbor of Australia and therefore directly impacted by Canberra’s expanding capabilities and the possibility of an arms race right in its backyard.
- Apart from consultations with ASEAN, AUKUS can also reinforce cooperation with other minilateral

ventures in the Indo-Pacific (like the Quad), on shared goals.

- The Philippines welcomed it & Singapore chose to take a moderate position. Indonesia has advocated “ASEAN Centrality” of the Indo-Pacific on multiple forums and also in the ASEAN outlook on Indo-Pacific.
- Newer security arrangements like the Quad or AUKUS may declare commitment to ASEAN centrality, however their emergence itself can be seen in relation to ASEAN’s performance as a regional organisation
- ASEAN’s consensus-based decision-making process has prevented any conclusive step on contentious issues like the South China Sea conflict, and more recently the Myanmar crisis.
- The ASEAN may choose either to continue avoiding confrontation with regional security issues and focus on economic integration instead, or it may transform its internal workings to foster more concrete decisions on regional security.

INDONESIAN CONCERN

- Indonesia, as the largest economy & most populous ASEAN nation, has assumed a leadership role within the organisation.
- Maintaining an independent foreign policy has compelled Jakarta to prevent taking sides between the US, its closest security partner, and China, its closest economic partner.
- So it has promoted ASEAN as the primary regional organisation in Indo-Pacific.
- But exclusive association with ASEAN and ASEAN-led organisations may limit Indonesia’s strategic engagements as larger powers do not look to ASEAN for resolution of crisis situations anymore
- Senior researcher at CSIS Evan Laksmana opines that it may be useful for Indonesia to consider “flexible coalitions” with “like-minded powers such as Australia, India, Japan and South Korea
- India has reaffirmed its policy of multi-alignment, and is already a member of Quad with Australia and Japan.
- Indonesia has been a strong advocate of rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and has played a crucial role in drafting the “ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific
- Given its geo-strategic importance, Indonesia’s cooperation will be essential for success of any regional security framework in the Indo-Pacific.
- Indonesia may find it more pragmatic to participate in frameworks outside of ASEAN, such as engagement with supply chain resilience cooperation or the Quad plus, to avoid sitting on the sidelines during vital restructuring in the Indo-Pacific balance of power.
- Indonesia - Australia bilateral relationship has a strong element of defence. Despite having signed

the defence agreement in 2018, practical defence engagement was lesser.

- Richard Tanter from Nautilus Institute calls the bilateral relationship asymmetric because Indonesia is more important to Australia from a security perspective than Australia is to Indonesia
- According to him, the two countries have very different histories and political evolution, which has likely led to ambiguity in their bilateral relations.
- Australia’s role in separation of East Timor in 1999 badly affected its relationship with Indonesia, and has sustained Jakarta’s suspicion of Australia to this day.
- The defence cooperation at that time was suspended only to be normalised many years later in 2006 through the Lombok Treaty.
- In 2013, Indonesia uncovered that Australia was spying on the-then president Yudhoyono and people close to him. As a consequence, it had suspended mutual intelligence cooperation.
- Canberra’s clear preference for closer defence relationship with allies in Anglosphere has alienated Indonesia

IMPACT ON INDO-PACIFIC

- The launch of AUKUS has been largely mired in skepticism, and as such, its expansion is not an obviously viable option. Not that the trio would easily open their exclusive club to other states: The U.S. has rebuffed any inclination to involve other countries, including Japan and India, in the AUKUS alliance.
- However, because of legitimate regional security concerns (and distrust of outside powers) among the nations in the region, the AUKUS mechanism needs to be reconfigured – perhaps by extension and not expansion.
- Much like the still-evolving Quad Plus format, AUKUS could fulfill the needs of the Indo-Pacific region by building a broader cohesive grouping of key regional actors like India, Japan, and South Korea through forums, dialogues, and bilateral or multilateral sharing of information.
- These Plus partnerships could supplement AUKUS’ military focus and commitment to emergency action on pressing matters like China’s imminent takeover of Taiwan, its maritime expansion in the South China Sea, and its intimidation tactics in Hong Kong.
- Further, “AUKUS Plus” can draw from the already exclusive Fives Eyes arrangement – another Anglosphere framework – which has long coordinated closely with Japan (often referred to as the Sixth Eye) and South Korea. Such ad hoc cooperation can also be developed with France, Canada, and New Zealand.
- As potential for a Russia-China-North Korea alliance grows, the need for AUKUS to expand its outreach and collaboration to promote interoperability

becomes crucial. A Russia-China-North Korea alliance had previously been proposed as a response to the U.S.-Japan-South Korea trilateral; now, it could emerge as a counter to AUKUS.

- Against such a scenario, the pact needs to allow for synergy with existing global value-driven frameworks like Global Gateway, Build Back Better World (B3W), and existing organizations like ASEAN and NATO.
- Thus, even as formal inclusion of other states does not seem a possibility, coordinating and envisioning a subsidiary Plus format would allow for not only flexibility in collaboration but also greater acceptance and impact in the Indo-Pacific.
- AUKUS provides a fresh opportunity to the United Kingdom to reinsert itself more directly into the Indo-Pacific. It is already a member of the Five Eyes (FVEY), an intelligence-sharing alliance built on Anglo-Saxon solidarity (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the U.K., and the U.S.).
- China has the world's fastest-growing fleet of sub-surface combatants, including the Type 093 Shang-class nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN) and the Type 094 nuclear-powered Jin-class ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), not to speak of its burgeoning fleet of conventional diesel-electric submarines with AIP (air-independent propulsion) capability.
- Its nuclear submarines are on the prowl in the Indo-Pacific. Yet, China denies Australia and others the sovereign right to decide on their defence requirements!

FIVE EYES:- GLOBAL REACH

- Since emerging from the secret UK-US Communication Intelligence Act (or the UKUSA Agreement), signed in March 1946 at the end of World War II, the FVEY has come to constitute a special Anglosphere relationship over the years that has defined how these countries fluidly share communication, intelligence, decryption and

analysis, and has become a core pillar in international affairs.

- The third edition of the agreement – updated in 1955 to include Canada, Australia and New Zealand as “collaborating Commonwealth countries” – specifies that exchanges between states would be virtually “unrestricted
- Accordingly, the FVEY alliance – between the US National Security Agency (NSA), Britain's Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), Australian Signals Directorate (ASD), the Communications Security Establishment of Canada (CSEC) and New Zealand's Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB) – has established a global reach
- The FVEY defined Anglophone relations during the Cold War as it enabled them to combine their complementary competencies to counter the Soviet Union (politically and militarily) and became a pivotal part of the West's Russia strategy.
- Post the end of the Cold War and with 9/11, the grouping was revitalized to fight an evolving transnational terrorism threat and support the war in Iraq and Afghanistan
- the AUKUS triad is also poised to become a defining feature of the three founding states and is likely to be at the center of their Indo-Pacific strategy and engagement in the coming times. The AUKUS is therefore complementary to the FVEY
- The US has only ever shared its secretive nuclear propulsion reactors technology with the UK. this nuclear-sharing relationship grew in concert with robust intelligence-sharing ties that translated into the FVEY and gave way to operational military cooperation.
- AUKUS can go a long way to fill the gaps in the Australia-New Zealand-US (ANZUS) treaty, which forms the foundation of Washington's alliances with both states.