

**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF JAPAN'S FREE AND OPEN INDO-PACIFIC
STRATEGY AND SOUTH KOREA'S NEW SOUTHERN POLICY**

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ABSTRACT

As leading states in East Asia and Asia in general, Japan and South Korea experienced an unpleasant situation that threatens both their national security and regional security. The emerging power of China became an actor that the two countries need to be aware of simply due to its growing assertiveness in the region. For Japan, China's arbitrary moves in the South China Sea is viewed as a threat to regional security and stability. Moreover, Japan believes such a move would also threaten its interests to expand its infrastructure exports to boost the economy due to competition with the Belt and Road Initiative. South Korea on the other hand had concerned about its economic dependency on China. It faced a tough time due to security concerns raised by China as Terminal High Altitude Area Defense was being deployed to South Korea. As a consequence, the Chinese government imposed South Korean products to be sold in China. Therefore, Japan and South Korea pivot their foreign policy to ASEAN member states to balance China's growing power in the region.

This thesis explains the factors behind the pivot of Japan and South Korea to ASEAN member states with their recently established foreign policies. Both countries faced problems that challenged their values and interests from external actors that would possibly also threaten the stability of the region. This thesis will use the concept of balance of power to analyze the behavior of the two countries towards the ASEAN member states. Moreover, this thesis will also use the qualitative method of research through desk study by reviewing various literature and finally apply methods of difference and methods of agreement.

Keywords: *Rule of law, economic diversification, ASEAN, Free and Open Indo-Pacific, New Southern Policy, China, Japan, South Korea*