AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC INTEREST: A FEASIBLE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE EAST ASIAN REGION

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Australia is a developed middle power located in isolation to its historical and cultural roots. Its geopolitical reality calls for a rethinking of its role in the East Asian region and how it will play its role through the East Asia Summit (EAS). The emergence of regionalism due to trade liberalization has seen the region steer towards a single market community. The purpose of this research is to assess the mutual benefits both Australia and the East Asian region stand to gain through the EAS. This research will analyze the external and domestic factors shaping Australia’s foreign policy orientation towards the East Asian region. Australia’s link with the ASEAN states is assessed to determine the feasibility of using the EAS as a suitable platform for Australia to continue engaging with the East Asian region. The findings of this research will show that Australia will continue to engage with the East Asian region through the EAS as it is of Australia’s economic interest to do so. This means that a mutually beneficial engagement with the EAS would remain the best platform for Australia to continuously engage with the region. This research was conducted through qualitative analysis based on primary and secondary sources of data from books, foreign policy papers, government documents, journal articles, speeches and statistical reports. A balance of primary and secondary data is of importance to check and balance the validity of arguments.
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