

Conference Paper
2019 U.S. Naval War College and East Asia Security Centre Conference
Between Scylla and Charybdis: Is there a Middle Path for Middle Powers in the
Indo-Pacific Region?
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Paper Title: Division of Labor: Great Powers, Middle Powers, and Maritime Coalitions

Synopsis: The recent decision of the US to use the term “Indo-Pacific Command” (INDOPACOM) explicitly recognizes a new set of geopolitical realities: increased peacetime competition with the People's Republic of China, greater appreciation of threats to the eastern Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal, and a broader understanding of the interconnected nature of the Indian and Pacific Oceans as security and economic spheres. Analyzing historical examples of maritime coalitions, this paper will examine the potential division of labor, and the most effective roles and missions, for great and middle powers in each of the three contingencies highlighted by the conference (coalition of regional states, bi-polar competition, or regional chaos).

Keywords: US, INDOPACOM, China, geopolitics