

Abstract

Australian-US Alliance and the Rise of China: Emergence of the “Dual Trends”.

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The Dual Trend is emerging in the alliance between Canberra and Washington. On the one hand, Australia and U.S. have visibly stepped up their cooperation and coordination in dealing with the rise of China as exemplified by their recent activities including the Australian Defence Force (ADF)'s participation in the U.S.-Philippines exercise and the ongoing coordination of two countries' capacity building assistance programs. On the other, however, the gap between the two countries in approaching the rise of China, or the China gap, is becoming an increasingly complex issue impeding the alliance cooperation in various domains. Canberra's failure to coordinate with Washington in timely manners caused some anxiety on the part of U.S. about Australia's decision to permit China's massive investment in the Port of Darwin, which is now a key infrastructure for U.S. marine rotational force in that city. Two countries' differing responses to China's proposal for Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) highlighted Canberra's frustration about the insufficiency of Washington's efforts in engaging China's rise. The Dual Trend, or an interesting combination of the deeper China policy cooperation and the more complex China gap between the two allies, is clearly a key strategic challenge facing the Australia-U.S. alliance.

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