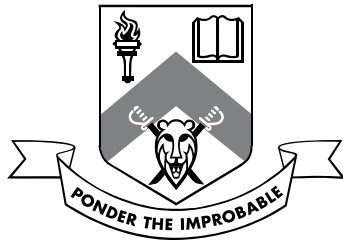


**IDSS 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE**  
**ON**  
**THE NATURE OF POLICY RELEVANT**  
**KNOWLEDGE**  
**IN**  
**ASIAN SECURITY AFFAIRS**

**REPORT ON A CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY**  
**THE INSTITUTE OF DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC STUDIES (IDSS)**

**5-6 AUGUST 2006**  
**SENTOSA SPA AND RESORT, SINGAPORE**



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## AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

What constitutes policy-relevant knowledge in Asian security affairs? This was the main question addressed by the conference, organised to celebrate IDSS's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As a research and teaching institution, IDSS staff are constantly engaged in academic as well as policy-relevant research. Yet the relationship between academic and policy-relevant knowledge, especially on the issue of Asian security, has not been systematically analysed. Related to the main question are several others that can shed light on the issue. Is there a gap between the knowledge produced by scholars of security affairs and the concerns or knowledge needs of policymakers? Do policymakers believe the gap can be bridged, and if so, what kind of knowledge will do it? What roles do think-tanks, universities, and other academic institutions play in producing policy-relevant knowledge?

The two co-convenors of the conference, Professor Amitav Acharya and Professor Khong Yuen Foong of IDSS, wanted to generate a timely debate on the nature of policy-relevant knowledge in Asian security affairs. The conference brought together a distinguished group of current/former policymakers, scholars-practitioners, and scholar-theorists to address the issues. Participants were invited to use a current, past, or hypothetical policy issue, and indicate what forms of knowledge would he or she most like to obtain in approaching the issue or making a decision. They were also requested to highlight one exemplary policy-relevant work that they found most helpful to policymaking.

For the purposes of the conference, 'Asian security affairs' was construed broadly, to include traditional issues such as states' responses to power shifts in Asia, nuclear proliferation, terrorism, the revolution in military affairs, and non-traditional issues such as the security implications of globalisation and policy dilemmas raised by the spread of infectious diseases.



*Barry Desker, Director of IDSS, welcoming the participants.*

## OPENING REMARKS

In his opening address, **Mr Barry Desker, Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)**, remarked that policymakers and scholars strive to understand and offer solutions to real-world problems. Despite this common goal, it seemed that policymakers and scholars have different vantage points. Desker stated that IDSS has been particularly interested in the relationship between academia and policymaking. Therefore, IDSS decided to organise this conference to review the nature of policy-relevant knowledge in Asian security affairs and had invited a broad range of policymakers, think-tank analysts, academics, and public intellectuals to discuss the subject in Singapore.

Desker also noted that the research component of IDSS has grown significantly over the last ten years, especially in the spheres of Asia-Pacific security, non-traditional security, terrorism, and country-specific studies. Generous funding for these programmes had come from the Singapore government as well as local and international donors—most notably the Sasakawa Peace Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Since IDSS's establishment in July 1996, research at IDSS has endeavoured to straddle the academic and policy domains. Desker said IDSS has worked to develop a strong capacity to undertake cutting-edge theoretical research that is underpinned by rigorous empirical analysis.

In conclusion, Desker stated that as IDSS expands its research programmes, both policymakers

and academics would continue to benefit from the institute's wide range of analyses and publications. With regards to this conference, Desker expressed his hope that the distinguished panellists would address the question: whether the oft-debated chasm between academics and decision-makers, which has been much discussed in the West, also informs the scholar-policymaker relationship in Asia.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**Deputy Prime Minister, Coordinating Minister for National Security, and Minister for Law Professor S. Jayakumar** remarked that the current security landscape has become increasingly complex. Many of the contemporary flashpoints, like those in the Middle East, are rooted in deep histories and long-standing animosities. Other challenges like terrorism have taken on new forms in terms of organisation and potential for violence. Nuclear proliferation has also re-emerged as a major challenge, with Iran and North Korea determined to obtain nuclear capability.

As policymakers thought through short-term and long-term scenarios, DPM Jayakumar said think-tanks like IDSS have an important role to play. As they are not preoccupied with managing immediate crises and concerns, scholars have the time and the intellectual wherewithal to develop the knowledge to assess the broader significance of key global developments. Track II institutions like IDSS can think out of the box, present alternative viewpoints, challenge 'sacred cows', and facilitate broad and free-flowing discourse and disputation.

DPM Jayakumar said IDSS's growth as a world-class institution mirrors Singapore's development as an academic hub. Together with the East Asian Institute, Asia Research Institute, Institute of South Asian Studies, and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, a significant cluster of scholars in Singapore has been created to study issues that are critical to Asia's future. This community of scholars made for a vibrant academic and intellectual hub. It would be a very



*Deputy Prime Minister Prof S. Jayakumar delivering the keynote address.*

useful resource for governments, and a training ground for younger policymakers.

DPM Jayakumar then took the opportunity to announce the establishment of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). RSIS would be formally inaugurated on 1 January 2007. As an autonomous school of the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), RSIS would focus on security and strategic studies, international relations, international political economy, and regional studies. Together with existing institutes like the Centre of Excellence for National Security and the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, IDSS would form a major pillar of the Rajaratnam School. Additional centres for diplomacy and international affairs, as well as negotiation and conflict management would be established in the future.

RSIS's mission is threefold: provide a rigorous professional education that blends high standards of academic scholarship with a strong, practical, real-world emphasis; conduct real-world, policy-relevant research to serve national needs, and the regional and international community; and, finally, build a global network of like-minded professional schools to share knowledge and gain access to international best practices.

DPM Jayakumar also proposed some areas of research that the RSIS could focus on. These include: the underlying forces and trends driving policy in the region and in individual countries; the Malacca Straits and the evolving interests

of states like China and India; extremism in Southeast Asia, its roots, and strategies for countering it; and pandemics and its implications for health security.

In conclusion, DPM Jayakumar congratulated IDSS on its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and said he looked forward to RSIS's inauguration. He expressed his confidence that the Rajaratnam School would continue IDSS's high standard of research and policy analysis.

## SESSION I: POLICYMAKERS' PERSPECTIVES

**Mr Barry Desker** warmly welcomed the participants to the conference. Before beginning the session, he invited **Dr Akinori Seki, President of Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF)**, to say a few words. Desker informed the conference that SPF had been a very strong supporter of the multiculturalism and regionalism programmes in IDSS, and had funded many of IDSS's initiatives.

Seki primarily expressed his hope that the conference would serve as a platform for fruitful discussions. He also expressed his hope that the conference findings would be distributed to the public. He ended his speech by congratulating IDSS on its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The first speaker, **Mr Allan Gyngell of Lowy Institute for International Policy**, stressed four important elements for knowledge to be policy-relevant and of interest to governments. The first was timeliness as policymakers required timely policy-relevant knowledge when they formulated policy. The second was clarity. Academics should minimise the use of technical jargon in their work since very few policymakers have the appropriate specialised academic background to decipher the terminologies. The third was concision, especially when dealing with subjects that was difficult to understand. To capture policymakers' interest, reports should be short and pointed. Fourth, a report must be conclusive, providing policymakers with a judgment at the

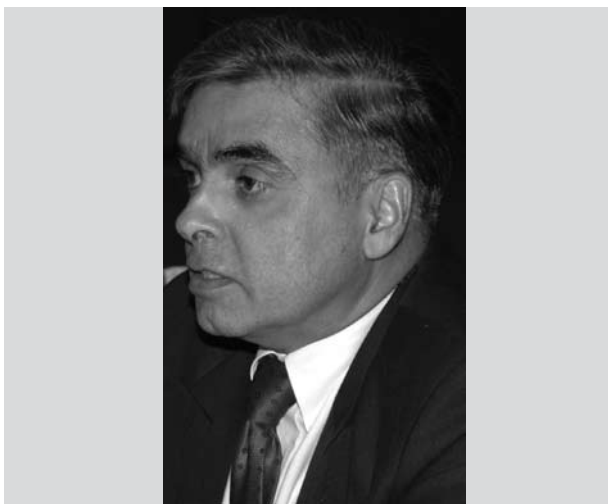


*Mr Allan Gyngell addressing the conference.*

end. In order to be relevant, researchers must go as far as the evidence would allow and submit a final assessment of their research.

**Sir Richard Dearlove of Pembroke College, Cambridge**, in his comparison of scientists' and social scientists' involvement in day-to-day government matters, concluded that social scientific ideas were contested and adopted in less direct ways than those in the hard sciences. Although ideas propounded by intellectuals such as Bernard Lewis, Samuel Huntington, Francis Fukuyama, and Henry Kissinger resonated with British politicians, Dearlove did not think that decision-makers would consult the academics first before making policy. Commenting on the place of intelligence in policymaking in counter-terrorism operations, Dearlove admitted the need for policymakers to constantly confront the tyranny of the tactical as they were under daily pressure to deal with immediate challenges rather than their root causes. In this respect, Dearlove commended scholars for endeavouring to accentuate the importance of addressing the root causes of terrorism rather than the symptoms. Recognising the need for governments to become more strategic in tackling the underlying causes of the problems they confronted, Dearlove suggested and advocated the establishment of more policy-oriented institutions in academia that could provide policymakers and government with policy-relevant knowledge and help them to address security issues more strategically.

The next speaker, **Mr Kishore Mahbubani of Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy**, began his presentation with the provocative suggestion that academics currently made little impact on policymakers. Mahbubani argued that most academics were preoccupied with dead men's ideas. Academics, Mahbubani observed, deluded themselves and others when they claimed to be defenders or expounders of the 'truth'. In Mahbubani's assessment, academic works wielded little influence on governments because they looked to the past whereas policymakers were concerned about the future. Moderating his provocative approach, however, Mahbubani acknowledged that academics and think-tanks in Asia could wield influence in policy. ASEAN, in his opinion could do a lot more and be far more effective by formulating and advancing a strategy to influence policy in Washington. ASEAN-ISIS, for example, could contribute to that exercise.



*Mr Kishore Mahbubani speaking from a policymakers' perspective.*

The discussant for this session, **Dr Paul Evans of Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada**, thought that the categorisation of officials and scholars as 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in the policymaking process was misleading. Evans believed that policy-relevant knowledge extended beyond those that governments might find useful. The so-called chasm ostensibly separating academics and policymakers was actually permeable. Today's academics might be tomorrow's policymakers. Evans suggested that the conference should

also be concerned with journalists, think-tank analysts, and other public intellectuals who moved from one academic or research institution to the next and propounded diverse ideas. To Evans, there were several ways that academics could influence governments and their policies. One was to advance ideas through publications. The aim was not merely to channel ideas into the policy community, but to actively shape policy outcomes. This might involve cultivating or working with allies in the policy community or even in another country. Such activities did not only involve speaking truth to power, but becoming power.

## DISCUSSION

### MECHANISMS INFLUENCING POLICY

In response to the conventional wisdom that academics faced difficulties influencing policy, one participant suggested alternative mechanisms where the process could be facilitated: when academics become policymakers, when the thinking of politicians is shaped by academics, and when academics put problems on the states' agenda. Another participant added that debates in a country could be influenced by a wide range of people. The direct or indirect roles played by such people in the decision-making process showed that policymaking could be influenced from the outside.

A commentator from the floor pointed out that books had been published that not only captured a lot of the ideas showing real change occurring within ASEAN, but also challenged the official idea that nothing fundamentally needed to be altered about the institution. This suggested that the system of policymaking in ASEAN and Asia was not a closed system, and that academics did have an impact on policy.

Discussion also centred around the observation that the policymaker-academic relationship was complex and interactive. It was suggested that some policymakers have been influenced by academics' writings. Public intellectuals have also participated directly in policymaking. The advice to academics wishing to make an

impact on policy was that they should avoid speaking only amongst themselves. To reach out to officials, academics should also make their writings easily accessible to the lay reader.

### **WHAT POLICYMAKERS WANT AND HOW TO PROVIDE IT?**

In addressing the question on the kind of knowledge policymakers want, one participant identified two layers to the issue. First, what policymakers say they want, and second, what they actually want. Civil servants and policy advisors could present the latter in the context of the former, and phrase it in such a way that it would be acceptable to policymakers. It was noted that academics did not generally adopt that approach when undertaking their research projects. By so doing, academic research could perhaps be commissioned and funded by the government. In this manner, a connection between what scholars are doing and what governments want could be established. Academic research could then usefully aid policymaking. It was further proposed that policymakers exploit the expertise of the academics and think-tanks in addressing some of the issues that they had to deal with.

One participant said that there seemed to be several formats in which researchers could present their findings to policy officials: policy briefs, articles published in leading journals, commissioned studies, and books of the sort that Samuel Huntington and Francis Fukuyama have written. It was suggested, however, that there might be a case for prioritising among these formats. It was also noted that some academics might be better suited to writing policy briefs than others who, because of their professional training and temperament, might excel instead at producing book-length studies. The strengths of both should be accommodated and developed to further policy-relevant research.

### **SUGGESTIONS TO POLICYMAKERS**

A commentator suggested that policymakers, when adopting ideas from academics, should continue to follow the scholarly debates associated with those ideas. This would enable

policymakers to be better acquainted with the strengths as well as the shortcomings of the concepts. This would ultimately help policymakers make better and more informed policy decisions. It was further observed that social science tend to be theory-driven whereas policymaking is more area-oriented. It was suggested that policy perspectives should be informed both by theory and area knowledge.

## **SESSION II: THINK-TANK PERSPECTIVES**

**Professor Zhang Yunling of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences** stated that the Chinese government has displayed a profound interest in regional and global affairs in recent years. The reconfiguration of great power relations across the globe, the growth of China's and its neighbouring countries' economies, and the emergence of new threats to China's national security have converged to motivate Chinese policymakers to take new initiatives and seek fresh ideas to cope with these challenges.

Against that background, Zhang remarked that Chinese policymakers have become particularly active in soliciting ideas from research institutions to make sense of global and domestic developments. The Chinese government has, therefore, convened and funded—through open competition—lectures, seminars, study groups, and workshops to debate matters of concern. Inputs from academics and analysts about grand strategic and technical matters have been particularly valued.

Zhang also commented that the Chinese government has encouraged the establishment of think-tanks and research institutes. Public and private contracts for research projects keep these institutions financially afloat, and are highly sought after. Scholars at universities focus on policy-relevant research to obtain government funding, official recognition, and prestige. National and provincial research academies also produce hundreds of reports annually. Party schools and military universities round up the

research institutions that generate policy-relevant materials for official consumption.

Zhang asserted that the significant volume of research papers circulating among Chinese policymakers has made some impact on official policymaking. He observed that officials who have been most able to grasp the nuances of contemporary affairs have been those who are informed by scholarly research. He noted further that some issues championed by policymakers originated actually from scholars. This suggested that scholarly and policy-relevant studies did generate a profound influence on policymakers.

**Mr Jusuf Wanandi of Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)** agreed that policy-relevant works advanced by think-tanks and scholars influence policymakers. In Indonesia, Wanandi asserted that in the aftermath of the 1965 coup, the Indonesian bureaucracy was in a shambles, and the government badly needed practical, new, and appropriate ideas to jump-start socio-economic and political development within the country. It was in that context that the CSIS came into being in 1971. Wanandi said the CSIS focused more on advancing practical rather than theory-based proposals to policymakers in its early years. As more of its analysts became trained in Western universities, however, the volume of theoretically-informed work became more pronounced.

Wanandi also said the CSIS prepared policy briefs for the government. It also engaged in oral briefings as Indonesia has a strong oral tradition. The aim was to ensure that the CSIS's work reached and made an impact on officials.

Wanandi highlighted two examples where CSIS contributed to policymaking. The first was in the area of development. With advice from CSIS, Soeharto embraced the East Asian model of development and used it to inform his political and economic programmes in Indonesia. Second, CSIS promoted and participated in regional Track II processes. That endeavour had moved Track I officials to embark on confidence-



*Mr Jusuf Wanandi outlining the Indonesian perspective.*

building measures in Asia and the building of an ASEAN security community.

In all, Wanandi emphasised that policy-oriented research and recommendations tend to originate from the need to tackle pressing problems that governments encounter or expect to address in international politics. Practical proposals are valued, and theoretical information, if any, tend to be implicitly embedded rather than explicitly stated in the policy briefs that Wanandi has advanced.

The third presenter, **Professor Carolina Hernandez of Institute of Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS)**, stated that ISDS was established to study security issues, and produce policy-relevant knowledge that could shed new light on the security matters and help policymakers to address them. Reflecting on her experiences as a participant in government activities and in academia, Hernandez said it was incorrect to assume that the government is always well-equipped or well-informed to deal with all security matters. In fact, officials appreciate policy-relevant works produced by scholars and analysts that are grounded in solid theoretical and empirical knowledge.

Hernandez accentuated the work of ASEAN-ISIS to suggest that scholars have had a positive bearing on policy outcomes in Southeast Asia. ASEAN-ISIS is the collective expression of nine regional research institutes, participating in

Track II activities to draw regional governments' attention to security problems and the possible solutions to those challenges. It was established in 1984, and was officially recognised by the ASEAN governments in 1991. It had made signal contributions to policy, stimulating regional governments to build a security and economic community in Asia. Some of its ideas, to be sure, are still-born. One of them is the ASEAN People's Assembly, which, to Hernandez's disappointment, has not stirred much official enthusiasm.

Hernandez also remarked that several factors could give scholarly ideas more purchase in official circles. First, the scholarly community could partner with sympathetic and like-minded officials to bring the scholars' works to the attention of decision-makers. Second, the policy recommendations propounded by independent analysts should be relevant, cogent, and timely. Finally, scholars should be dogged and be prepared to wrestle with policymakers on the soundness of their proposals.

The fourth speaker, **Professor Bruce Hoffman of RAND Corporation and Georgetown University**, said academic scholarship combined with sound policy research and analysis could help policymakers refrain from conjecture and become more effective in identifying and dealing with security threats. Because policymakers tend to be preoccupied with issues that need immediate attention, policy-relevant scholarly research could furnish officials with an understanding of the threats that states would have to confront in the long run.

But Hoffman stated that it would be imprudent to assume that think-tanks and the academe provided the panacea for all security problems. There are scholarly works that might be successful in identifying and describing policy challenges, but are less successful in ascertaining the solutions. Some scholarly writings also tend to be preoccupied with epistemological questions than with policy solutions and outcomes. The products of some think-tanks, especially the contracted ones, also contain limitations. They

might be the prisoners of the clients' agendas. They might also mirror the clients' concerns.

Hoffman, nevertheless, maintained that think-tanks and the scholarly community could serve several critical functions. For one, a think-tank could group different scholars from diverse disciplines together to analyse issues and provide analyses that are theoretically informed and empirically rigorous. RAND, for example, was able to draw on a wide range of perspectives and expertise to analyse primary documents obtained from Afghanistan and make sense of the terrorist threat. Independent scholars also tend not to be limited by or hindered by groupthink. They are less likely to be engaged in reinventing the wheel since originality is highly esteemed in the profession. Finally, they could also play an important counterfactual role to challenge established understanding of contemporary affairs.

Following Professor Hoffman's presentation, the first discussant to take the floor was **Mr Barry Wain of Institute of Southeast Asian Studies**. Wain agreed with the panellists that think-tanks could bring specialised knowledge to bear on policy issues, and provide profound perspectives and the historical background to help policymakers better comprehend the challenges that they have to confront. He nevertheless contended that how think-tanks package and disseminate their findings are also important. Too much academic jargon could limit the effectiveness of scholarly reports. Executive summaries and briefer versions that could be picked up by the press would reach out to larger audiences and make a greater intellectual impact on the policymaking community. Wain also suggested that think-tanks assign their staff to interact with journalists who are on the security beat. Such interactions could help journalists better understand the academe's culture and language.

Turning to the presenters, Wain asked Zhang to elaborate on the degree of access that scholars have to policymakers in China and for any evidence to suggest that policy-relevant research

has impacted on officials. Lastly, he noted that few think-tanks in Asia are non-governmental organisations. As such, given their strong connection to governments, might their scholarly outputs be viewed sceptically as tending to tow the governments' line rather than being objective?

The second discussant, **Associate Professor Rohan Gunaratna of IDSS**, focused on how terrorism studies have evolved since 9/11. He said universities did not offer terrorism as an academic discipline prior to 9/11. The establishment of the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence at the University of St Andrews in 1994 set new standards for terrorism studies. Scholars at the centre like Professor Bruce Hoffman encouraged analysts to conduct field research, and helped develop innovative ways to understand and counter terrorism and political conflict.

Since 9/11, a number of research institutes have been formed to study terrorism. Gunaratna said that among IDSS's more significant contributions to countering terrorism were its involvement in the creation of a rehabilitation manual and the religious rehabilitation group. Out of these had come the community engagement programme, which is being implemented in Singapore. Gunaratna also noted that the participation of Muslims in IDSS's work is significant. IDSS also responded to the terrorists' justification of violence ideologically/theologically: its staff had issued a point by point analysis/rebuttal to Bali bomber Imam Samudra's rationalisation of terrorist activities. It has worked to devise threat indicators to alert the banking community of possible terrorist financial activities. It has created a database on terrorism. It has also actively engaged the media in order to educate the public about terrorism and extremism.

## DISCUSSION

### THE ROLES OF THINK-TANKS

A discussant noted that the panel did not pin down what constitutes a think-tank. Is it one that focuses on providing background information

and analyses? Is it one that provides alternatives to current official policies? What about those institutions that undertake projects in order to advance a particular ideological perspective like the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute, or advocacy think-tanks that are associated with non-governmental organisations? The roles, functions, and practices of think-tanks also differ from country to country. It was important that the participants defined what one meant by 'think-tank' as this would help advance one's understanding of a think-tank's functions.

There was no consensus, however, on the roles think-tanks performed. One participant said think-tanks are not new. Colonial governments had their own series of think-tanks like the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, which provided the historical and ethnographic research to justify colonial policy. Another said one popular description of 'think-tanks' is that they are located at the intersection of knowledge and power. Disagreeing with that notion, however, the commentator said there should not be an exclusivist notion of who has knowledge and who has power. Rather, one should be conscious that different kinds of knowledge are needed, and that different power relations are constantly negotiated among policymakers, scholars, non-governmental organisations, and business interests in the setting of security agendas. It was further suggested that unlike academic institutions, which generally conduct primary research and build knowledge 'brick-by-brick', think-tanks generally take the academic knowledge and 'massage' it to make it relevant to policymakers.

A conference participant discussed the roles that ISEAS in particular has been performing in furthering policy-relevant work. To reach out to the public, ISEAS organised public lectures. ISEAS also anticipated policymakers' needs by starting the energy studies and regional integration programmes. Think-tanks could, moreover, act like academic institutions and perform primary research. One should not be too obsessed about restricting the roles a think-

tank could perform. Another participant agreed, stating that so long as they helped advance policy issues and improve governance, one should not be bothered by what research institutions are called.

One analyst, however, offered a distinction between the roles carried out by a think-tank and a university. It was noted that the university's main function is to train undergraduates and grant degrees. The think-tank's main role is to produce research that is policy-relevant. Also mentioned was the observation that ASEAN-ISIS should be regarded as a Track II process rather than a think-tank, where policymakers, academics, businesspeople, and civil society members in their private capacities discussed security issues.

A conference participant said the word 'think-tank' used to have positive connotations. It was known as an institution that provided independent and objective research which shed light on policy-relevant issues. It has now come to mean, however, an institution that exists to propound a particular ideological or political position. To the commentator, the think-tank's main role should be to educate and illuminate, rather than to influence or lobby. By advancing independent and objective analyses, think-tanks would be better able to win and maintain the confidence and trust of their clients.

While there was agreement that one of the think-tank's most important roles is to support governance rather than governments, it was maintained that think-tanks should nonetheless work closely with governments to implement pertinent policy proposals like counter-terrorism programmes.

Other than think-tanks, it was also suggested that the presenters might wish to look at the roles played by independent advocacy groups such as the International Crisis Group, Transparency International, human rights advocates, the media, civil society, and government officials acting in their private capacities in advancing and highlighting myriad security issues in the region.

## **THE INFLUENCE OF DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS**

To the question 'where did policy-relevant knowledge originate from?', one commentator urged the audience not to ignore the role of universities as sources of empirical knowledge in international affairs. It was maintained that some of the best works come from universities rather than think-tanks. It was suggested that the best area specialists are still in the traditional universities. While they may spend time at think-tanks or in government, they usually return to universities. Influential scholars on terrorism like Bruce Hoffman, and China specialists like Thomas Christensen and Iain Johnston are notably teaching in universities.

There was an observation that it is not universities that are influential, but the individuals at the universities. It is Samuel Huntington talking about the clash of civilisations who is influential rather than Harvard University. Likewise, it is Francis Fukuyama's thesis on the end of history that is making an impact on the policy world rather than the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. Conversely, because think-tanks have become politicised, ideas that have come from think-tanks tend to be associated with the think-tanks rather than individual scholars.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

One participant was struck by the common themes addressed by the panellists: think-tanks succeed when they generate excellent research works that are made available to policymakers; when their policy recommendations are heeded by policymakers; and when they fulfil the needs of their clients. But the panellists did not seem to have adequately addressed one other issue: public outreach. It was noted that think-tanks have press offices, websites, blogs, and they are constantly putting their personnel on television, the radio, and in the newspapers. Researchers also publish their papers in scholarly journals like *International Security*. Yet these activities were not mentioned by the panellists as roles that think-tanks should fulfil. The questions were: How should think-tanks influence public opinion? Is there a specific message that should



*Prof Zhang Yunling discussing the approach of Chinese thinktanks.*

be communicated? Is the motive for publishing a think-tanks' work a way to impress donors?

In answer to the latter question, one discussant submitted that an important aim of a think-tank's public outreach programme is admittedly to impress current and potential donors. Another analyst remarked specifically that it was difficult to assess the direct effect Chinese think-tanks have on China's policymakers. Officials also did not adhere to academic ethics by citing the sources of their reports. But it was maintained that Chinese officials are aware of the debates in the academic and think-tank communities, and have used the scholars' works to prepare their policy papers. Think-tanks in China also have a profound influence on the public through their publications. The Chinese academy, for example, publishes more than 500 books and thousands of papers annually. Scholars also give interviews on television and radio. It was therefore argued that this outreach effort has impacted upon not only policymakers, but also the wider public in China.

To a question on whether China is a free-rider or a contributor to regional security, a conference participant stated that Beijing does not see itself as a free-rider. In fact, China has actively participated in peacekeeping operations and contributed to building regional institutions. Still, while China has accepted the regional order, this did not mean that China is satisfied with the status quo.

## SESSION III – SCHOLARS/THEORISTS' PERSPECTIVES

**Mr K. Kesavapany of Institute of Southeast Asian Studies** began the session by raising three questions: Where do scholars or theorists reside; are they in think tanks, universities, or does it matter? What do they do? How do their works affect the scholarly world or the general public?

The first presenter, **Professor Rosemary Foot of Oxford University**, made a point that academics influence policy not only through their writings, but also helped to train those who would eventually enter government after their studies. Although this had not been given much attention in the discussion, she noted that education provides a crucial link between the academic and policy worlds.

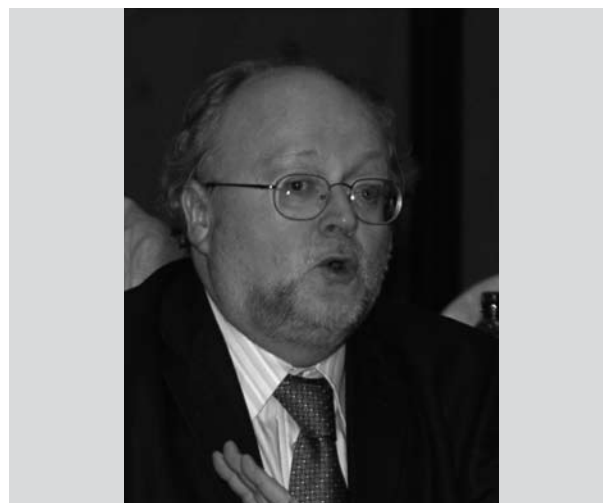
Summarising her paper, Foot said she focused on three issues. The first was on mediation and the role of mediators in addressing the Korean peninsula nuclear problem. She employed the case study to highlight how IR theorists, working closely with area specialists, could help provide policy-relevant knowledge on the type of mediation techniques that could best resolve the crisis. Second, she dealt with the foreign policy tools available to Beijing to manage the crisis. Third, she analysed the costs and benefits to the Chinese leadership if they followed particular courses of action. In all, she was convinced that scholars/theorists could contribute to the policymaking process. Foot's personal preference, however, was for scholars/theorists to maintain some distance from the policy world.

The next speaker, **Dr Paul Evans**, observed that Singapore provided an interesting example whereby intellectuals, writers, and professors in the local universities might regard themselves as civil servants who see their role as one that is focused on sustaining the society or political authority. Their role is to conserve rather than to contest. Evans also commented that the tenure system in the universities protects professors

from losing their positions if they ran afoul of the government of the day. Academics working in the think-tanks, on the other hand, do not enjoy university tenure, and this might make them sensitive and vulnerable to changing political winds. Precisely for this reason, the extent to which one's ideas could influence policy might actually depend on how good were the working relations between analysts and government officials. Evans, nonetheless, noted that more professors, analysts, and students have embraced activism. They believed scholarship should not merely be concerned about producing ideas but more importantly, generating knowledge to influence policy. Their suggestion was for universities to take the lead in effecting social or global change.

The third presenter, **Professor Steve Smith of University of Exeter**, dismissed the view that academics have nothing to say to policymakers because their work is not linked to 'real-world' problems. Smith firmly believed that academics should engage with policymakers, but they should do so under very clear and negotiated terms of engagement where the ground rules of their involvement should be agreed by all. When it concerned confidentiality and access, Smith agreed that there has to be a trade-off between the level of access an academic could get to classified official information and the freedom to use it. Smith said academics should feel free to present whatever findings their research supported, although he acknowledged the pressure some academics faced from their patrons or grant-making bodies to affirm and publish research results that furthered the latter's agenda. Smith did not think that this is merely a problem for so-called 'closed' societies; it could also be a problem for 'open' societies, especially when 'saying the right thing' is an unstated precondition for access to classified information and funding. But whatever the difficulties, he strongly believed that academics should play a major role in the development of evidence-based policy research, because if they do not, what one would get is policy-based evidence.

Reacting to the papers presented thus far, **Mr**



*Prof Steve Smith delivering his speech.*

**Sean Lynn-Jones of Harvard University** highlighted three types of theories that needed to be explicated. The first are the grand theories; these are paradigms or world-views. Second, there are major propositions that might help policymakers better understand how the world works. Third, there are the middle-ranged theories where conditional generalisations and causal ideas are developed. Lynn-Jones said most policies are informed, whether explicitly or implicitly, by theories. Area study, Lynn-Jones believed, could help one to better understand the dynamics of a particular country or region. In sum, Lynn-Jones said academics must fight the cult of irrelevance and be policy-relevant. Academics might wish to avoid less policy-relevant research work on subjects such as grand theories. Creating a career path for social scientists who engage in policy-relevant research would be another positive step in this direction.

**Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna of IDSS**, the second discussant, spoke about his interaction with policymakers and made the point that officials need solid information and good judgment when deciding on policy. Good judgment, in Ramakrishna's view, is the capacity to choose the right option amongst other competing options in the midst of situational and environmental complexities where the link between cause and effect is unclear. Academics could help policymakers acquire good judgment; scholarly publications could attune policymakers

to the latest threats and challenges that they might encounter in the medium and long-term. Inviting policymakers and government analysts to conferences that introduce them to cutting-edge research is also another way. Agreeing with Foot, Ramakrishna highlighted the important role professional schools could indirectly make to policymaking: this is to train future and career policymakers, and provide them with a rigorous postgraduate education in the liberal arts, humanities, and social sciences. Through such training, Ramakrishna believed policymakers would be more nuanced and less rigid in their approach to future policy issues.

## DISCUSSION

### GRADUATE PROGRAMMES

One commentator underscored the need for professional graduate policy schools to offer a multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary academic programme. The school should not only offer economics and political science, but also history, cultural studies, and other relevant subjects that would equip students with the appropriate skills to excel in his or her profession. There is also a need to convince students that they need theoretical knowledge, and not only the practical skills to be effective in their work. Theory informs good scholarship, and can enable analysts to produce competent analyses and forecasts about socio-economic and political issues.

The need for non-western IR theory and a broader debate

It was noted that theories of international relations tend to be western-centric. Not many IR theories draw from the Asian experience. To make theory interesting, it was suggested that theory could be presented as an alternative way of looking at the world or as an aid to policy formulation. Participants also agreed on the need to develop theories based on experiences in this part of the world.

It was noted that there is increased interest in the study of western theories in China. But there are Chinese policymakers who do not fully endorse



*Prof Rosemary Foot assessing the scholars' viewpoint.*

the western concepts. The Chinese government has consequently attempted to develop Chinese IR theories. It was also observed that efforts have been made in the Philippines to teach theories from many different sources, and all are not necessarily western in orientation. One participant remarked that IR should not be about what great American theorists said. The Asian perspective on IR theory, however, remained undeveloped. IR scholarship could, therefore, become rather parochial.

In the event, one analyst observed that government departments recruit officials from diverse backgrounds. IR schools would likewise benefit from scholars and practitioners with diverse backgrounds. Practitioners could contribute ideas wrought from their experiences in the real world to the classroom and in other scholarly settings.

### SESSION IV: SCHOLARS/PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS' PERSPECTIVES

**Professor Han Sung-Joo of International Policy Studies Institute of Korea** argued that there are three ways scholars and public intellectuals could participate in the policymaking process. First, it could be through the publication of their ideas, knowledge, theories, and recommendations in opinion pieces, journal articles, reports, and books. Second, many are involved in

Track II dialogues, and have helped provide the intellectual moorings for the creation of Track I regional institutions. Third, some scholars such as Henry Kissinger have also entered government. In that connection, Han observed that presidential political systems have less qualms about appointing scholar-political amateurs as officials than parliamentary governments.

Han then related his experiences in government, focusing on the 1993/1994 Korean nuclear crisis. Han recalled that his academic training gave him an advantage over those who did not have the same intellectual preparation. First, the questions he asked of his advisers were stimulated by his educational experience. He was then able to craft an appropriate strategy to engage policymakers in China, Russia, and the U.S. in productive consultations. Second, his academic training gave him the mindset to deal with the issue in an open and practical way. Brainstorming rather than strict negotiating sessions were conducted, paving the way for compromise and resolution. Third, as opposed to bureaucrats who tended to adopt hard-line attitudes and against domestic critics who were ready to charge the South Korean administration with appeasement, Han was able to calibrate his carrot and stick approach to move negotiations along without antagonising his domestic constituency. Fourth, Han was able to apply the negotiating strategies that he had learnt in resolving the crisis. He found Thomas Schelling's *The Strategy of Conflict* to be most instructive. Finally, Han sought advice from his academic colleagues, and found the consultations to be useful.

In conclusion, Han rhetorically asked: should academics engage in policymaking? His answer: much depends on whether the individual is able to; whether serving the political leadership might compel the scholar to compromise on his/her moral or ethical values; and whether the political environment and cultural context in which the academic operates in encourage such participation.

The second speaker, **Professor Tommy Koh of**



*Prof Han Sung-Joo reflecting on his experience as foreign minister.*

**Institute of Policy Studies**, used a case study—improving Sino-Japanese relations—to suggest that rich and rigorous academic training could help policymakers better address contemporary issues. He identified five areas in which he would require policy-relevant knowledge.

First, he would seek to learn lessons from the European experience, particularly the processes leading to the post-war Franco-German rapprochement, and apply them in Asia. He would also seek answers to whether ASEAN could play the same role that the U.S. played during the cold war in respectively helping the two contentious states to strengthen their relations. Second, he would seek a better understanding of the reasons for the rising anti-Japanese sentiments among the Chinese. Third, he would like to know how prevalent was the anti-China feeling in Japan, and what factors were stimulating those sentiments? Fourth and fifth respectively, he would search for answers to what roles the U.S. and ASEAN could play in advancing contemporary Sino-Japanese relations.

Koh closed his remarks by observing that while scholars might write and publish profound works, these publications might fail to be policy-relevant. Conversely, practitioners, because of their concern with the immediate, often miss the deeper historical context of evolving events. This could be niche for scholars who want to be policy-relevant and a way to bridge the chasm

between the policy and academic worlds. Koh also suggested that policymakers should make time to read widely while scholars should become more involved in government.

The third presenter, **Mr Michael Vatikiotis of Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue**, discussed the contemporary relations between religion and security. He noted that many governments tend to adopt a binary approach to ethnic or ostensibly religiously-inspired conflict. Scholars and pundits have also chosen sides, with some advocating extremist measures to deal with those conflicts. Vatikiotis noted that the media continues to wield considerable influence among officials. He suggested that since policymakers often only have five to six minutes to appreciate and decide on a policy issue, media reports which are concise and persuasive would have an important influence on decision-makers. Also, officials usually focus on and deal with the unambiguous symptoms rather than the complicated root causes of a problem. Superficial solutions have, therefore, obtained.

Vatikiotis then talked about conflict in Southeast Asia. He argued that religion is generally not the cause or goal of the region's jihadist movements. But the deeper socio-economic and political motivations of the movements are often ignored. Consequently, governments have missed opportunities to engage with the groups. Vatikiotis maintained that a struggle for political autonomy among the Malay community is inducing the violence in South Thailand. Religion has served mainly to establish social networks among the separatists. Mosques and religious schools have become recruiting grounds for separatists. Separatists have also funded students for further education and created obligations among the students for the separatist cause. Islam has, moreover, been used to motivate the insurgents. To Vatikiotis, reaching out to and stirring the secular desires of the students are key to reducing the number of young southern Thais supporting the separatist movement.

In sum, Vatikiotis maintained that public reports about the troubles in places like South Thailand

tend to be based on superficial evidence and official sources. Consequently, a closed loop of faulty data has been at play in identifying the problem as well as justifying the repression that has occurred in that area. There was, thus, an urgent need for scholars and analysts to review the problem in a more rigorous way. There was also an urgent need for dialogue rather than continued repression to deal with the root causes of the conflict.

The first discussant was **Professor Harry Harding of Eurasia Group**. He started by suggesting that the conference had three agendas. The first was the formal agenda, which was to enquire what policymakers and scholars could say about Asian security issues. The second was the real agenda, which was to address how policymakers and scholars interact. The third was the hidden agenda, which was to provide advice to the newly-inaugurated S Rajaratnam School of International Studies to pursue fresh research agendas and other institutional work in the years ahead.

Harding then attempted to define who is a public intellectual. The word 'public' implied priority given to public education and public dialogue on scholarly matters. Harding observed, however, that most public scholarly figures are not oriented toward public education; they focus mainly on disseminating their work to other academics, to their clients, or to their students. Most also tend to engage in public work only episodically by writing and getting their opinions published in newspapers or by conducting public lectures. As for 'intellectual', Harding pointed out the difficulty of defining the term. Did it refer only to those with academic qualifications? If so, what scholarly prerequisites marked an intellectual? Perhaps it might be best to categorise an intellectual as a subset of the educated population; as someone who is interested in creating and disseminating knowledge; or, according to American historian Richard Hofstadter, as someone who works on specialised knowledge.

Having expounded on its definitions, Harding

said he preferred to characterise a public intellectual as someone who devotes one's life to pursuing knowledge with a view toward creating better societies at the international and national levels. They include scholar-practitioners who participate in government such as Henry Kissinger; policy advocates at think-tanks and academic institutions; popularisers like Paul Samuelson and Carl Sagan who are able to simplify complicated academic issues and make them accessible to the public; and pundits and other public figures like Thomas Friedman and Desmond Tutu. These public intellectuals deal with important matters, have written and spoken eloquently and comprehensibly on a host of issues, and are able to influence policymakers and policymaking directly in government or indirectly through public discourse.

According to Harding, public intellectuals who have made an impact on Asian affairs include John Fairbank, Ezra Vogel, and Robert Scalapino. Among them, there are intellectuals who have written and talked about the region without advancing an agenda on how they would like Asia to be. There are also those, however, who have grappled with the future of individual Asian states and the region. Collectively, they have addressed six main subjects: China's and Japan's responses to the Western challenge during the nineteenth century; pan-Asian ideas in pre-war Japan; Mao Zedong's impact on China; the architects of the post-war Asian economic miracle; the Asian values debate; and cooperative security and confidence-building in Asia. Collectively, they have addressed and publicised policy-relevant knowledge in Asia and across the globe.

The second discussant, **Mr Kwa Chong Guan of IDSS**, quipped that perhaps public intellectuals and policymakers are so intellectually and temperamentally different that the former could be regarded as coming from Mars and the latter from Venus. It seemed that the intellectuals' main preoccupation is to be critical of power and authority; they threaten the establishment. Officials, conversely, would have liked to control the intellectuals.

If the government-academic relationship in Singapore was uneasy during the country's early years as an independent republic, the current environment is undoubtedly very different. The Singapore government has demonstrated its receptivity to scholars and their ideas. It established the Lee Kuan Yew distinguished visitors programme. It supported the creation of IDSS and other think-tanks. It has also acknowledged that myriad ideas needed to be generated and acted upon to grapple with the challenges posed by a complex world. Kwa noted, for instance, that an IDSS monograph on the Singapore-Malaysia water issue resonated with Singaporean policymakers. Track II activities also have significant influence on regional security affairs.

In sum, Kwa saw value in scholars questioning the policymaking process. External critiques could help officials review and improve their policies. Analysts, nonetheless, need to see and acknowledge they have limitations. They should also constantly re-evaluate their analytical assumptions and engage in self-criticism. By so doing, decision-makers and public intellectuals could help strengthen security in Asia.

## DISCUSSION

### INFLUENCE OF PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS

One participant remarked that public intellectuals are 'external policy entrepreneurs'. They help accentuate security problems. They also advance particular values. But their impact also depends on the influence they wield. The questions for the commentator were: How do they become influential? Why are they influential? Is it because of their institutional affiliations, political influence, or social stature, or is it because of the paradigm-shifting power of their ideas? It was then suggested that institutional affiliation is the least decisive in determining whether an academic and his/her ideas become influential in government or not; the quality, persuasiveness, and timeliness of the scholar's ideas are more critical factors. It was also maintained that the scholarly and personal credentials of the public intellectual are significantly decisive in

determining the latter's influence in international and national politics.

### **INTELLECTUALS AND GOVERNMENT**

One analyst noted that it was rare to find academic-policy makers who excelled in government. Is this due to bureaucratic politics or the failure of the selection process? One answer that was offered was that this might be due to education. Typically, in a country's foreign service, the majority of the recruits tend to be trained in political science. While many could furnish sophisticated theoretical explanations of key issues, they often lack deep knowledge of the history and culture of the peoples and countries that they are assigned to deal with. Their analyses and prescriptions are consequently superficial and unrealistic. It was suggested that policy schools better educate their students in area knowledge.

Another observer argued that there appears to be some disagreement between what is fashionable in the political science discipline—namely, its preoccupation with epistemological and theoretical debates—and what practitioners would find valuable, such as their future analysts acquiring a deeper understanding of societies and countries. There was a need for policy schools to address that problem. It was further underscored that there was a need for schools to offer multi-disciplinary studies in order to prepare their students for policy work.

### **INFLUENCE OF SCHOLARLY WRITINGS ON POLICYMAKERS**

One commentator maintained that most policy papers tend to be parochially preoccupied with immediate challenges. Bureaucrats should be encouraged to probe deeper into the challenges that confront their countries. In that connection, academic papers and training could help generate the questions that bureaucrats tend not to ask.

Han notably revealed that Schelling's ideas about brinkmanship were most helpful to him during the Korean crisis. Han added that Schelling's book also helped him to approach the problem, formulate questions, and strategise. At the same

time, however, Han said that his experience in government has also made him a better scholar; it has given him more insight into the policymaking process and a greater capacity to advance policy-relevant recommendations.

Another participant contributed to the discussion by commenting that while policymakers might have little time to refer to scholarly works when dealing with crises, the intellectual capital that they had acquired in school and brought into office would help them in their decision-making.

### **MANAGING POLICY AND PEOPLE**

It was argued that academic knowledge, while important in advancing policymaking, did not eclipse people management. This aspect of policymaking tended to be missed by academics. It was recognised, moreover, that officials tend to be preoccupied with managing immediate matters and develop no interest in probing deeper into the root causes of the problems that they are addressing. As such, officials often address only the tactical issues and fail to think strategically about resolving the problems.

### **ROLE OF ASEAN IN SINO-JAPANESE TENSIONS**

While it might not be possible for the animosity in Sino-Japanese relations to be completely eradicated, one participant said ASEAN is nevertheless playing a significant role in enhancing regional security through the ASEM process and the ARF. It was also suggested that public intellectuals have been contributing indirectly to the maintenance of a more peaceful and stable region through Track II dialogues. While ASEAN could create opportunities for the two powers to dialogue, there was agreement among some of the analysts that ASEAN is limited to engaging and reminding the two powers of the stakes that are involved should they destabilise the regional order.

### **TERRORISM AND RELIGION**

One commentator said a fundamental distinction between terrorism with clear-cut political programmes and those with purely religious or ideological motives should be drawn. It was



*Prof Tommy Koh fielding questions from the floor.*

suggested that policymakers have more difficulty coming to grips with the latter than the former.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

A conference participant encouraged the panellists to engage in a comparative study of how and why Asian academics become involved in government, and what lessons and pitfalls could be learnt from their experiences.

Another said that while the panellists had done an admirable job in highlighting the constructive contributions of public intellectuals, it was noted that they did not look at those—like those from France—who deconstructed established knowledge and power relations. One conference participant specifically encouraged Harding to expand on his definition of ‘public intellectual’ by discussing the contributions of French, Central European, and Russian thinkers in public life.

## **SESSION V – CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION**

**Professor Amitav Acharya of IDSS** summarised the rich and complex discussions. To that end, he highlighted four major questions that the conference particularly addressed. First, what is policy-relevant knowledge? Second, what are the sources of policy-relevant knowledge? Third, how can academics better influence policy? Fourth, how can one bridge the gap separating the academic and policy worlds if such a gap

actually exists?

From the discussions, Acharya concluded that one way to look at what constituted policy-relevant knowledge was to view it simply as knowledge that policymakers expect and want from academics. Policy-relevant knowledge could sometimes be privileged as knowledge generated from within the government. Decision-makers might not make their preferences explicit, but they seem to harbour some expectations about the type of information they desire from the scholarly community. These include data that would aid officials in formulating and making policy. Dissonant and contrary evidence, however, that might undermine or contradict policy decisions tend to be rejected. Policy-based information that endorsed government decisions would be more welcomed. The mind, after all, is not an evidence-seeking mechanism as it is a consistency-seeking mechanism.

Acharya also noted that most conference participants maintained that policy-relevant knowledge could mean background and historical information, analyses of the short- and long-term causes of events, and policy recommendations. One other issue that was raised was where theory fitted in as policy-relevant knowledge. Here, Acharya thought that Lynn-Jones ably addressed the issue by identifying middle-range theories, area study, policy analyses that are informed by multiple theories, and theory-based advocacy as policy-relevant.

As for the sources of policy-relevant knowledge, Acharya said Zhang’s presentation was significant. He noted that Zhang mentioned that the ‘sources’ in the Chinese context are the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the central and provincial party schools, the military-run universities, and strategic institutes. More generally, the sources of policy-relevant knowledge also include think-tanks, university departments, professional schools, government-run internal research institutes, non-governmental organisations, and public intellectuals.

On how academics could influence policymaking,

Acharya noted that this was possible when academics become policymakers. Other ways include the publication of scholarly ideas, public debates about policy, training policymakers at universities, and making academic concepts and ideas accessible to policymakers and the general public. Through books, opinion pieces, briefing papers, and public lectures, scholars could influence policy. However, the extent to which academic work could reach out to decision-makers is also dependent on the play of personalities, issues, timing, and the receptivity of particular political systems to new ideas.

Finally, the gap between academics and policymakers could be bridged if officials recognise its significance and are prepared to harvest policy-relevant knowledge from a wide variety of sources rather than limiting themselves to internal sources. Academics, on the other hand, also have parts to play. They should generate policy-relevant research and help officials overcome the tyranny of the tactical by providing them with long- and broad-range analyses of security developments. Scholars should also pay attention to theory-driven policy research. Perhaps reward systems should also be modified to encourage scholars to engage in research on more policy-relevant middle-range theories and area knowledge rather than relatively less policy-relevant grand theories. Finally, Acharya noted that academics could also enhance the impact of their ideas by writing policy papers that have four important qualities: timeliness, clarity, concision, and sound judgment.



*Prof Amitav Acharya summing up the discussion.*



*Prof Khong Yuen Foong discussing the book project.*

**Professor Khong Yuen Foong of IDSS** next discussed the objective and outline of the volume that might emerge from the deliberations. The book plans to address the question: what constitutes policy relevant knowledge? The conference organisers consequently wanted the participants to discuss the types of knowledge which they regard as policy-relevant. It was hoped that contrasting views could be obtained from practitioners or ex-policymakers, scholar-practitioners, and scholars. However, the discussions had focused on the tensions and interactions between policymakers and scholars. The written papers, conversely, have dealt predominantly with the knowledge that is required to be policy-relevant. Khong, therefore, reminded the participants to focus more on what they thought constituted policy-relevant knowledge when revising their papers.

Khong also encouraged the participants to identify scholarly writings that have made an impact on policymakers and policymaking. He wanted a sense on how scholarly work should be pitched in order to have the most policy impact. This could help scholars to craft their writings in ways that would maximise their influence. Scholars would also be better equipped to focus on the type of work that would match their talents, temperaments, and intellectual background. Some might be better at grand ideas while others might excel at writing policy briefs. Discovering what type of knowledge policymakers find important would

be helpful in furthering the volume's objective. Conversely, it might be argued that there is no universal definition of what constituted policy-relevant knowledge. Relevance, instead, might be determined by the context, country, research infrastructure, and civil service structure where the information is generated.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE VOLUME**

One participant offered suggestions on how the volume should be organised. One was to focus on a common theme that linked the chapters together. To be less restrictive, the notion of policy-relevant knowledge must also not be defined mainly as the scholars' relationship with policymaking. Rather, it should address different forms of policy-relevant knowledge, each of which would exhibit different power-knowledge relationships requiring different ground rules to operate. In this respect, practitioners could be asked to share their experiences, and to provide feedback on how their academic training had helped them at work.

The participant also suggested that one chapter should deal with the following series of questions: What do policymakers think they want? What do they really want? Or are officials simply seeking scholarly confirmation of their pre-existing views under the guise of being open to new evidence? Answers to these questions should be addressed by someone who has had much experience in advising and dealing with governments. It was also proposed that a chapter explore the place of think-tanks in advancing policy-relevant research. These institutions enjoy peculiar power-knowledge relationships with policymakers who tend to be their financial backers, and who are most likely to provide them with access to confidential information. Likewise, a chapter should also address the role of the media in generating policy-relevant work and in directly influencing policy.

Additionally, two other questions should be addressed. First, what is the nature of the power-knowledge relationship between policymakers

and scholars, and how is this reflected in the Asian context? Second, how do these relations in Asia differ from say, the West? In other words, how do different cultural, geographical, historical, and political contexts affect the policymaker-scholar relationship, or do they? Contributors should address these questions in the light of their experiences and against the context of their own societies.

### **OTHER SOURCES OF POLICY-RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE**

One participant commented on two issues relating to policy-relevant knowledge. The first was that while it was important to discuss the nature of policy-relevant knowledge in the context of the academic-policymaker nexus, the participants should not ignore the roles played by non-governmental organisations and the business community. Second, it was suggested that academics consider how they could encourage policymakers to adopt their ideas. Successful scholars-policy entrepreneurs, it was observed, are comfortable with policymakers 'borrowing' their ideas without attribution since that meant policy influence.

### **LOOKING AT THE MECHANISMS OF POLICY-RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE**

A commentator pointed out that policy-relevant research is dissimilar to knowledge that might be relevant to policymakers. There are other audiences, besides governments, that policy-relevant research could speak to. Nonetheless, more discussion on the mechanisms through which scholars could exploit to better reach out to policymakers is needed. Thus far, the focus had been on the kind of knowledge that is policy-relevant and not the mechanisms. That shortcoming should be redressed.

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE  
PRESENTERS & OTHER PARTICIPANTS

# IDSS 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE ON THE NATURE OF POLICY RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE IN ASIAN SECURITY AFFAIRS

## PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

### Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> August

1900 hrs Welcome Dinner  
(Ballroom, Conference Level)

### Day 1 – Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> August

0800 hrs – 0900 hrs Registration

0930 hrs WELCOME REMARKS by Mr Barry Desker,  
Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), Singapore

0935 hrs - 0945 hrs KEYNOTE ADDRESS by Professor S. Jayakumar,  
Deputy Prime Minister, Co-ordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Law, Singapore

0945 hrs - 1015 hrs Reception

1015 hrs - 1215 hrs Session I - Policymakers' Perspectives  
Chair: Mr Barry Desker, IDSS, Singapore

Sir Richard Dearlove, Pembroke College, University of Cambridge, UK  
Mr Allan Gyngell, The Lowy Institute for International Policy, Australia  
Mr Kishore Mahbubani, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Singapore

Discussant: Dr Paul Evans, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Canada

1215 hrs – 1315 hrs Lunch

1315 hrs - 1515 hrs Session II - Think Tank Perspectives  
Chair: Professor Khong Yuen Foong, IDSS, Singapore

Professor Zhang Yunling, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China  
Mr Jusuf Wanandi, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia  
Professor Carolina Hernandez, Institute of Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines  
Professor Bruce Hoffman, RAND Corporation/Georgetown University, USA

Discussants: Mr Barry Wain, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore  
Assoc Prof Rohan Gunaratna, IDSS, Singapore

1515 hrs – 1530 hrs Coffee/Tea Break

1530 hrs - 1730 hrs Session III – Scholars/Theorists' Perspectives  
Chair: Mr K. Kesavapany, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore

Professor Rosemary Foot, St. Antony's College, University of Oxford, UK  
Dr Paul Evans, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Canada  
Professor Steve Smith, University of Exeter, UK

Discussants: Mr Sean Lynn-Jones, Harvard University, USA  
Assoc Prof Kumar Ramakrishna, IDSS, Singapore

**Day 2 – Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> August**

- 0930 hrs – 1130 hrs      Session IV - Scholars/Public Intellectuals' Perspectives  
Chair: Professor Amitav Acharya, IDSS, Singapore
- Professor Han Sung-Joo, International Policy Studies Institute of Korea, Korea  
Professor Tommy Koh, Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore  
Mr Michael Vatikiotis, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Switzerland
- Discussants: Professor Harry Harding, George Washington University, USA  
Mr Kwa Chong Guan, IDSS, Singapore
- 1130 hrs – 1145 hrs      Coffee/Tea Break
- 1145 hrs – 1300 hrs      Session V - Conclusions and Evaluations  
Professor Amitav Acharya, IDSS, Singapore  
Professor Khong Yuen Foong, IDSS, Singapore
- 1300 hrs – 1400 hrs      Lunch

THE END

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## ABOUT IDSS

**The Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)** was established in July 1996 as an autonomous research institute within the Nanyang Technological University. Its objectives are to:

- Conduct research on security, strategic and international issues.
- Provide general and graduate education in strategic studies, international relations, defence management and defence technology.
- Promote joint and exchange programmes with similar regional and international institutions, and organise seminars/conferences on topics salient to the strategic and policy communities of the Asia-Pacific.

Constituents of IDSS include the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) and the Asian Programme for Negotiation and Conflict Management (APNCM).

### RESEARCH

Through its Working Paper Series, *IDSS Commentaries* and other publications, the Institute seeks to share its research findings with the strategic studies and defence policy communities. The Institute's researchers are also encouraged to publish their writings in refereed journals. The focus of research is on issues relating to the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region and their implications for Singapore and other countries in the region. The Institute has also established the S. Rajaratnam Professorship in Strategic Studies (named after Singapore's first Foreign Minister), to bring distinguished scholars to participate in the work of the Institute. Previous holders of the Chair include Professors Stephen Walt (Harvard University), Jack Snyder (Columbia University), Wang Jisi (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), Alastair Iain Johnston (Harvard University) and John Mearsheimer (University of Chicago). A Visiting Research Fellow Programme also enables overseas scholars to carry out related research in the Institute.

### TEACHING

The Institute provides educational opportunities at an advanced level to professionals from both the private and public sectors in Singapore as well as overseas through graduate programmes, namely, the Master of Science in Strategic Studies, the Master of Science in International Relations and the Master of Science in International Political Economy. These programmes are conducted full-time and part-time by an international faculty. The Institute also has a Doctoral programme for research in these fields of study. In addition to these graduate programmes, the Institute also teaches various modules in courses conducted by the SAFTI Military Institute, SAF Warrant Officers' School, Civil Defence Academy, and the Defence and Home Affairs Ministries. The Institute also runs a one-semester course on *'The International Relations of the Asia Pacific'* for undergraduates in NTU.

### NETWORKING

The Institute convenes workshops, seminars and colloquia on aspects of international relations and security development that are of contemporary and historical significance. Highlights of the Institute's activities include a regular Colloquium on Strategic Trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the annual Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO) and the biennial Asia Pacific Security Conference. IDSS staff participate in Track II security dialogues and scholarly conferences in the Asia-Pacific. IDSS has contacts and collaborations with many international think tanks and research institutes throughout Asia, Europe and the United States. The Institute has also participated in research projects funded by the Ford Foundation and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. It also serves as the Secretariat for the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), Singapore. Through these activities, the Institute aims to develop and nurture a network of researchers whose collaborative efforts will yield new insights into security issues of interest to Singapore and the region.

***On 1 January 2007, the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies will be upgraded to become the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University.***

