



- Security Beyond Borders -

International Conference on Climate Change and Security
Traders Hotel, Singapore
11 – 12 October 2007

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, in collaboration with the Swiss Embassy in Singapore held an *International Conference on Climate Change and Security*. Held at the Traders Hotel, Singapore on 11-12 October 2007, the Conference on Climate Change and Security is one of the key major activities organized by the RSIS’ programme on Non-Traditional Security (NTS) in Asia.

The discussions at this policy forum served to highlight the complex challenges of climate change in Asia and their salience beyond the region. In the opening remarks, Ambassador Barry Desker, Dean of the RSIS, remarked that as with other non-traditional security issues, climate change has now dominated the security agenda of many states in the region. However, the global consensus on the grave security challenges posed by climate change, is not matched by a consensus on how best to address this problem. Ironically, whilst there is agreement on the need for a new global framework to observe the key principles put forward by the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, particularly on the reduction of carbon emissions—the contentions between the developed and the developing countries on how to



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proceed remain a serious obstacle in the global mission to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Thus, for Asia and Europe, there are at least three reasons why climate change must be placed on top of their security agenda. These are: the severe consequences of climate change, the need for concrete Asian action on mitigating its impact, and the emerging initiatives that are coming out from both regions in responding to the challenges of climate change.

H.E. Mr. Daniel Woker, Ambassador of Switzerland to Singapore, concurred with the points raised by Ambassador Desker. From a Swiss perspective, the security implications of climate change has been vividly illustrated by the melting glaciers on the Swiss Alps. It was therefore important that Asia and Europe find common grounds in addressing the security challenges of climate change.

The conference then proceeded with 2 opening addresses on the Global and Asian perspective of Climate Change. The former presentation was delivered by Dr Jose Romero from the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland, who highlighted the need for the international community to increase what he calls “environmental intelligence” to address the global consequences of climate change. The Asian Perspective of Climate Change was delivered by Mr Terence Siew, Head of the Climate Change Unit at the National Environment Agency in Singapore. Siew argued that while climate change is a global problem that requires global solutions, it is nevertheless important to better understand the security implications of climate change on Asia’s growth and prosperity. He also noted the efforts and initiatives of the Singapore government in dealing with climate change.

Various panels followed covering various themes of climate change. The two panels on Climate Change and Security: Issues and Challenges covered a diverse range of aspects, in particular environment and sustainable development, human insecurities, the impacts on natural habitats and marine and coastal environments as well as the extent to which climate change is a cause of violent conflict and wars. Following panels on Energy Security, the politics of climate change amongst major powers and the way forward for the international community in the post

2012 Kyoto Protocol period, were equally engaging with discussion sessions leaving participants with much food for thought. Presenters provided great insight to the issues at hand and provided a series of recommendations, which would be compiled to be presented to policymakers at the upcoming UNFCCC meeting in Bali in early December 2007.

Assoc. Prof Mely Caballero Anthony (RSIS) then concluded the 1 ½ day event by expressing thanks to all present for their time and effort in making the Conference a success. She also noted that while there have been issues of how to grapple such a wide topic, the presence of the multi-disciplined speakers clearly suggests that it is not merely a task for governments to address. The small intimate setting was useful as this allowed participants to have candid discussion.

Workshop on Humanitarian Emergencies and Human Security: Lessons from Aceh

**Hermes Palace Hotel, Banda Aceh
2-4 September 2007**

The Asian Tsunami in 2004 was a significant milestone in the history of global natural disasters. The severity of its impact was disastrous as it destroyed vital infrastructures, crippled economies and moreover killed hundreds and thousands of people in the affected parts of Asia. Indonesia, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka critically needed international assistance not just to provide relief services but subsequently reconstruction, rehabilitation and re-integration measures. The Aceh tsunami disaster relief, in particular, was Indonesia’s biggest non-military operation in the last 50 years with the assistance of 34 countries. What makes the task more daunting and complex is the fact in addition to the post-tsunami situation; Aceh has also had to recover from the effects of a post-conflict situation.

Three years on, the extent to which human security of Aceh has been ensured remains to be seen. The NTS-Asia subregional workshop in Aceh on Humanitarian Emergencies and Human Security was therefore timely and apt in assessing the post-tsunami situation. The workshop was jointly organized by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU and



the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta and brought together a diverse array of participants, many of whom were involved in the relief operations in Aceh after the tsunami. Participants included members of international organizations such as the United Nations, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and OXFAM; various civil society organizations, academics as well as members of the Indonesian government and military.

Drawing on their various experiences during the post-tsunami period, the workshop reflected the

significance of cooperation amongst both state and non-state actors in addressing non-traditional security crises. It was also highlighted in the course of the workshop that the tsunami was a crucial factor in getting Aceh separatists and the Indonesian military to lay down their arms and work together during the crisis. Issues relating to gender, children, multilateralism and prospects for the future were also raised in the workshop.

The discussions at the meeting covered a wide range of topics on the responses to the Aceh tsunami, the lessons learnt and the challenges ahead. These themes





were succinctly summed by Dr. Rizal Sukma (Deputy Executive Director, CSIS Jakarta) through his notion of **PASCOE**.

- **Presence** of the international community and NGOs as being significant actors in facilitating progress of relief and rehabilitation work
- **Access** of resources and information to all parties involved
- **Speed** to move about and need to accelerate the processes
- **Co-ordination** amongst various actors needs continuous and further discussion, and
- **Exit** strategy, which has not given sufficient attention but should be further considered and discussed.

RSIS and CSIS participants also had the chance to visit various areas affected by the tsunami and several landmarks of Aceh's rich history and culture, with the generous hospitality of Mr Humam Hamid of the Aceh Recovery Forum. Driving through the streets of Banda Aceh, one could not help but notice the immense presence of the international community in reconstruction and rehabilitation whether it be in the rebuilding of homes, mosques and schools or transport, water and energy infrastructure. At the same time, evidence of the tsunami's impact lingers on as much of Aceh's coastal areas remain deserted. As many residents living by the coast had perished during the tsunami, only a handful of survivors trickle back to rebuild their homes. The tsunami had also caused a brain drain within Acehnese society as many of those living by the coast, had worked or studied at the nearby Aceh University. Hence, at least 12 PhD holders and at least 50 masters holders were lost due to the tsunami. The magnitude of the tsunami was made even more crystal clear upon visiting the site of a ship that had been carried about 4 kilometres inland by the waves, destroying everything in its path. Finally, RSIS and CSIS participants savoured a scenic view of Aceh from the highest hillpoint while driving through much of the Aceh Freedom Movement's stronghold.

The trip to Aceh was thus indeed an enlightening and fruitful experience for all and further reinforced the significance of the study of non-traditional security issues. Given the vast beauty and potential that Aceh had to offer, participants remained optimistic that the

region would overtime recover and ensure security for all.

Recent Events

Asian Social and Public Policy Research Workshop - Regional Governance

30 October 2007, CAS, HKU

Assessing the Shifting Security Agenda in the Asia Pacific: A Meeting of Experts

17 October 2007, Marina Mandarin Hotel, Singapore

Organised by RSIS and funded by the Macarthur Foundation, this meeting of experts included several members of the NTS-Asia network, namely Prof. Syed Rifaat Hussain (RCSS, Sri Lanka), Mr Bui Truong Giang (IWEP, Vietnam) and Assoc. Prof. Mely Caballero Anthony (RSIS, Singapore)

Walking Along With The City of Victoria, Hong Kong: Good Governance, Accountability, and Collective Memory

28 September 2007, CAS, HKU

Seminar in Cantonese. Speaker: Mr. Yam Ching Chuen, Social Worker, Social Welfare Department, HKSAR

Seminar on "War and Remembrance: Thinking of the Resistance War"

18 September 2007, CAS HKU

Speaker: Professor Diana Lary, Professor Emerita, Department of History, University of British Columbia, Canada

In this seminar Prof Lary examined the remembrance of the Resistance War in China. It was a universal experience; very few parts of China, very few Chinese families or individuals, escaped its impact. Her presentation dealt with different levels of memory: the state, the communist and the family and individual. It looked at a disparate range of experiences, and how the memories of these experiences have played out. Her paper is part of a larger project on social suffering during the Resistance War.

Indo- Pak Poll, August 2007

The survey was designed and conducted in India by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Delhi. The fieldwork in Pakistan was conducted by A.C Nielsen, Pakistan. The sample for the survey booth in India and Pakistan is purely an urban sample. The survey in Pakistan was conducted in 10 biggest towns in terms of population, while in India; the sample was drawn from the 20 biggest towns in terms of population of the towns. The fieldwork for the study in India and Pakistan was conducted between July 25th and August 6th 2007.

In Pakistan a total of 1011 interviews were randomly conducted in these cities spread across 40 locations while in India a total of 2030 interviews were randomly conducted in these cities spread across 136 locations

A special survey was also conducted in Jammu and Srinagar to assess people's opinion on issues and problems related to the state. A total of 255 interviews were conducted in Jammu and 226 interviews were conducted in Srinagar.

In India, apart from the national sample, 523 additional interviews (booster sample) were also conducted among members of families affected by the partition. The booster sample of those affected from the partition was conducted in cities of Delhi, Hyderabad, Amritsar, Calcutta, Lucknow and Mumbai. The booster sample included 40 percent women respondents, 28 percent Muslim respondents 42 percent Hindus respondents and 24 percent Sikh respondents.

For more on the poll, visit http://www.lokniti.org/recentsurvey_indo_pak_poll_august_2007.htm

Democracy and Children's Rights in India and the UK: Law, Policy and Outcomes

The University of Essex (UK) and CSDS (India) have come together in collaboration with other partners for the project 'Democracy and Children's Rights in India and the UK: Law, Policy and Outcomes'. Prof. Peter R. deSouza and Dr. Todd Landman are the principal investigators of this project. The project has been funded by UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most universally signed and ratified treaty in the international human rights regime. Despite this seemingly universal promulgation of the rights of children, a large number of uncertainties placed on record by states when ratifying the Convention has weakened the obligations laid down by the UNCRC.

The UNCRC is unique in its emphasis on viewing the child as a rights-holder rather than a beneficiary of welfare and protection. By recognising that children not only have a moral and legal claim to certain goods, services and provisions, but that they also have the ability to forward these claims to the community and the state, the UNCRC has redefined the concept of citizenship in terms of its membership and its exercise. While the Convention does not argue that children should be given rights identical to those enjoyed by adults, it does underline the position that 'children are social beings too' and among other rights, they should be accorded 'the right to respect, the right to make mistakes and the right to be taken seriously'.

This project seeks to encourage comparative research on the laws, policies, and institutions that come about in response to national and international legal commitments, the cultural attitudes towards children that underlie these efforts and the political and social outcomes of these endeavours. The project focuses on India and the United Kingdom because each country is uniquely placed in the debate on the rights of children and has a particular perspective to offer. A comparison of the two countries would yield research outcomes relevant not only to each of these countries but also enable either country to learn from experiences in the implementation of and innovations





in laws, policies and institutions. The following areas of research are of particular importance:

1. the changing conceptions of childhood in the light of international commitments and national laws and policies,
2. the condition of children in India and the United Kingdom relating to issues such as citizenship, child employment, child protection, poverty and social exclusion,
3. the justiciability of the UNCRC in international and national law and the attempts to provide redress through law (international, national and state legislation) and institutions, e.g. child courts and children's commissions, and
4. the effectiveness of both the law and institutions in addressing the above issues.

Both states have similar international commitments since they have ratified the UNCRC. The United Kingdom has additional commitments accruing from its ratification of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms 1950 which is enforced by a stronger accountability mechanism i.e. the European Court of Human Rights. India, on the other hand, is bound by national commitments and the mechanism of state reporting provided by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. However, the evolution of judicial activism and the widespread utilisation of public interest litigation in India has enabled the larger public greater control over laws and policies that impact human and child well-being. This particular issue links to the debate on the introduction of a regional human rights treaty body in Asia and the role of national institutions in the implementation of states commitments and the monitoring of these commitments.

The United Kingdom has enacted laws and established institutions to promote children's rights and well-being. Yet it is still languishing in providing for rights-based outcomes for children. A comparative study of the relationship between the introduction of laws and institutions and the implementation of rights and achievement of well-being in these countries would provide valuable insights into larger debates on linkages between child rights and child well-being, their conceptualisation, implementation and measurement. The issue of available resources in the implementation of rights is

another theme that underlies comparative research on the two countries. In the light of the Millennium Development Goals especially the five goals that are directly related to child well-being and Goal 8 which seeks to develop a global partnership for development, research on the relationship between developing and developed countries (in this case, India and the United Kingdom) towards implementing their children's rights obligations would add to current debates on this issue.

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Public Lecture: Discourse on Democratic Socialism

7 September 2007, CAS, HKU

Visit by Mr. Roy Therrien, Second Secretary of the Embassy of the United States

29 August 2007, IAPS, CASS

Mr Therrien met with Prof. Sun Shihai, Deputy Director of IAPS and had a warm and engaging discussion on US plans in transferring civil nuclear technology to India and other related issues in Asia-Pacific region.

Visit by Mr. Sompong Sanguanbun, the Deputy Director General of the Department of East Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand

7 September 2007, IAPS, CASS

Mr Sanguanbun met with Prof. Han Feng, Deputy Director of IAPS, and other scholars and had a warm and engaging discussion on the relations between China and South Asian countries.

Visit by Mr. Eric Barboriak, First Secretary of the Embassy of the United States

6 September 2007, IAPS, CASS

Mr Barboriak met with Prof. Liu Jian and had a warm and engaging discussion on the relations between China and South Asian countries.

Recent Publications

Coping with Riverbank Induced Displacement, *RMMRU Policy Brief*, 2007

Cheng Xiaoyong & Cao Yunhua, 2007, Australia's Policy towards ASEAN, *Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies* No.8, IAPS, CASS

Wang Shilu, 2007, Reforming ASEAN's Cooperation Mechanism and Principles: Disputes and Prospects, *Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies* No.8, IAPS, CASS

Ma Ying, 2007, 40th Anniversary of ASEAN: A Review, *Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies* No.8, IAPS, CASS China

Zhou Fangye, 2007, Nonviolence Mass Movement and Political Transformation in Thailand, *Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies* No.7, IAPS, CASS, China

Zheng Yongnian & Zhang Chi, 2007 Soft Power in International Politics and the Implications for China, *Journal of World Economics and Politics* No.7, IWEP China

Pang Sen, 2007, UN Peacekeeping Operations: Trends and Challenges, *Journal of World Economics and Politics*, No.6, IWEP China

Hoang Thi Ha, 2006, "Poverty as a Non-traditional Security Challenge in Southeast Asia: Vietnam's Case for Development Partnership against Poverty, *CAS Research Paper*, HKU

Wendy Yap, 2006, Regional Environmental Governance: The Role of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, *CAS Research Paper*, HKU

NTS Asia Secretariat

Secretary- General / Coordinator
Mely Caballero Anthony

Research Analyst / Webmaster
Sofiah Jamil



Editorial Team

Mely Caballero- Anthony
Sofiah Jamil

www.rsis-ntsasia.org
webmaster@rsis-ntsasia.org

