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NTS VIEWPOINT

Post-Arab Spring: Political transitions in retreat?

By Mely Caballero-Anthony

A recent cover of the *Economist* magazine asked: 'Has the Arab Spring failed?' More questions along this line will certainly come as the international community follows closely the political developments in the Arab world. Already, many analysts and pundits are wondering how the celebrated Arab Spring of 2011 that led to the breathtaking end of dictatorial regimes in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen could have gone awry.

The rapid descent into political strife and turbulence in these states has rocked the once placid region, with unimaginable violence recently breaking out in Egypt. While nothing compares with the carnage that had been seen in Libya – itself under pressure for a regime change – the turn of events has led many to question the wisdom of the democratic transformations that are taking place in these states. As Egypt's re-instated military regime struggles to keep order and pull the country back from the precipice of civil war, how do we make sense of these unfolding narratives of the Arab world? And what does this mean for Southeast Asia's own story of political transitions?

Since the mid-1970s, Southeast Asia has had its own chequered experience of political transitions. From the Philippines' long and arduous journey to democracy in the early 1980s to Myanmar's breathtaking democratic reforms after decades under a military junta, the common thread is that transitions are inherently fragile, fraught with difficult challenges and would therefore need to be properly nurtured until democratic processes are consolidated.

Political 'transitologists' like Andreas Schedler and Guillermo O'Donnell, writing about the Latin American experience, have pointed out that while dozens of Third World countries went

'democratic' between 1980 and 2000, only a few were able to consolidate that status. Most either slid back into autocratic modes of governance or got stuck in the so-called 'half-way' status. Similar studies have shown that democratic consolidation depends on an array of factors. Pressures by domestic and external parties to allow citizens greater political participation are one part of the equation. Also significant are a gamut of domestic factors affecting political outcomes, including level of economic development, quality of political leadership, nature of elite bargaining, political institutions and even political culture.

Beyond elections, there is the difficult task of getting the new players that have entered the political arena to work together and achieve some kind of a consensus that democracy is the only game in town. Instead of gaining exclusive hold on power, the moves now have to be about developing democratic structures and norms that allow for strong political institutions underpinned by respect for the rule of law. Also imperative is building a strong economy that can help to engender more inclusive and empowered communities. More importantly, there must be the realisation that political transitions require time and forbearance in the midst of urgent pressures and demands to meet people's expectations. Without these being in play, achieving the lofty goal of a democratic society that works for the common good becomes a gargantuan task.

The unfolding events in the Arab world compel states and societies that have gone through or are still undergoing political transition to appreciate the often complex nature of the process. As history has shown, the road to democratisation is paved with high expectations, and numerous challenges. The latest narrative of political transition suggests that Southeast Asia would do well to help the region's democratising states strengthen their institutions and their economies – lest they too falter like the many that have travelled the same route.

Mely Caballero-Anthony is Associate Professor and Head of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore. She is lead writer and editor of Political Change, Democratic Transitions and Security in Southeast Asia (Routledge, 2010).

Additional Info:

- 'Has the Arab spring failed?', *Economist*, print edition, 13 July 2013.
- El-Menawy, Abdel Latif, 'Egypt's political transition must slow down', *Al Arabiya*, 17 July 2013.
- Ghitis, Frida, 'How to rescue the Arab Spring', *CNN*, 30 July 2013.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo, 1996, 'Illusions about consolidation', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 34–51.
- Schedler, Andreas, 1998, 'What is democratic consolidation?', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 91–107.
- Carothers, Thomas, 2002, 'The end of the transition paradigm', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 5–21.

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CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- Sachs, Jeffrey D., 'Sustainable visions', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 9 June 2013.
- Jolly, Asit, 'How the hills can kill again', *India Today*, 5 July 2013.
- 'First meeting of experts on long-term finance considers pathways for mobilizing climate finance', *Climate Change Policy & Practice*, 17 July 2013.
- 'Pollution costs India US\$80b a year: World Bank', *Channel NewsAsia*, 17 July 2013.
- 'China floods claim 337 lives so far this year', *Al Jazeera*, 21 July 2013.
- 'China to implement stricter air quality controls', *Eco-Business*, 24 July 2013.
- Berger, Erin, 'Himalaya "tsunami" shows need for science in disaster plans', *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, 26 July 2013.
- 'Activists demand environment minister's transparency on the concession map', *The Jakarta Post*, 28 July 2013.

Selected Publications

- UN Environment Programme (UNEP), 2013, *Green economy and trade – Trends, challenges and opportunities*, Nairobi.

This report identifies international trade opportunities in key economic sectors associated with the transition to a green economy; and examines the policies and measures that may facilitate, or overcome hindrances to, such opportunities. It aims to assist governments, the private sector and other stakeholders to build capacity to take advantage of sustainable trade opportunities at the national, regional or international level.

- Mulyasari, Farah, Satomi Inoue, Sunil Prashar et al., 2013, 'Disaster preparedness: Looking through the lens of hospitals in Japan', *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 89–100.

Given that critical facilities such as hospitals play a crucial role in the socioeconomic and psychological recovery of a population after a disaster, this article assesses the preparedness levels of hospitals in Japan. The results show that the majority of the respondent hospitals exhibit functional preparedness, which is useful during the emergency period of a disaster. However, the other three pillars – structural, non-structural and human resources preparedness – need to be strengthened.

- Sanz-Caballero, Susana, 2013, 'Children's rights in a changing climate: A perspective from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', *Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 1–14.

This article identifies the ways in which rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are undermined by sudden climate change events as well as by the gradual consequences of climate change. It shifts the perspective on how we address climate change consequences: from human impacts to human-rights violations.

Events & Announcements

- 'Expert Group Regional Training Workshop on Adaptation for Asian Least Developed Countries', 20–24 Aug 2013, Siem Reap, Cambodia.
- 'International Green Building Conference', 11–13 September 2013, Singapore.

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ENERGY AND HUMAN SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Velandy, Siddhartha M., 'US military driving clean energy innovation', *The Diplomat*, 21 June 2013.
- Campbell, Charlie, 'Indonesia embraces shale fracking – But at what cost?', *Time*, 25 June 2013.
- Hibbs, Mark, 'Fires demonstrate danger of nuclear power in Asia', *The Diplomat*, 4 July 2013.
- Watts, Himangshu, 'IEA expects gas price hike to give investment a lift', *The Economic Times*, 10 July 2013.
- Imaduddin, 'PM's China visit: Bright hopes to end Pakistan's energy crisis', *Business Recorder*, 11 July 2013.
- 'Now, energy-starved India gets a boost from Baghdad', *The New Indian Express*, 12 July 2013.
- Huda, Mirza Sadaqat, 'Myanmar, Bangladesh and India: Prospects for energy cooperation', *National Geographic*, 13 July 2013.
- Sinha, R.K., 'Nuke power important for India's energy security', *The New Indian Express*, 13 July 2013.
- Shukman, David, 'The receding threat from "peak oil"', *BBC*, 14 July 2013.
- Càceres, Sigfrido Burgos, 'China's oil security: Diplomacy, economics and the prospects for peaceful growth', *Peace & Conflict Monitor*, 24 July 2013.

Selected Publications

- Frankfurt School – UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Collaborating Centre for Climate & Sustainable Energy Finance / Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF), 2013, *Global trends in renewable energy investment 2013: Key findings*, Frankfurt: Frankfurt School of Finance & Management.

This document reports that investment in renewable energy and fuels (including small hydroelectric projects) in 2012 was 12 per cent lower than in 2011. Investment in developed countries declined 29 per cent (it increased by 19 per cent in developing countries). Uncertainty on renewable energy policies in the main developed economies was a major factor; substantial decrease in cost of solar energy also contributed to the lower figures. The report notes that budget allocations for fossil-fuel energy remain enormous.

- International Energy Agency (IEA), 2013, *World Energy Outlook Special Report 2013: Redrawing the energy-climate map*, Paris.

The report states that current world carbon dioxide emissions exceed the level required to limit global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius. Promoting energy efficiency, minimising use and construction of coal-fired power generators, reducing methane emissions from upstream petroleum production, and expediting cuts in fuel subsidies are key to achieving the target. The report argues that it would be more cost-effective to mainstream climate policies in the energy system and invest in low-carbon infrastructures now rather than at a later stage.

Events & Announcements

- 'Asia Pacific Clean Energy Summit and Expo', 9–11 September 2013, Honolulu, HI, USA.
- 'International Conference on Renewable Energy and Environment', 23–24 September 2013, Phuket, Thailand.

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FOOD SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- Abd Almohsen, Rehab, 'Food security needs "more holistic" agriculture', *SciDev.Net*, 1 July 2013.
- Li, Jiao, 'Golden rice trial triggers sackings, investigation', *SciDev.Net*, 1 July 2013.
- Promchertchoo, Pichayada, 'Thai government reverses decision to lower price ceiling', *Channel NewsAsia*, 3 July 2013.
- Weng, Lawi, 'Thai subsidy scheme leads to Burmese rice sell-off', *The Irrawaddy*, 3 July 2013.
- Grubel, James and Fathiya Dahrul, 'After trade spat, Indonesia puts Australian beef on menu', *Reuters*, 4 July 2013.
- Mukherji, Biman and Rajesh Roy, 'India approves ambitious food security program', *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 July 2013.
- Sihalohe, Markus Junianto, 'House passes new agriculture law', *Jakarta Globe*, 9 July 2013.
- 'The fuss over intensified farming', *IRIN*, 10 July 2013.
- Fresco, Louise O., 'Starved for science', *Project Syndicate*, 17 July 2013.
- 'Food prices decline but remain high; consumer food subsidies increasing concern', *World Bank*, 25 July 2013.

Selected Publications

- Anik, Asif Reza, A.V. Manjunatha and Siegfried Bauer, 2013, 'Impact of farm level corruption on the food security of households in Bangladesh', *Food Security*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 565–74.

This study looks at the impact of farm-level corruption on households' food security using survey data collected from 210 Bangladeshi rice farmers. Results confirm that the cost of corruption adversely affects the calorie consumption of households. The marginal effect of corruption is higher for low-expenditure households compared with high-expenditure households.

- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP), 2013, *Smallholders, food security and the environment*, Rome.

The report looks at the role of smallholders in achieving food security and balance in the ecosystem. Smallholders are a neglected sector of the global agricultural community despite the fact that their productivity not only benefits themselves but also the communities they are part of. With their intimate knowledge of local conditions, they are crucial to efforts to make agriculture more sustainable and equitable.

- Iizumi, Toshichika, Hirofumi Sakuma, Masayuki Yokozawa et al., 2013, 'Prediction of seasonal climate-induced variations in global food production', *Nature Climate Change*, 21 July.

Given increased food market volatility, governments are paying greater attention to production forecasts. This study presents a global assessment of the reliability of crop failure hindcasts for major crops. Results indicate that moderate-to-marked yield loss over a substantial percentage (26 to 33 per cent) of the harvested area can reliably be predicted if climate forecasts are near perfect.

Events & Announcements

- 'ASEAN Food Conference: Meeting Future Demands: Security and Sustainability', 9–11 September 2013, Singapore.
- 'Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Science Forum: Nutrition and Health; Targets for Agricultural Research', 22–25 September 2013, Bonn, Germany.
- 'ASEAN Regional Conference on Food Security', 8–10 October 2013, Penang, Malaysia.
- 'Job: Researcher (Food Security and Climate Change)'.

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HEALTH SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Amul, Gianna Gayle, 'Haze and air pollution: The potential health crisis', *RSIS Commentaries*, 2 July 2013.
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 'Innovative study estimates extent to which air pollution in China shortens human lives', *ScienceDaily*, 8 July 2013.
- Nagpal, Suktri, David Sinclair and Paul Garner, 'Has the NTD community neglected evidence-based policy?', *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, 11 July 2013.
- 'Stronger bans on tobacco marketing needed to save lives – New WHO report on the tobacco epidemic', *WHO Western Pacific Region*, 15 July 2013.
- 'Six new MERS coronavirus cases reported in UAE, Saudi', *Reuters*, 18 July 2013.
- 'Vietnam concerned over HIV donor funding cuts', *Asian Scientist*, 18 July 2013.
- Winterbottom, Jo and Kate Kelland, 'WHO had asked India to ban toxin that killed children', *Reuters*, 22 July 2013.
- Takada, Kazunori, 'Bribery serves as life-support for Chinese hospitals', *Reuters*, 23 July 2013.
- McKenna, Maryn, 'Antibiotic resistance: The last resort', *Nature*, 24 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- Khan, Kamran, Jennifer Sears, Vivian Wei Hu et al., 2013, 'Potential for the international spread of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome in association with mass gatherings in Saudi Arabia', *PLOS Current Outbreaks*, 17 July.

An understanding of global population movements particularly the annual mass pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, the epicentre of the Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), is critical to efforts to mitigate a potential pandemic in the broader Middle East. Insights on such movements could help guide anticipatory MERS coronavirus surveillance and inform plans to increase public health preparedness.

- Floyd, Katherine, Christopher Fitzpatrick, Andrea Pantoja et al., 2013, 'Domestic and donor finance for tuberculosis care and control in low-income and middle-income countries: An analysis of trends, 2002–2011 and requirements to meet 2015 targets', *The Lancet*

This article presents an analysis of the funding for tuberculosis from 2002 to 2011. It emphasises the increasing ability of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa to fund tuberculosis treatments, but notes that donor financing amounting to USD1.6–2.3 billion each year is needed to meet 2015 goals in other countries.

Events & Announcements

- 'International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP) International Population Conference', 26–31 August 2013, Busan, South Korea.
- 'Asia Pacific Forum on Quality Improvement in Healthcare', 25–27 September 2013, Auckland, New Zealand.

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INTERNAL AND CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT

News & Commentaries

- Zhou, Wa, 'Refugee children made welcome in Hebei schools', *China Daily*, 20 June 2013.
- 'China to send security force for peacekeeping mission in Mali', *Xinhua*, 28 June 2013.
- 'UNHCR consternation at killing of two IDPs in Myanmar's Rakhine state', *UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*, 28 June 2013.
- Gumbs, Laura, 'Indonesia remains unwelcoming transit for asylum seekers', *The Irrawaddy*, 10 July 2013.
- Jikkham, Patsara, Achara Ashayagachat and Waedao Harai, 'BRN put to test as fasting month opens', *Bangkok Post*, 10 July 2013.
- 'Bangladesh Islamist Ghulam Azam found guilty of war crimes', *BBC*, 15 July 2013.
- Maclean, Dana, 'Analysis: How to reverse Buddhism's radical turn in Southeast Asia', *IRIN*, 16 July 2013.
- "'Wealth-sharing" deal offers hope in Mindanao', *IRIN*, 16 July 2013.
- 'No ID, no security – The dilemma of Sri Lanka's returnees', *IRIN*, 17 July 2013.
- Siegel, Matt, 'UN "troubled" by Australia's new policy on asylum seekers', *The New York Times*, 26 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- Kraisoraphong, Keokam, 2013, 'Conflict in Southern Thailand: Seed for security sector reform?', Asia Security Initiative Policy Series No. 22, Singapore: RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies.

This article explores the prospects for the current conflict in Southern Thailand to serve as a catalyst for security sector reform in the country. It reviews the changes in the Thai security sector and highlights the challenges faced by the sector. It also examines the differences between the current conflict in the country's south and the communist insurgency of past decades, and the implications for security sector governance in Thailand.

- Gegout, Catherine, 2013, 'The International Criminal Court: Limits, potential and conditions for the promotion of justice and peace', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 5, pp. 800–18.

This article notes that structural and political factors constrain the efficacy of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in promoting international justice and peace. Despite this, the ICC still has the potential to achieve the aims of ending impunity and promoting peace. Attaining such aims would depend on a range of factors, from its institutional capacity to the level of support from the international community.

Events & Announcements

- 'Scholarship: 2013 United States-Timor-Leste (USTL) Scholarship Program (for East Timorese)', Deadline: 16 August 2013.
- 'Bringing Justice and Peace to Papua: Assessment on Asymmetrical Local Autonomy, Communal Property Right on Land, and Conflict Resolution', 24–25 September 2013, Bandung, Indonesia.

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TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

News & Commentaries

- Bello, Muhammad, 'Nigeria: Wali – 300 Nigerians held in Chinese prisons for drug trafficking', *allAfrica*, 9 July 2013.
- 'Japan mob publishes magazine for gangsters: Reports', *AFP*, 9 July 2013.
- 'Corruption up 450% in a year in Russian military – Prosecutors', *RIA Novosti*, 11 July 2013.
- Quinn, Ben, 'A very British export: Guns and mercenaries to fight piracy in Somalia', *Guardian*, 11 July 2013.
- '22 financial institutions fined over last 3 years for weak anti-money laundering controls', *Channel NewsAsia*, 12 July 2013.
- 'Foreigners working longer hours via counterfeit resident cards: Immigration', *The Japan Times*, 13 July 2013.
- 'Seizure of 1,148 ivory tusks underscores Hong Kong's transit role in illicit trade', *Traffic*, 19 July 2013.
- Mukherji, Biman and Arpan Mukherjee, 'Gold smuggling takes off in India', *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 July 2013.
- Maiden, Samantha, 'Crime syndicates importing Vietnamese asylum seekers to grow marijuana and work in brothels', *News.com.au*, 28 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- Crouch, Melissa and Antje Missbach, 2013, 'Trials of people smugglers in Indonesia: 2007–2012', Policy Papers, Melbourne: Centre for Indonesian Law, Islam and Society (CILIS), University of Melbourne.

This policy paper addresses the critical need for greater understanding of how the Indonesian legal system is dealing with people smuggling. It argues that any efforts to increase the scope and depth of cooperation between Australia and Indonesia must take into account the progress made by law enforcement agencies in prosecuting people smugglers in Indonesian courts, as well as the challenges they confront.

- UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2013, *India country assessment report: Current status of victim service providers and criminal justice actors in India on anti human trafficking*, New Delhi.

This report provides a brief analysis of 13 forms of human trafficking in India, including trafficking of organs, forced marriages and adoption rackets, highlighting broad trends across the country. In addition, it identifies areas that require attention and concerted action to strengthen services for survivors of trafficking, such as the provision of special juvenile police units and victim shelters.

Events & Announcements

- '6th Chinese in Prato & 4th Wenzhouese Diaspora Symposia: Chinese Migration, Entrepreneurship and Development in the New Global Economy', 29–30 October 2013, Prato, Italy.
- '1st Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Committee (ECEC) Meeting', 7–8 November 2013, Nairobi, Kenya.

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WATER SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- Schneider, Keith, 'Scarcity in a time of surplus: Free water and energy cause food waste and power shortage in India', *Circle of Blue*, 20 June 2013.
- Vidal, John, 'Global threat to food supply as water wells dry up, warns top environment expert', *Guardian*, 6 July 2013.
- Magistad, Mary Kay, 'Low-water lunch: A Chinese breakthrough on irrigation?', *PRI's The World*, 8 July 2013.
- Harvard University, 'Trees use water more efficiently as atmospheric carbon dioxide rises', *ScienceDaily*, 10 July 2013.
- Isalkar, Umesh and Bhavika Jain, '26% of water samples in Mumbai unpotable', *The Times of India*, 11 July 2013.
- Ives, Mike, 'In Mekong Delta, rice boom has steep environmental cost', *Yale Environment 360*, 11 July 2013.
- Starkey, Natalie, 'Pumping water underground could trigger major earthquake, say scientists', *Guardian*, 11 July 2013.
- Taylor, Lenore, 'NSW coal seam gas project tests Rudd's commitment to "water trigger"', *Guardian*, 12 July 2013.
- Nayani, Aziz, 'Pakistan's new big threat isn't terrorism – It's water', *The Atlantic*, 19 July 2013.



Selected Publications

- Committee on Climate Change, 2013, *Managing the land in a changing climate*, Adaptation Sub-Committee Progress Report, London.

This report argues that droughts could devastate food production in England by the 2020s. Without action, increasingly hot and dry summers may mean farmers that would be hit by shortfalls in the amount of water needed for crop production. The report also warns that current farming practices may be allowing the country's richest soils to be washed or blown away.

- McCartney, Matthew, Lisa-Maria Rebelo, Stefanos Xenarios et al., 2013, *Agricultural water storage in an era of climate change: Assessing need and effectiveness in Africa*, IWMI Research Report No. 152, Colombo: International Water Management Institute (IWMI).

This report outlines a framework for assessing the effectiveness of a range of water storage options in the Volta Basin and the upstream (Ethiopian) portion of the Blue Nile Basin. The approach relies on several broad criteria underpinned by water storage-specific metrics. The method links biophysical and demographic elements of storage and, because it is linked to climate parameters, it provides a basis for assessment within the context of climate change.

- Cooley, Heather, Newsha Ajami, Mai-Lan Ha et al., 2013, *Global water governance in the 21st century*, Oakland, CA: Pacific Institute.

This report describes several key elements of global water governance, including the conceptual frameworks and policy priorities developed to address major water-related challenges, and the organisations and organisational networks that conceive of and/or implement those conceptual frameworks and priorities. It also identifies key deficiencies in global water governance and provides recommendations for how governance can be improved to better address the major water concerns of the 21st century.

Events & Announcements

- 'International Seminar and Workshop on Hydrography', 27–29 August 2013, Batam, Indonesia.
- 'American Council for an Energy-efficient Economy (ACEEE) National Conference on Energy Efficiency as a Resource', 22–24 September 2013, Nashville, TN, USA.
- 'International Water Association (IWA) Specialist Conference on Efficient Use and Management of Water', 22–25 October 2013, Paris, France.

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About the Centre:

The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Climate Change, Food Security, Energy Security, Health Security, as well as Internal and Cross Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

The Centre is the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012–2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009–2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific. It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia).

More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts.