

## FACTSHEET

28 October 2014

### AMBASSADOR BARRY DESKER

Ambassador Barry Desker joined the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) as Director on 1 October 2000. He became the Dean when the Institute – having expanded significantly since its establishment in July 1996 – was renamed the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) on 1 July 2007. As IDSS remained as one of the research centres of RSIS, Barry Desker retained his appointment as Director of the institute in a concurrent capacity.

Barry Desker's contributions to RSIS and NTU have been noted internationally. In 2012, he was conferred an honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of Warwick. In 2013, he was conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, by the University of Exeter. Both honorary degrees were awarded for his scholarship and academic leadership, amongst other organisational and national achievements.

#### **RSIS Milestones during Ambassador Barry Desker's Tenure as Dean**

- In the University of Pennsylvania's annual ranking of think tanks for 2013, IDSS was ranked 78<sup>th</sup> worldwide. Earlier, RSIS was ranked 47<sup>th</sup> among the Top 50 Non-U.S. think tanks in the world for 2011.
- RSIS is one of 25 policy institutes in the world which participates in the Council of Councils chaired by the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations.
- In 2012, RSIS was invited to participate in Think20, a grouping of the leading think tanks of G20 members although Singapore is not a member of the G20.
- RSIS is a global leader in Asia Pacific security studies, counter terrorism studies, homeland security studies and non-traditional security studies. Because of Barry Desker's personal interest in the World Trade Organisation and international trade issues, RSIS has been active in international debates on these issues.
- RSIS expanded from one centre in 2000 to six centres during Barry Desker's tenure as the Dean. These centres are:
  - Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies
  - International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research
  - Centre of Excellence for National Security
  - Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies
  - Temasek Foundation Centre for Trade & Negotiations
  - Centre for Multilateralism Studies

- Academic partnerships were forged, including a Double Masters Programme with the University of Warwick, exchange programmes with The Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, and a Japanese Government-sponsored consortium of Japanese and Southeast Asian universities.
- In June 2013, RSIS signed MOUs with the School of International Studies at Peking University, and the China Foreign Affairs University, which provided opportunities for collaboration on policy discussions and research between RSIS and the two Chinese institutions.
- Started in 2001, the RSIS Commentary Series has come to be widely read by policymakers globally and in the region, including many foreign governments.
- More than 50 conferences and workshops are organised annually as well as more than 100 seminars each year.
- The number of Master of Science programmes increased from one to four, together with the creation of a small, but select, doctoral programme. Annual enrolment in MSc programmes increased from 10 in 1998, when the first programme started, to more than 200 in recent years. To date, RSIS' graduate programmes have drawn students from 68 countries, and its Alumni has grown from 63 in 2001 to more than 1,200 today.
- Staff strength grew from 28 in 2000 to 168 in 2014. The management and support staff of 49 currently manages and administers 119 faculty and research staff, including 15 visiting scholars.

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**About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies**

The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** is a professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. RSIS' mission is to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of security studies and international affairs. Its core functions are research, graduate education and networking. It produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Region Studies. RSIS' activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia Pacific.

For more information about RSIS, please visit [www.rsis.edu.sg](http://www.rsis.edu.sg).