



# THINK TANK

News from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

## RSIS's MOU with NLB

The long-standing and fruitful relationship between RSIS /ICPVTR and the National Library Board of Singapore (NLB) was formalized when the parties signed an important Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in September. The MoU covered document preservation, collaborative research projects and public outreach.

The most important element of the MoU was the agreement on ICPVTR's critical Al-Qaeda collection. Recovered from the field by ICPVTR, the NLB will preserve these priceless primary documents, enabling them to provide valuable insights for years to come. Additionally, the library will provide

researchers with access to this important cache. There will also be a permanent display of documents for the general public as well as possible exhibitions similar to the highly successful "Changing Faces of Terrorism" Exhibition in 2005 and "Infectious Diseases" Exhibition of 2007. The NLB will be formally partnered with ICPVTR, providing staff on secondment to assist in ICPVTR's leading Security and Informatics Project. NLB staff will also receive training on terrorism analysis. The centre is happy to assist the NLB in its efforts to provide their clients with high-quality analysis. While a partnership on this project has been in existence, the formalization of the exchange is expected to reinvigorate the effort.

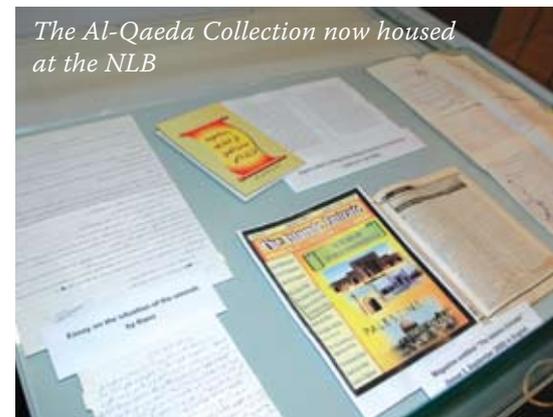
Both parties have a strong commitment to public outreach and the MoU will provide additional avenues in this regard. ICPVTR will be providing public access to information on terrorist incidents as well as background information on terrorist leaders. Additionally, the centre has agreed to provide speakers on terrorism and related issues. On the evening of 5 December, the centre will conduct the first in a series of public lectures. The topic will be on the situation in southern Thailand.

The NLB is pleased to be able to



*Ambassador Barry Desker, Dean, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, exchanging tokens with the Chief Executive of the National Library Board, Dr. N. Varaprasad, after the signing of the MOU*

host RSIS book launches and public conferences at their facilities across Singapore. They are already working to host one early next year. We also look forward to collaborative research and publications arising from the MoU.



*The Al-Qaeda Collection now housed at the NLB*

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## RSIS Colloquia

To mark the beginning of the new school year, RSIS organized several talks under its “Strategic Trends in the 21st Century Colloquium Series”. Renowned scholars in the fields of International Relations, Strategic Studies and International Political Economy were invited to Nanyang Technological University to speak to a broad cross-section of the public, including policymakers, foreign diplomats, journalists, businessmen and students. The following are highlights of the lectures delivered.

### Highlights of their Lectures



*Professor Robert H. “Robin” Dorff,  
Professor of National Security  
Affairs, Strategic Studies Institute,  
U.S. Army War College*

Professor Robin Dorff, Professor of National Security Affairs in the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College, presented his colloquium on “Addressing the ‘Good Governance Deficit’: The Strategic Imperative of the 21st Century”. His presentation on 13 August 2007 focused on two main themes: the need for legitimate, good governments around the world, and the need for the United States to help nurture them by conceiving and operating from a unified, coherent strategy.

Professor Dorff argued that the United States should work towards fostering effective good governance through the promotion and protection of legitimate governments. This, in his view, is not only the “right thing to do” but is in the United States’ strategic interests. He concluded his presentation by stressing that an orchestrated approach would be more effective than the current U.S. strategy of “whack the mole”, as it would effectively narrow the “spaces” wherein terrorist “moles” operate. He stressed that although the United States could not do this without the support of its global allies, the country would undoubtedly have to play a primary role in countering terrorism.

On 17 August 2007, Professor Bruce Hoffman delivered a lecture on “Terrorism, Radicalization and Subversion: Al Qaeda’s Resurgence”. He noted that while the post-9/11 invasion of Afghanistan by U.S. forces had resulted in serious disruption to Al-Qaeda’s sanctuary and training infrastructure, the terrorist group has since been able to regenerate itself—particularly in the border areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Furthermore, although top members of the organization’s leadership were killed or captured between 2001 and 2004, many mid-level members of the Al-Qaeda leadership have risen to take their place. The bombings in Madrid and London in 2004 and 2005, respectively, as well as the failed 2006 “Liquid Plot”, exemplify the continuing danger Al-Qaeda poses to the Western world. Similarly, the group has been successful at co-opting many local militant groups into joining its global struggle against the United States. In addition to its affiliations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Al-Qaeda is now observed to have active members present in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.



*Professor Bruce Hoffman,  
Professor of Security Studies,  
Edmund A. Walsh School of  
Foreign Service, Georgetown  
University*

Professor Richard Betts, the S. Rajaratnam Professor of Strategic Studies and a professor at Columbia University, gave a lecture on U.S. defence spending policy on 20 August 2007. A central theme he developed is that U.S. defence spending falls between two logical levels: the amount necessary to enable the United States to be an active enforcer of global security, and the much smaller amount necessary to provide national security. He commented that defence spending has actually increased greatly since the end of the Cold War, a fact that does not factor in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as they are excluded from the general defence budget. He pointed out that if one were to only look at current defence spending compared to the height of the Cold War, one would never have thought that the war had ended. He concluded that while it is necessary for the United States to “remain ahead of the curve” in terms of defence capability and technology, it would not be prudent for the United States to function as an enforcer of world order.



*Professor Richard Betts, the  
S. Rajaratnam Professor of  
Strategic Studies in 2007*



*Mr. Richard Smith, RSIS Distinguished Fellow and former Australian Secretary of Defence*

On 28 September 2007, Mr. Richard Smith spoke on “Australia’s Response to the Rise of China”. Dating China’s rise to the sweeping economic policies of Deng Xiaoping, Mr. Smith noted that the country’s growth has been largely externally driven, while also coinciding with a new era of globalization. As a result, the domestic policies of neighbouring countries have been impacted as well. Australia, in particular, has recognized the potential significance of the growing Chinese economy and, consequently, has worked to capitalize on the benefits of the bilateral relationship since the 1980s. In contrast to other countries, Australia has not seen China’s economic growth as a threat. However, Tiananmen Square and the election of John Howard have caused political hiccups in relations and, despite an overall positive trajectory, concerns over China’s environmental issues remain. In strategic terms, Australia now finds itself in a situation where its biggest trading partner is not a member of its alliance network. Yet notions of “containing” or “encircling” China are dismissed as unneeded and unrealistic. Mr. Smith added that Australia therefore seeks to maintain a balance between its strong U.S. alliance and its economic ties with China.



*Professor Edward A. Kolodziej, Director, Centre for Global Studies and Emeritus Research Professor of Political Science, University of Illinois*

Professor Edward A. Kolodziej, on 25 September, spoke on the subject, “From Superpower to Besieged Global Power: Restoring Global Order after the Failure of the Bush Doctrine”. In his lecture, Professor Kolodziej reviewed America’s foreign policy under the Bush Administration. He stated that the current Administration has misused its power and is now weak as a result of its unilateral action. He made a strong argument that in order for the United States to be a superpower, it must work closely with multilateral institutions and other states. Given the interdependencies that exist in today’s world, all states need a cooperative global strategy. Professor Kolodziej believes that the next White House administration will have a long and difficult task in restoring the United States to its previous status.

## RSIS’s Conference on “Changing Security and Competition: New Power Dynamics in Southeast Asia”

In October 2007, some 30 scholars and practitioners participated in the conference on “Changing Security Cooperation and Competition: New Power Dynamics in Southeast Asia” at The Fullerton Hotel. The meeting on 18–20 October is part of a project funded by the Stanley Foundation to examine the changing Asian political, economic and security environment—with a focus on Southeast Asia—and the impact of new developments on U.S. policy. Appreciating how the new trends are eroding extant political and security alignments, and creating new ones, can help policymakers and analysts propose and craft policies that will contribute to the continued stability and prosperity in the region. In Singapore, the conference participants engaged in roundtable discussions on several significant issues, including changing power competition in Southeast Asian security, terrorism, new and non-traditional security issues, traditional security issues, and the changing regional security architecture. Developed for the policy community, a final document listing the policy recommendations advanced at the Singapore meeting and at subsequent gatherings will be the key product of the project.



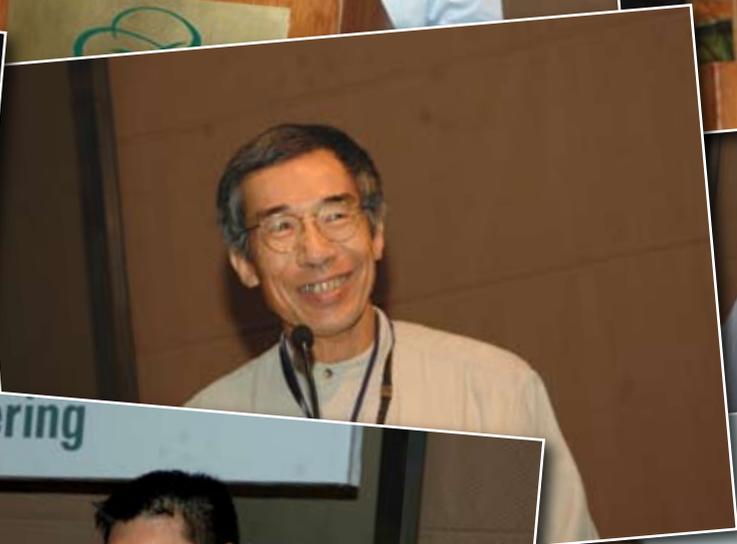
ditional security issues, traditional security issues, and the changing regional security architecture. Developed for the policy community, a final document listing the policy recommendations advanced at the Singapore meeting and at subsequent gatherings will be the key product of the project.



## The Ninth Asia-Pacific Programme for

The Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) held the annual Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO) at the Sentosa Resort and Spa from 6–12 August, starting with a welcome dinner on 5 August. APPSMO 2007 marked the first-time participation of Botswana and Sri Lanka in the programme. Their involvement reflects the growing interest among many defence officials in the world in gatherings like APPSMO, which promotes defence and security diplomacy through an extensive series of academic seminars in Singapore. Fifty-three senior military officers from 20 countries took part in the inaugural APPSMO in 1999. In 2007, there were 61 officers from 26 countries who participated.

The academic aspect of the programme was designed to stimulate the participants to consider policy matters from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Distinguished speakers from Singapore and around the

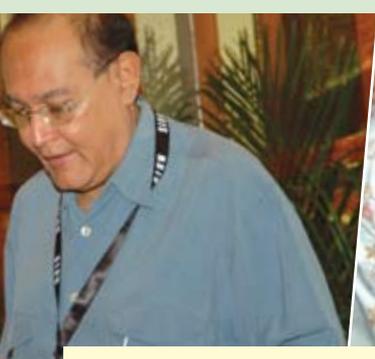




## or Senior Military Officers (APPSMO)

world were invited to share their expertise on various policy-relevant topics. They addressed subjects such as the situation in Iraq, civil-military relations, the future of warfare, the role of armed forces today, terrorism and international security, new dimensions in international security, strategy and military leadership, the changing place of Asia in American national security policy, the evolution in military affairs, the media and international conflict, the role of the military in internal conflicts, and defence networking.

Apart from academic discussions, the participants were also treated to a number of other activities, including visits to the SAF Centre for Military Experimentation, Changi Naval Base and military heritage sites across Singapore. Team sports were also organized for the officers. These activities were meant to offer the participants opportunities to interact with one another and to build relationships lasting beyond their stay in Singapore.



### What some participants said about APPSMO 2007



*Colonel Stephen Gracias (India): "I am delighted to be here and enjoyed the food, the National Day Celebrations and the lectures during APPSMO."*



*LTC Penkin Maxim (Russia): "APPSMO 07 provided me with a good opportunity to exchange views with other officers on official matters as well as allowed me to meet fellow officers from all over the world."*



*Captain Curt Chestnutt (USA): "I am impressed by the 'professionalism' of the speakers and the participants of APPSMO 07."*

# 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 significant in the history of global natural disasters. Its impact was disastrous as it destroyed vital infrastructures, crippled economies and killed hundreds of thousands of people. Indonesia, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka critically needed international assistance, not just in the provision of relief services but subsequently for reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration measures. Aceh's tsunami disaster relief has been Indonesia's biggest non-military operation in the last 50 years and has required the assistance of 34 countries. What has made the task more daunting and complex is the fact that Aceh also had to recover from the effects of a post-conflict situation.

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

of International Studies (NTU) and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (Jakarta)—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 the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), OXFAM, various civil society organizations, academics, and members of the Indonesian government and military.

Drawing on their various experiences during the post-tsunami period, the workshop reflected on the significance of cooperation among both state and non-state actors in addressing non-traditional security crises. It was 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. 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, including responses to the Aceh tsunami, lessons learnt and challenges ahead. These themes were succinctly summarized by Dr. Rizal Sukma (Deputy Executive Director, CSIS Jakarta) through his notion of PASCOE:

- Presence of the international community and NGOs as significant actors in facilitating the 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
- Coordination among the various actors that need continuous and further discussion
- Exit strategy, which has not been given sufficient attention but

should be further considered and discussed

RSIS and CSIS participants, with the generous hospitality of Mr. Humam Hamid of the Aceh Recovery Forum, also had the chance to visit various areas affected by the tsunami and several landmarks of Aceh's rich history and culture. Driving through the streets of Banda Aceh, one could not help but notice the immense presence of the international community in the area's reconstruction and rehabilitation, whether it was in the rebuilding of homes, mosques and schools, or in 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 have trickled back to rebuild their homes. The tsunami also resulted in a loss of talent within Acehnese society as many who lived by the coast had worked or studied at the nearby Aceh University. At least 12 Ph.D. holders and 50 Master's degree holders were lost due to the tsunami. The magnitude of the tsunami was made more stark at a visit to the site where a ship had been carried four kilometres inland by the waves, destroying everything in its path. Finally, RSIS and CSIS participants also savoured a scenic view of Aceh from the city's highest point while driving through much of the former Aceh Freedom Movement's stronghold.

The trip to Aceh was an enlightening and fruitful experience for all and it further reinforced the significance of the study of non-traditional security issues. Given the vast beauty and potential that Aceh had to offer, participants remain optimistic that the region will, over time, recover and ensure security for all.



*RSIS and CSIS participants in Aceh*

# Bendemeer Secondary School Contributes to the S. Rajaratnam School's Endowment Fund

*Mrs. Rathi Parimalan, Principal of Bendemeer Secondary School, presenting a cheque for \$5,700 to the Secretary-General of the RSIS Fund Raising Committee and Executive Secretary of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Mr. Sng Seow Lian*



On 8 August, Mrs. Rathi Parimalan, principal of Bendemeer Secondary School, presented to Mr. Sng Seow Lian a cheque for \$5,700 for the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies' Endowment Fund. The money was raised through a walkathon organized by Mr. Ng Wee Nghee, the Sports Secretary of the school. The event, which took three months to plan, was part of the larger 30th anniversary celebrations of Bendemeer Secondary School. The school's teaching and support staff as well as 1,234 students took part in the event.

*RSIS caught up with Mrs. Rathi to find out what inspired her to contribute to the School's Endowment Fund.*

## What inspired you to pick RSIS as a cause?

Bendemeer Secondary School has always been very active in nurturing active citizens who appreciate the diversity of the country. The staff of Bendemeer Secondary is always keen to promote racial harmony within its student population. Also, we have decided to help RSIS in its fund-raising efforts because we feel that RSIS has a good programme that helps to nurture potential leaders in areas such as the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region. This is important as it has an impact on Singapore and other

countries in the region. Therefore, we decided to give the money we raised through the walkathon to continue Mr. Rajaratnam's vision of promoting diversity and multiculturalism in Singapore and the region.

## Did the students know about S. Rajaratnam and his contributions to Singapore?

At the beginning of the campaign, not many of our students had heard of him. To get the pupils interested, we started by using the national pledge to talk about Mr. Rajaratnam's contributions to Singapore. Students, led by the class Racial Unity Groups (RUGs), planned a series of activities that would help the rest of their fellow students know who he was. These were aimed at the following:

- to find out who Mr. Rajaratnam was as a private person;

- to understand the significance of the national pledge;
- to appreciate and know the values and qualities necessary to maintain harmony among the various races living in Singapore; and
- to share ideas on how to promote racial harmony.

On 10 December 2006, the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies announced that it would embark on a \$40-million fund-raising campaign. Income from the money raised (which stands at \$34.6 million as at 18 December 2007) will be used to engage top-notch scholars to teach and research at RSIS and promote scholarships for talented students. Two professorships were also established under the Endowment Fund—the Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in International Relations and the NTUC Professorship in International Economic Relations.



*Flag-off of the walkathon at Bendemeer Secondary School*

## Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim Speaks at RSIS



*Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, former Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister of Malaysia*

On 22 September, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim was invited to speak about the Malaysian experience of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. When the crisis happened, Datuk Seri Anwar was the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister of Malaysia. A decade later, talking to a packed auditorium in Nanyang Technological University, he sought to address some key lessons Malaysia and its neighbours had learnt, warning the audience that the region is still vulnerable and showing signs of another looming financial crisis.

Datuk Seri Anwar felt that the region's financial policies had to be based on the concepts of the "Hayekian free enterprise with a shot of Keynesian fiscal push when necessary". He felt that

when managing the economy, good governance, transparency and accountability must be the rule of thumb. At the same time, governments, when adopting such policies, must also exercise flexibility and common sense. He used the example of the IMF's liberal prescription for privatization to economies in demise during the crisis to support his argument. He was critical of the IMF's policy recommendations as he felt that they were not only "undemocratic" but also "economically unsound". Datuk Seri Anwar also stressed that social justice must remain a cornerstone objective for all policies, applicable for all types of economies, developing or developed. The rights and interests of workers must be protected.

He also urged the region to resolve their issues relating to the liberalization of capital accounts. In addition, he shared with his audience that governments in the region are in need of structural reforms in the economic and political spheres. While it has often been argued that the emphasis on political freedom, liberties and democracy is a specifically Western priority, and that for Asia, economic development must precede freedom, Datuk Seri Anwar argued against such an idea. He shared with his audience his belief that the idea of development ought to help promote freedom and that the trade-off for development was freedom.

7 Jan 2008

Networked Government Workshop  
Marina Mandarin Hotel, Singapore

9–10 Jan 2008

32nd Oceans Conference on Freedom of Seas, Passage Rights and the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, co-hosted with the Centre for Ocean Law & Policy, University of Virginia School of Law

Orchard Hotel

11 Jan 2008

RSIS Board of Governors Meeting  
RSIS Conference Room

17-18 Jan 2008

Sentosa Roundtable on Asian Security  
The Sentosa Resort & Spa

Having said that, he conceded that, to some extent, some good has resulted as the region develops economically. Governments have made efforts to fortify themselves against another financial crisis. Governments in the region have expanded investment in research and development in many sectors of the economy, and they have also made prudent decisions in allocating resources, reducing systemic risk and, most importantly, gaining a certain amount of understanding of how financial markets work.

Concluding, Datuk Seri Anwar urged the region to be more cohesive as it would help to enhance capacity and preparedness in countering a future crisis. This will also help the region move towards liberalization in a mutual, collective and conterminous manner.

## RSIS and MacArthur Foundation Host Planning Meeting

On 17 October 2007, a number of academics from universities and think tanks across the region convened to assess the shifting security agenda of the Asia Pacific. Organized by RSIS and funded by the MacArthur Foundation, the meeting sought to identify current gaps in the study of regional security and, accordingly, plan a potential research agenda for the foundation's grant-making initiative. Nine papers were prepared in total and arranged into the following three panels: The Changing

Power Structure in the Asia Pacific; Regionalism and Multilateralism; and The New Security Agenda.

Papers were not formally presented but were instead critiqued by a panel of three discussants during each session. With more time consequently allotted for discussion, the dialogue covered a range of issues pertinent to the future of Asian security. These included, but were not limited to, the topics of globalization, institution building, trans-national crime and non-traditional security. It was noted by several participants that economics was notably absent from the day's proceedings. However, a general consensus was reached that any further academic work done in the field should aim to be policy relevant and comprehensive.