

Two Decades in the Making

Contributed by
Bernard Chin



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong addressing RSIS students and staff members at the inaugural RSIS Day held on 30 July 2015

More than 240 staff and students of the RSIS family came together as one for the inaugural RSIS Day on 30 July 2015, in celebration of the School's 19th anniversary. This year's event marked the one-year countdown to bigger celebrations next year when RSIS celebrates its 20th anniversary.

In his address to staff and students, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, said "I hope this celebration is a modest start to a continuing tradition. This

will be a prelude to the 20th anniversary celebration that we will undertake together a year from now."

RSIS can trace its roots back almost two decades when it was formerly known as the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), which was established on 30 July 1996. IDSS was renamed the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) on 1 July 2007, having expanded significantly since its establishment, and IDSS then became the first of the

School's research centres. The School now has five research centres and three research programmes.

As a research think tank, RSIS has attained a global reputation as a leading research institution in the Asia Pacific. In the University of Pennsylvania's annual ranking of think tanks for 2013, IDSS was ranked 78th worldwide. RSIS is one of the founding policy institutes in the world that participates in the Council of Councils, which is chaired by the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations.

RSIS' graduate education role has also expanded significantly since its founding years. The number of Master of Science programmes increased from one to four, together with the creation of a small, but select, doctoral programme. To date, RSIS' graduate programmes have drawn students from 68 countries, and its Alumni has grown from 63 in 2001 to more than 1,400 today. 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.

RSIS continues to build linkages with renowned institutions the world over, and can leverage this to achieve its mission of shaping perspectives on global affairs. As RSIS prepares to usher in two decades of excellence in research and graduate education, it is well-placed to grow further in the Asia Pacific and internationally.

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Strengthening Ties with Chinese Think Tanks

Contributed by
Irene Chan

RSIS' annual calls on Chinese think tanks took place from 14-17 June 2015. This year's delegation was led by the RSIS Executive Deputy Chairman, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, who was making his maiden visit to China since assuming his post in November 2014. The six-member delegation included Associate Professor Ralf Emmers, Associate Dean; Associate Professor Li Mingjiang, Coordinator of the China Programme; Assistant Professor Hoo Tiang Boon, Research Fellow with the China Programme; Ms Jane Chan, Research Fellow and

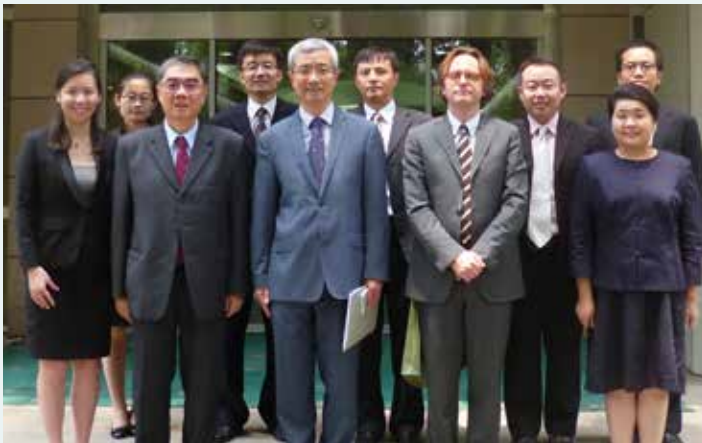
Coordinator of Maritime Security Programme; and Ms Irene Chan, Senior Research Analyst with the China Programme.

In Beijing, the China Programme co-organised two workshops with China Foreign Affairs University and Renmin University on "New Trends in Chinese Foreign Policy" and "Asia Pacific Security" respectively. Researchers from various think tanks in Beijing participated in the workshops. The RSIS delegation also called on the China Institute of

Contemporary International Relations, National Strategic Institute at Tsinghua University, and the National Defense University. The delegation also had two separate dinner meetings with prominent Chinese analysts such as Major General Zhu Chenghu, Professor Li Fan and Singapore's Ambassador to China, Mr Stanley Loh Ka Leung.

The discussions during the trip focused on Asia Pacific security issues, China's relations with the U.S., Southeast Asia, and

Japan; the South China Sea disputes, regional economic issues and counter-terrorism. Through the workshops and roundtable discussions, the RSIS delegates were able to better understand the new leadership's foreign policy, regional security issues, its perspective of the U.S. as well as how various international and regional issues are debated in China. The visit strengthened RSIS' working relationships with the various Chinese think tanks and research institutes and allowed the delegates to enhance their networking with Chinese researchers.



Group photo of RSIS and the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations



Group photo of RSIS with the roundtable participants of the Tsinghua National Strategic Institute



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (left) presenting a memento to Senior Colonel Qi, PLA National Defence University



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (right) presenting a memento to Professor Shi Yinhong, Director of Center of American Studies at Renmin University



Participants of the conference

How Radicalisation Affects East Asia

Contributed by Joseph Franco

Seven RSIS delegates participated in a conference in Manila on “Radicalisation in East Asia: Addressing the Challenges of Expanding ISIS Influence” on 15 May 2015. Led by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS,

the delegation of faculty and researchers spoke at the event that was spearheaded by the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy (PCID), with the University of the Philippines (UP) Law Center, the UP Center for Integrative and Development

Studies (UP-CIDS), and the Mindanao State University (MSU) as the co-partners.

The growing threat of ISIS has been seen as a product of ideology, conflict and deprivation. Its more radical position compared to other groups needs to be seen as an international concern. Some Southeast Asians are reportedly joining ISIS and

they would be dangerous on their return to the region. Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines are the most vulnerable states in this regard. On the other hand, the instability in Mindanao has implications for the region as well. The spillover effects of the conflict and the attractiveness of a conflict area for terrorists, is a concern for the international community, particularly ASEAN.

The conference was convened with a focus to promote a high-level, strategic dialogue among Filipino politicians, policymakers and academics regarding the radicalisation’s impact on the Mindanao peace process. The risk to even robust states such as Singapore was also raised, as exemplified by the foiled Jemaah Islamiyah bomb plot. Panel moderators and reactors shared the same perspective in terms of the growing inter-connectedness of security issues among ASEAN states.

12th RSIS Alumni Dinner

Contributed by Candice Leow



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong on stage addressing the alumni before the start of the dinner

Over 140 RSIS faculty, staff and alumni attended the 12th RSIS Alumni Dinner on 24 July 2015. The evening of reunion saw 17 cohorts of alumni from more than 50 countries congregating at Sheraton Towers Singapore.

Addressing the alumni, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman

of RSIS, emphasised the important role played by the alumni in representing the global brand of RSIS. Professor Joseph Liow, Dean of RSIS, expressed the School’s commitment to build a strong alumni network and to support alumni engagement.

Mr Phillip Ee, President of RSIS Alumni Association,

spoke about the success of the association in its first year, reaching out to overseas alumni and market leaders to develop strategic synergies between the association, the school and industry. Ms Christine Chua, Deputy Director of NTU Alumni Affairs Office, attended the dinner.

The Graduate Programmes Office provided an update on the successful launch of the RSIS Career Talk series in the past academic year, through which private and public sector organisations as well as alumni visited RSIS to share insights and career prospects of various industries with the students. The Graduate Programmes Office also shared on the upcoming RSIS Alumni Mentorship Programme which aims to connect students with

alumni who are keen to make a positive impact by providing insights on specific work sectors, charting career paths and professional practices.

Prof Liow took the opportunity to present the inaugural RSIS Teaching Award to Professor Pascal Vennesson and Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna. The annual award recognises teaching excellence and outstanding contributions to the enhancement of teaching and learning at RSIS.

RSIS alumni, staff and faculty bonded over the international buffet spread, fostering camaraderie among old and new entrants in various fields such as politics, government and the civil service, uniformed services, academia, media, business, law and financial services.

CENS Annual Cybersecurity Workshop

Contributed by
Caitríona Heint



Dr Shashi Jayakumar, Head of CENS

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) held its annual cybersecurity workshop on “Emerging Issues, Trends, Technologies & Threats in 2015 and Beyond” on 20-21 July 2015 at the Marina Mandarin Singapore.

The workshop focused on the key global debates, emerging trends, and technologies in cybersecurity in 2015, and in the coming two to three years. It also considered the possible implications that these developments might have for countries like Singapore and the wider

Southeast Asia/Asia Pacific region, particularly in terms of the regulatory, operational and governance domains. Various case examples, such as the attacks on Sony Pictures Entertainment in 2014, were discussed.

Experts analysed several current issues such as the positions of countries like the United States, China and India on international cybersecurity, managing data privacy matters between industry and government agencies, and the implications of the Right to be Forgotten. They also discussed intelligence gathering and analysis in cyberspace, the economic security implications of cybersecurity, public-private partnerships, balancing national security needs with

data privacy and freedom of expression concerns. They examined international law enforcement efforts, future crime and emerging technologies, securing Smart Cities, redlines in cyberspace, national cyber defence strategies and the role of the military in smaller states, Internet governance, and confidence building measures at regional level.

The workshop brought together key experts from government, international organisations, civil society, academia, and the private sector to explore the pressing global debates and emerging trends in cybersecurity. Participants were offered different perspectives so as to form their own opinions, as well as multiple opportunities to network.

Hudud for All in Malaysia

Contributed by
David Han

The President of the Islamic Party of Malaysia (PAS), Dato’ Abdul Hadi Awang gave an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on 28 April 2015 at RSIS on “Hudud for All: Implementing Islamic Criminal Law in Malaysia”. He spoke on the nature of Hudud laws and PAS’ motivation in seeking to implement these laws in Malaysia.

He said that since Islamic law, Shariah, covers all aspects of society, politics and economics, it is the religious basis for implementing Hudud law in Malaysia. Hudud law deals with six types of crimes: (i) apostasy; (ii) alcohol consumption; (iii) adultery; (iv) qazaz, which is to accuse

someone of adultery without credible basis; (v) stealing; and (vi) robbery. Although non-Muslims have the option to be punished under the Hudud law or the civil law, Hudud law is primarily meant for Muslims.

While Hudud law is harsh, it is difficult to execute the stipulated punishments due to stringent requirements. The law is implemented not only to punish crimes, but also to educate and work as a deterrent.

Dato’ Hadi Awang also elaborated on PAS’ motivation to implement Hudud. First, the practice of Hudud in the old Malay



Dato’ Abdul Hadi Awang

kingdoms provides historical justification to implement Hudud in present-day Malaysia. Second, PAS seeks to steer Malaysian society to understand Islamic law given that Malaysian society has been steeped in the Western legal system for a long time.

During the question and answer session, Dato’ Hadi Awang argued that corruption is not theft as the

former is done voluntarily between involved parties. Hence corruption is not dealt with under Hudud law. He commented that the government should provide some form of monetary assistance for criminals who are unable to earn a living due to Hudud punishment. Furthermore, he mentioned that Hudud law will be implemented with impartiality.

4th International Maritime Security Conference

Contributed by
Henrick Z. Tsjeeng

The 4th International Maritime Security Conference (IMSC), co-hosted by the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and RSIS, and organised by Experia Events, was held on 20 May 2015 at the Changi Exhibition Centre, with its central theme as “Safe and Secure Seas – Strengthening Maritime Cooperation”. The event was attended by 24 navy chiefs and vice chiefs, and RADM Lai Chung Han, Singapore’s Chief of Navy, spoke on one of the panels.

In his opening address, Guest-of-Honour Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Singapore’s Minister of State for National Development

and Defence, highlighted the necessity of building trust and practical cooperation to address maritime challenges.

The IMSC explored maritime security concerns, and the increasingly complex regional and global maritime security challenges. Given the transnational character of these issues, no single country can tackle them on its own.

The speakers provided suggestions and recommendations to combat these maritime security threats. The traditional role of navies was discussed, though the speakers

emphasised that navies must also adapt and take on new responsibilities.

Major frameworks that were seen to be of great value were dialogues and forums providing avenues for discussing maritime security issues. Equally important was the role of practical cooperation, including multilateral exercises, coordinating centres, communication links and norms of behaviour. One example is the Joint Standard Operating Procedures for Submarine Rescue Mutual Support and Cooperation, under the Memorandum of Agreement signed by Singapore and the U.S. on 19 May 2015.

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, observed



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong delivering the closing remarks
Photo credit: Experia Events

that regional navies will need to continue working toward enhancing the level of Information exchange, Mutual trust, Safety in the maritime realm and Cooperation, to achieve the common goal of “Safe and Secure Seas.”

Countering Terrorism and Extremism: Two books by RSIS

Contributed by
Sara Mahmood

At the closing ceremony of the East Asia Summit (EAS) Symposium on 17 April 2015, Dr Mohamed Bin Ali and Mr Salim Mohamed Nasir (both from RSIS’ Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies Programme), presented Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong with two books on terrorist rehabilitation and community resilience.

The Symposium was organised by RSIS’ International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). The two volumes, focused on countering the growing threat of terrorism and extremism, were presented to Prime Minister Lee at the Khadijah Mosque in Singapore.

Published by Imperial College Press (ICP), London, the books were authored by RSIS research staff. The first book, *Terrorist Rehabilitation: A New Frontier in Counter-Terrorism* by Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Head of ICPVTR, and Dr Mohamed Bin Ali, discusses the approaches and strategies of terrorist rehabilitation in countering the threat of terrorism. Comprising nine chapters, the book provides case study assessments of terrorist rehabilitation practices set against the backdrop of their unique operational and geopolitical milieu in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

The second book, *Resilience and Resolve: Communities against Terrorism* by Dr Jolene Jerard of ICPVTR and

Mr Salim Mohamed Nasir discusses the importance of communities in mitigating the threat of terrorism. Drawing upon key lessons and experiences from countries that are adopting community-based approaches, the chapters provide invaluable insights on the psychological aspects of radicalisation, the centrality of counter-ideology and case studies of approaches to promoting

moderation, religious harmony and community engagement in building resilience and resolve against terrorism.

The books are also aimed at building East Asia’s strategic capability to fight the current and emerging threat of terrorism and extremism. They focus on an encompassing approach involving the international community, governments, business community and civil societies to confront this global challenge.



Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (left) receiving the two volumes from Dr Mohamed Bin Ali (centre) and Mr Salim Mohamed Nasir at the Khadijah Mosque



APPSMO 2015

Beyond Stovepipes: Adopting the Whole of Government Approach to Security Challenges

Contributed by
Chang Jun Yan

The 17th Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2015) was held at the Singapore Resort & Spa Sentosa on 5-10 August 2015. Organised by the Military Studies Programme, within the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), RSIS, the programme was attended by more than 50 military officers from 25 countries around the Asia Pacific and Europe.

The theme of APPSMO 2015, “Beyond Stovepipes: Adopting the Whole of Government Approach to Security Challenges” addressed questions and issues on the core roles of armed forces today and the

near future, in the context of a security environment that is rapidly evolving. Mr Lui Tuck Yew, Minister for Transport and Second Minister for Defence, officiated at the opening of the event. Major-General Perry Lim, Chief of Army for the Singapore Armed Forces, was Guest-of-Honour at the dinner for participants and speakers at the Shangri-La’s Rasa Sentosa Resort.

As in previous years, APPSMO provided a valuable forum for defence diplomacy and discussions, where military professionals, policymakers, practitioners, academics and other experts exchanged views on a broad range of subjects related to

regional and international security.

This year’s edition assembled an impressive range of speakers. Distinguished overseas speakers included Vice Admiral (Ret.) Koda Yoji; Major General (Ret.) Zhu Chenghu; Mr Shazryll Zahiran, Deputy Director General, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, Malaysia; and Mr Jeremy England, International Committee of the Red Cross. Professor Jusuf Wanandi, Senior Fellow and co-founder of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, was also invited to chair a session.

Local and RSIS speakers included Ambassador Kirk

Wager, U.S. Ambassador to Singapore; Rear-Admiral (Ret.) Bernard Miranda, former Commander of the multinational Combined Task Force 151 in the Gulf of Aden; Brigadier-General Benedict Lim, Group Chief, MINDEF Communications; Deputy Secretary Raja Kumar, Ministry of Home Affairs; Professor Pascal Vennesson, IDSS; Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, Head of Policy Studies at RSIS; and Associate Professor Ahmed Salah Hashim, IDSS.

The Distinguished Dinner Talk entitled “China and the World” was delivered by Professor Wang Gungwu, Chairman of East Asia Institute. APPSMO 2015 featured four Distinguished Lunch Talks, a first for APPSMO: (i) Mr Peter Ho, Senior Advisor, Centre for Strategic Futures, spoke on “Future Ready Government”; (ii) Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan, Ambassador-at-Large and Policy Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, shared on “Adapting the Nation-building Narrative for a New Generation”; (iii) Professor Kishore Mahbubani, Dean and Professor in the Practice of



Public Policy, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, talked about “Good Governance in the 21st Century”; (iv) and Admiral (Ret.) Arun Prakash, former Chief of Naval Staff, Indian Navy, dealt with “Planning for Future Security Challenges”.

Centre and the new Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre, as well as the Urban Redevelopment Authority. They joined Singaporeans in celebrating the nation’s Golden Jubilee at the SAF’s Temasek Club, where they watched the live telecast of the National Day Parade.



APPSMO participants attended seminars dealing with “Instruments of National Power,” “Hybrid Threats,” “Conflict Resolution and Counter-Terrorism,” “Interagency Cooperation,” “National Security,” and “Perspectives on Security in the Asia Pacific.”

The participants also visited the Republic of Singapore Navy’s Information Fusion



RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop 2015

Contributed by
Don Rodney Ong Junio



(L-R) Keith Rockwell, Chief Spokesman, WTO; Baey Yam Keng, Chairman, Singapore Government Parliamentary Committee on Culture, Community and Youth; Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS; and Benedict Chong, CEO, Temasek Foundation



Ambassador Roberto Azevêdo

RSIS organised in coordination with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Temasek Foundation, the sixth edition of the RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop on 25-27 May 2015 at Marina Mandarin Singapore. The workshop was part of the newly-established Temasek Foundation Series on Trade & Negotiations under the Centre for Multilateralism Studies.

The workshop brought together 15 speakers and more than 60 parliamentarians from 18 countries in the Asia Pacific region to discuss new trends and topics confronting the multilateral trading regime. Lectures were also organised on the important roles that lawmakers play in ensuring that domestic economies fully capture the benefits of participating in the WTO. WTO Director-General

Roberto Azevêdo delivered the keynote address where he examined the challenges for the future of the WTO.

According to Director-General Azevêdo, the passage of the Bali Agreement including the Trade Facilitation Agreement in 2013 represents an important milestone in WTO's 20-year history. With the agreement, he notes that costs of trading could be reduced by 10 per cent for developed countries, and up to 15 per cent for developing countries. Total benefits have been estimated at up to US\$1 trillion a year while also creating about 21 million new jobs worldwide. One feature of the trade facilitation agreement is the mandatory requirement to provide technical assistance for member-economies that lack the capacity to implement the agreement. Such provision would allow developing countries to fully capture the benefits of the trade facilitation agreement.

However, for the agreement to come into effect, two-thirds of WTO members should ratify it.

This is where parliamentarians play an important role.

The main challenge now is for countries to ratify the agreement and deposit their instrument of acceptance with the WTO. In many countries, ratifying international agreements would involve a legislative action. In this regard, parliamentarians are at the forefront in ensuring that domestic processes are completed in a timely and orderly manner.

The parliamentarians were also given ample opportunities to network and share best practices and experiences. The parliamentarians visited the Port of Singapore on a study tour to get a glimpse of Singapore's measures and infrastructures in the area of trade facilitation and customs procedure.

Amb Roberto Azevêdo also gave an RSIS-MTI Trade Academy Distinguished Public Lecture on "WTO's 20th Anniversary: Building a Stronger Global Trading System" on the first day of the workshop.

Southeast Asia Regional Prisons Capacity-Building

Contributed by
Sara Mahmood



Participants of the Southeast Asia Regional Prisons CVE Project

THE International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) in collaboration with the United States Department of Justice (U.S. DoJ), conducted the Southeast Asia Regional Prisons CVE (Countering Violent Extremism) Project from 18-22 May 2015. Held at RSIS, this course was the third U.S. DoJ supported training programme to counter violent extremism.

ICPVTR specialists and visiting experts conducted training of prison officers from Indonesia and the Philippines on the effective management of terrorist and extremist inmates. ICPVTR staff shared best practices in terrorist rehabilitation and reintegration.

Delivering the welcome address, Dr Jolene Jerard, Manager (Capacity Building) at ICPVTR, highlighted the

dangers of radicalisation and shared appropriate measures to control radicalisation within prisons. In addition to discussing the various rehabilitation modes – religious, educational, vocational, social and family, recreational, creative arts and psychological – Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Head of ICPVTR, said that rehabilitation is an enterprise between the government, the civilian society and the private

sector. Mr Mike Pannek, Senior Corrections Advisor at International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Programme, U.S. DoJ, discussed the scope of prison management through exploring case studies of best practices, building effective programmes, creation of partnerships and the necessity for specialised training staff. Other presenters included both functional and regional analysts on threat and response.

The five-day programme included visits to the Prison Complex at Changi, the Counter-Terrorism (CT) Suite at Home Team Academy (HTA), and the CT Training Stations at the HTA Training Village. The group also visited the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) of Singapore, which showcased the evolving terrorist threat and the role of the community in countering the threat; and the Harmony Centre that exhibited Singapore's inter-religious harmony – an integral element in the social fabric of Singapore.

Banality of Evil and Motivations for Violence

Contributed by
Irm Haleem

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research organised a workshop on “Banality and Motivations” on 29 May 2015. The workshop focused on Hannah Arendt's notion of the “banality of evil”, which she introduces in her analysis of Stalin and Hitler's totalitarian regimes in her seminal work *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), and which she develops further in her controversial book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963).

The workshop was centred on how this notion influences the motivations of individuals for action or inaction. Fundamentally, Arendt's notion of the banality of evil describes a dynamic that is created by forging, through tyranny and terror, a particular social and political structure where multiple and varied avenues of association are destroyed in the interests of the party in power. In such a structure, individuals feel isolated and seek the only

association available to them: the party of the regime in power.

Such a structure dilutes the distinction between the individual and the collective, making individuals superfluous in the interest of the collective, thereby creating a mass society that is easy to manipulate and control. Given the perils of going against a tyrannical regime, the individuals in such a society choose to ‘be with’ the regime, a choice that necessarily entails accepting and internalising all means to the ends of the survival of

the regime, even the means of gross inhumanity. And it is within such a dynamic that the ‘banality of evil’ arises, like a phoenix from its own ashes. It is also at this point that atrocities are carried out by the masses, not only unquestioningly, but also as a matter of routine, without a blink, shedding light on the corrosive effect of terror-induced banality on the motivations of individuals.

Within this analytical framework, the workshop explored the relevance of Arendt's notion of the banality of evil for understanding the motivations of some for the actions of violence in contemporary times.

Selangor State Assembly Delegation at RSIS Seminar

Contributed by
Saleena Begum Saleem



(L-R) Y.B. Ng Tien Chee, State Assemblyman for Balakong; Y.B. Lai Nyuk Lan, State Assemblywoman for Sungai Pelek; Y.B. Tuan Idris Bin Ahmad, State Assemblyman for Ijok; Ambassador Barry Desker, Distinguished Fellow of RSIS; Dr Raman Letchumanan, Senior Fellow of RSIS; Y.B. Hannah Yeoh, Speaker of Selangor State Assembly; Y.B. Haniza Binti Mohamed Talha, State Assemblywoman for Taman Medan; Y.B. Kamarol Zaki Bin Haji Abdul Malik, State Assemblyman for Sungai Air Tawar; Y.B. Tuan Haji Saari Bin Sungib, State Assemblyman for Hulu Klang

Representatives of the Selangor State Assembly spoke at an RSIS Panel Seminar on “The Future of Selangor’s Economy and Politics” on 8 June 2015. The panellists included four representatives from the Pakatan Rakyat (PR) coalition, which holds a two-thirds majority in the Selangor State Assembly, as well as a representative from UMNO.

Selangor State Legislative Assembly (SSLA) Speaker, Madam Hannah Yeoh, spoke on two key reforms undertaken by the SSLA. The first: the state’s executive body is required to submit an official report to the SSLA after readings of legislative reports. This practice is not done in the other Malaysian states. The second is that the Select Committee on

Competency, Accountability and Transparency (SELCAT) must now be chaired by an opposition leader. This was implemented to strengthen the opposition’s ability to improve checks and balances in government administration.

Madam Yeoh also spoke on the 2014 Selangor Chief Minister crisis. Tan Sri Abdul Khalid Ibrahim, who was then

the Chief Minister, had come under scrutiny by PR over a water-restructuring deal with the federal government, raising questions on his integrity. Mr Ibrahim’s refusal to resign resulted in political manoeuvrings, which included the dismissal of employees from a Selangor state subsidiary company. Madam Yeoh noted that the SELCAT had summoned the Chief Minister as a witness, which was a first in Malaysia. The public hearing allowed the issue to be dealt with within the Assembly.

Panellists discussed the water agreement crisis in Selangor. Dr Idris bin Ahmad, the Chairman of the Select Committee on Local Council, remarked that it was problematic because the Selangor government was not in full control of water management; instead overall control was with the federal government. On the issue of PAS cutting ties with DAP and the weakening effect on PR, Haji Saari Sungib, state assemblyman from PAS, agreed that party lines were important, but because a strong opposition was necessary to unseat Barisan Nasional, gaining the support of Malay voters was fundamental to parties such as PAS and UMNO.

RSIS Welcomes 160 Students in Orientation 2015

Contributed by
Candice Leow



Associate Professor Ang Cheng Guan, Head of Graduate Studies, conducting the briefing

RSIS welcomed its 18th cohort of Master’s and Doctoral Students during Orientation 2015 held at the Lee Kong Chian Lecture Theatre on 13 and 14 July 2015.

Professor Joseph Liow, Dean of RSIS, and Associate Professor Ang Cheng Guan, Head of Graduate Studies,

addressed the more than 160 students who hailed from 24 countries. They were followed by the coordinators of the various Master’s programmes who provided information and tips useful for the studies at RSIS.

Class photographs were taken to commemorate the

occasion before the students proceeded to mingle with faculty and their peers during the welcome lunch.

A series of briefings followed, including briefings on the Research Methods Workshop by Assistant Professor Lee Su-Hyun; advice given by Ms Geanina Bujoreanu, Manager of Graduate Programmes Office; and on resources and facilities by Ms Chong Yee Ming, RSIS Librarian. Lastly, Ms Jane Lim, Student Counsellor at the NTU Student Counselling Centre, shared her knowledge on “Adjusting to Postgraduate Study”.

On the second day, students were given useful information

on remote access to electronic resources, such as books and journals from subscriptions of NTU, SAFTI and RSIS. After lunch, they visited the NTU School of Humanities & Social Sciences (HSS) Library and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) Library.

The students also attended a seminar by the Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS) on “Greek Crisis: Implications for Europe and Asia” on 13 July, chaired by Ambassador Barry Desker, Distinguished Fellow of RSIS, and Bakrie Professor in Southeast Asia Policy.

Launch of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme

Contributed by
Vincent Mack



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (right) launched the HADR Programme together with Dr Noeleen Heyzer

The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Programme was launched by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, on 21 July 2015 at Copthorne King's Hotel. The event was attended by guests from various humanitarian sectors—civilian government agencies, militaries, NGOs, regional organisations,

United Nations, the Red Cross movement, faith-based organisations and civil society groups.

Delivering the welcome address, Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of NTS, highlighted the timeliness and relevance of the programme launch given that half of the

world's natural disasters in 2014 and approximately 25 per cent of the world's conflicts had occurred in the Asia Pacific region. RSIS will fill current gaps in the HADR infrastructure through innovative research approaches that will develop global leaders for the future HADR landscape; examine community fragilities and resilience towards conflict and disasters; investigate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid; and explore the impact of technology on emergency action.

Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Social Scientist and former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, delivered the keynote address, emphasising the critical need to improve the capacity of humanitarian actors and facilitate the emergence of a new partnership model by bringing

together multiple stakeholders to forge solutions to present and future humanitarian crises.

Amb Ong reiterated the importance of the non-traditional security field and the programme's ability to tap RSIS' expertise to leverage on the recent establishment of the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) and drive regional cooperation in HADR efforts.

The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme, run by both the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies and the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies and coordinated by Dr Alistair D. B. Cook will use a multi-dimensional and holistic approach in assessing humanitarian aid and emergency preparedness capacities in the region. The programme will create new knowledge through interdisciplinary and policy-relevant HADR research so as to develop the next generation of global leaders in HADR.

RSIS SAF Day 2015

Contributed by
Graham Gerard Ong-Webb



Mr Eddie Lim, Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the Military Studies Programme, IDSS

The Military Studies Programme (MSP) of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) organised a roundtable entitled "Continuing the SAF Success Story: Defence Thinking, New Threats, Regional Efforts, and Active Citizenry" at RSIS on 30 June 2015, in commemoration of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Day on 1 July.

Chaired by Mr Eddie Lim, Senior Fellow and

Coordinator of MSP, the Roundtable was organised in the greater spirit of the 50th anniversary of Singapore's independence (SG50), and the establishment of the SAF in 1965, which is celebrated this year as SAF50.

The event saw a panel comprising the following RSIS faculty and researchers: Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, Head of Policy Studies in the Office of the Executive Deputy

Chairman; Ms Angela Poh, PhD Candidate; Assistant Professor Ong Weichong, MSP; and Dr Graham Gerard Ong-Webb, Research Fellow, MSP.

Assoc Prof Ramakrishna started off with an analysis on Singapore's approach to national security. He noted that Singapore's whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to national defence continues to endure and is well poised to deal with new threats.

Ms Poh followed with a reflection of Singapore's concept of defence over the past 50 years. Decision-makers may adopt a more inclusive approach to security matters that would allow the public to be more informed, and more diverse views to be aired. She opined that this was the mark of a more mature society, and would in the long term allow Singapore to be more resilient.

Asst Prof Ong spoke on the importance of 'Operations Other Than War' (OOTW) to the SAF's mission in defending Singapore. These are missions undertaken during periods of peace with the expressed purpose to promote peace and to alleviate human suffering. He also explored how such missions contribute to Singapore's defence interests, including the acquisition of goodwill and mutual understanding.

Dr Ong-Webb provided an overview of the National Service (NS) system in Singapore, in the context of his own journey as a citizen soldier or 'NSman'. The SAF's ability to meet current and future security challenges remains constant and this largely has to do with the fact that the NS system continues to be a critical component of military defence as one of five equally important pillars of Singapore's Total Defence strategy.

STAFF PUBLICATIONS

**Security, Strategy and Military Change in the 21st Century**

Edited by Jo Inge Bekkevold, Ian Bowers and Michael Raska. Routledge: 2015. ISBN: 978-1-13-883265-7

This edited volume explores and analyses strategic thinking, military reform and adaptation in an era of Asian growth, European austerity and US rebalancing.

A significant shift in policy, strategy and military affairs is underway in both Asia and Europe, with the former gaining increasing prominence in the domain of global security. At the same time, the world's powers are now faced with an array of diverse challenges. The resurgence of great power politics in both Europe and Asia, along with the long term threats of terrorism, piracy and sustained geopolitical instability has placed great strain on militaries and security institutions operating with constrained budgets and wary public support.

The volume covers a wide range of case studies, including the transformation of China's military in the 21st century, the internal and external challenges facing India, Russia's military modernization program and the USA's reassessment of its strategic interests. In doing so, the book provides the reader with the opportunity to conceptualize how strategic thinking, military reform, operational adaptation and technological integration have interacted with the challenges outlined above. With contributions by leading scholars and practitioners from Europe and Asia, this book provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of strategic and operational thinking and adjustment across the world.

This book will be of much interest to students of military and strategic studies, security studies, defence studies, Asian politics, Russian politics, US foreign policy and IR in general.

Islamist Terrorism and Militancy in Indonesia

Kumar Ramakrishna. Springer: 2015. ISBN: 978-981-287-194-7

Drawing upon insights from the natural and social sciences, this book puts forth a provocative new argument that the violent Islamist threat in Indonesia today derives its stubborn resilience from being in essence a complex, adaptive and self-organizing system – or what some specialists might even call a super-organism. The book challenges the popular assumption that ideology is the root cause that explains why Indonesian Islamists radicalize into violent extremism. In addition it addresses why despite years of intense security force pressure, seemingly disparate militant cells keep 'popping up' like the proverbial hydra – and in the apparent absence of a centralized coordinating body, nevertheless appear to display an organic interconnectivity with one another. Going beyond standard ideological mantras the book argues that fresh inter-disciplinary thinking is needed to cope with the constantly mutating violent Islamist challenge in Indonesia, and puts forth a comprehensive strategy for doing so. It will be of interest to academics and students of terrorism, religion and violence in the Southeast Asian region.

ASEAN's External Agreements: Law, Practice and the Quest for Collective Action

Marise Cremona, David Kleimann, Joris Larik, Rena Lee and Pascal Vennesson. Cambridge University Press: 2015. ISBN: 9781107498150

ASEAN is coming of age as an international actor and international treaty-maker. To date, more than two hundred external agreements and other instruments have been concluded in the name of ASEAN. This book provides the first systematic account of the legal framework governing ASEAN's burgeoning external relations practice. It focuses in depth on ASEAN's wide-ranging mandate to promote its values and principles in the wider region and beyond, as well as the highly intergovernmental, and at times haphazard, handling of the bloc's relations with the outside world. Furthermore, it reveals that there are two basic meanings of ASEAN in its international dealings, which have important implications under international law: ASEAN as an international organisation with its own legal personality and ASEAN as the collectivity of its member states. This timely and thoughtful book is a valuable resource for practitioners and scholars of international law, ASEAN law, international relations, regional integration and governance.

Perspectives on the Security of Singapore: The First 50 Years

Edited by Barry Desker and Ang Cheng Guan. World Scientific: 2015. ISBN: 978-981-4689-33-5

Perspectives on the Security of Singapore: The First 50 Years explores the security of Singapore in the last 50 years and its possible trajectories into the future. This volume brings together the diverse perspectives of a team of academics with different expertise, ranging from history to political science to security studies with a common interest in Singapore. The book is further boosted by the recollections of key civil servants involved with foreign affairs and defence, such as S R Nathan, Peter Ho, Bilahari Kausikan and Philip Yeo.

Multilateral Asian Security Architecture

See Seng Tan. Routledge: 2015. ISBN: 978-1-13-890240-4

This book provides a comparative assessment of the material and ideational contributions of five countries to the regional architecture of post-Cold War Asia.

In contrast to the usual emphasis placed on the role and centrality of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Asia's multilateral architecture and its component institutions, this book argues that the four non-ASEAN countries of interest here – Australia, Japan, China and the United States – and Indonesia have played and continue to play an influential part in determining the shape and substance of Asian multilateralism from its pre-inception to the present. The work does not contend that existing scholarship overstates ASEAN's significance to the successes and failures of Asia's multilateral enterprise. Rather, it claims that the impact of non-ASEAN stakeholders in innovating multilateral architecture in Asia has been understated. Whether ASEAN has fared well or poorly as a custodian of Asia's regional architecture, the fact remains that the countries considered here, notwithstanding their present discontent over the state of that architecture, are key to understanding the evolution of Asian multilateralism.

This book will be of much interest to students of Asian politics, international organisations, security studies and IR more generally.

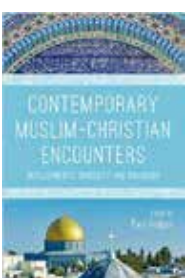
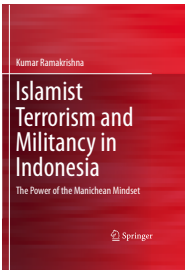
Contemporary Muslim-Christian Encounters: Developments, Diversity and Dialogues

Paul Hedges. Bloomsbury Academic: 30 July 2015. ISBN: 978-1-4725-8853-1

Contemporary Muslim-Christian Encounters: Developments, Diversity and Dialogues addresses the key issues in the present day global encounter between Christians and Muslims. Divided into two parts, the first examines theoretical issues and concerns which affect dialogue between the two traditions. The second part highlights case studies from around the world. Chapters come from established scholars including Reuven Firestone, Douglas Pratt and Clinton Bennett, emerging scholars, as well as practitioner perspectives.

Highlighting the diversity within the field of "Christian-Muslim" encounter, case studies cover examples from the US and globally, and include dialogue in the US post 9/11, Nigerian Muslims and Christians, and Christian responses to Islamophobia in the UK.

Covering unique areas and those not explored in detail elsewhere, *Contemporary Muslim-Christian Encounters: Developments, Diversity and Dialogues* will be of interest to advanced students, researchers, and interfaith professionals.



THINK TANK

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UPCOMING EVENTS

19 AUGUST 2015

RSIS WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY
PANEL DISCUSSION ON HUMANITARIAN
ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF IN THE
ASIA PACIFIC

21 AUGUST 2015

RSIS DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURE BY
PROFESSOR SHUJIRO URATA ON "REGIONAL
ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN ASIA PACIFIC
AND JAPAN REVITALISATION STRATEGY"

26-28 AUGUST 2015

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK INSTITUTE-RSIS
CONFERENCE ON "ECONOMIC CORRIDOR
FOR COMPETITIVE AND INCLUSIVE ASIA"

22 SEPTEMBER 2015

THE S. T. LEE DISTINGUISHED
ANNUAL LECTURE BY
PROFESSOR TAKASHI SHIRAISHI

1-2 OCTOBER 2015

WORKSHOP BY CHINA PROGRAMME AND
MILITARY TRANSFORMATIONS PROGRAMME
ON "RESHAPING THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION
ARMY SINCE THE 18TH PARTY CONGRESS"

27 OCTOBER 2015

RSIS DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURE
BY DR OLLI HEINONEN