



# 17<sup>TH</sup> ASIA PACIFIC PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS

BEYOND STOVEPIPES:  
ADOPTING THE WHOLE OF  
GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO  
SECURITY CHALLENGES

Event Report  
5-10 August 2015

Institute of Defence and  
Strategic Studies

**Event Report**

# **17<sup>TH</sup> ASIA PACIFIC PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS (APPSMO)**

**BEYOND STOVEPIPES: ADOPTING THE WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO  
SECURITY CHALLENGES**

**ORGANISED BY:**  
INSTITUTE OF DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC STUDIES (IDSS),  
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This report summarises the proceedings of the conference as interpreted by assigned rapporteurs and editor of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies. Participants neither reviewed nor approved this report.

The conference adheres to a variation of the Chatham House Rule. Accordingly, beyond the points expressed in the prepared papers, no attributions have been included in this conference report.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 17<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO) organised by the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), was held at The Singapore Resort and Spa Sentosa from 5 to 10 August 2015. Since its inception in 1999, APPSMO has provided a unique and important forum for military officers and defence analysts to network and exchange views on a broad range of subjects related to regional and international security. APPSMO 2015 continued to facilitate defence diplomacy with the attendance of 57 military officers and defence planners from 25 countries representing Asia, Oceania, North America and Europe.

During the week-long programme, the participants attended a series of seminars and discussions that featured experts from both the academic and policy communities. The theme for APPSMO 2015 was “Beyond Stovepipes: Adopting the Whole-of-Government Approach

to Security Challenges”. Some of the key topics discussed included the instruments of national power, hybrid threats, conflict resolution and counter-terrorism, inter-agency cooperation, national security, and perspectives on security in the Asia Pacific.

The participants visited the Information Fusion Centre (IFC) and the Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) at the Changi Naval Base, as well as the Urban Redevelopment Authority. They were also brought on a military history tour of Singapore. The participants and speakers attended the National Day Parade on 9 August 2015. APPSMO 2015 has played an important role as an additional conduit of defence diplomacy by facilitating interaction among senior military officers in and beyond the Asia Pacific. It has provided an opportunity for participants to foster a better understanding of each other, as well as their respective countries.

## WELCOME REMARKS



### Ambassador Ong Keng Yong Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong began by welcoming participants and speakers to the 17<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2015). He noted that from a very modest start in 1999, APPSMO has grown into a global programme involving military and civilian participants representing more than 20 countries. Amb Ong also highlighted that RSIS had begun to more actively engage the growing APPSMO alumni network since 2014. He pointed out that one of this year's speakers MG Zhu Cheng Hu was himself an APPSMO alumnus. Amb Ong hoped more would follow suit in future.

In restating this year's theme, "Beyond Stovepipes: Adopting the Whole-of-Government Approach to Security Challenges", Amb Ong observed that many of the questions and issues armed forces today and in the near future have to grapple with fall precisely within the realm of inter-agency cooperation. He noted that the security environment increasingly demands a whole-of-government approach rather than a military-centric one. As such, Amb Ong hoped this year's edition of APPSMO would stimulate discussion about key questions and issues of how governments and their agencies can better respond to the myriad of security challenges that cross institutional boundaries. He highlighted that this year's panellists — comprising scholars, practitioners and policymakers —

had vast experience in addressing topics such as: (i) The Instruments of National Power; (ii) Conflict Resolution and Counter-terrorism; (iii) Hybrid Threats; (iv) Inter-agency Cooperation; (v) Good Governance; (vi) Future Ready Government, among other pertinent issues. Amb Ong also urged participants to make use of the numerous opportunities in the coming week to share opinions, debate ideas and challenge existing assumptions.

Amb Ong then provided an overview of the security challenges of the future. He pondered if the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) would morph into something radically different from its present character, and how hierarchical institutions could better respond to amorphous threats with little formal structures. Crucially, Amb Ong asked how militaries could better respond to a wider range of threats and challenges with fewer resources at their disposal in this age of austerity. Speaking in line with the programme's theme, he wondered if the answers lay in 'flattening' institutional structures. Amb Ong admitted these were difficult questions with no clear-cut answers, but hoped the week's discussions would inspire participants to reflect and develop responses to these pressing issues of the day.

Amb Ong concluded his welcome remarks by thanking the Ministry of Defence for its continued support, and wished all participants a stimulating conference ahead.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS



**Mr Lui Tuck Yew**  
**Minister for Transport and**  
**Second Minister for Defence**  
**Singapore**

**Mr Lui Tuck Yew** began his address with an overview of the increasingly complex security environment. He noted that the role of militaries and military officers was previously more straightforward, dealing primarily with the defence of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Missions and tasks handed down the chain-of-command were usually defined clearly. Adversaries and threats were conventional, relatively predictable and less sophisticated.

Mr Lui however pointed out that the security environment has now transformed into a complex mosaic of unconventional and transnational threats, ranging from cyber-attacks to piracy to terrorism. Additionally, he emphasised that the global exponential increase in online transactions has created new threats. Mr Lui cautioned that cybercrime and the exploitation of new media have created new security challenges on a much larger scale. He also highlighted how the Internet has also facilitated the global spread of radical ideologies, illustrating this point using ISIS' effective use of it to recruit foreign fighters from as far afield as Southeast Asia.

Mr Lui assessed that in this increasingly complex environment, militaries have no choice but to undertake a wider spectrum of operations. He used the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) as an example, outlining how the medical and peace support missions it has undertaken over the decades have grown in frequency and complexity.

The SAF, like many militaries on such overseas missions, now undertake operations that deviate from its core warfighting skillset.

But Mr Lui observed a consequence of this diversification is the need to build new capabilities to adapt to new roles. A key area of capability that has to be developed, he proffered, are mechanisms that facilitate a whole-of-government approach that allow the military to work effectively with other agencies. He explained this was because the multi-dimensional nature of contemporary security challenges can only be addressed by a diverse pool of organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, which individually often do not have the ability to address these threats. Mr Lui opined that a network of organisations is needed to fight a network of threats, and that smooth and effective inter-agency cooperation is of the utmost importance. Furthermore, he suggested that the military may not necessarily play the lead role within such a network of cooperation.

Mr Lui however noted that organisations do not necessarily share convergent goals with others and may therefore resist working together. As such, inter-agency cooperation is often much harder than it sounds. He identified three areas that organisations had to work on. First, organisations have to embrace the whole-of-government mind-set at all levels, and avoid sharing information only vertically within individual organisations, but also horizontally with partner organisations. Second, different organisational cultures and the varied operational systems they result in have to be bridged, especially if they are potentially contradictory or opposed to each other.

Mr Lui noted that this includes everything from doctrine to terminology being adopted. Finally, organisations have to get accustomed to a potentially slower pace of work as the whole-of-government approach can be time-consuming and even inefficient when multiple organisations cooperate. However, he pointed out that cooperation would produce better eventual outcomes, though consultation still had to be balanced with prompt action given the time sensitivity of security challenges.

Drawing on Singapore's experience, Mr Lui proposed four practical ways to facilitate inter-agency cooperation. First, he pointed to the establishment of inter-agency platforms and structures that enable the horizontal sharing of information across agencies. Doing so, he argued, would encourage a culture where opportunities to leverage on the competencies of each agency could be exploited, and any conflicts addressed. He highlighted the National Maritime Security System as an example of how the Republic of Singapore Navy, the Police Coast Guard, the Maritime Port Authority of Singapore, the Singapore Customs, and the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority of Singapore, shared information through that platform, to ensure synergistic policies and operations.

Second, Mr Lui also outlined how inter-agency cooperation is institutionalised beyond the operational level through the recent establishment of the new Strategic Policy Office in the Prime Minister's Office. The objective of this unit is to help build a shared understanding of the Government's priorities, and be responsible for strategic resource allocation.

Third, Mr Lui emphasised that clear roles, responsibilities and processes—in other words, a common operating procedure—have to be established to make full use of such coordinating platforms and structures. These protocols and interfacing groups to operationalise the

whole-of-government approach would serve as the bridge between different existing organisational processes and terminology, preventing issues from falling through gaps that would naturally occur as disparate organisations are networked together. Mr Lui mentioned that the establishment of Crisis Management Groups (CMG) for different areas by different ministries and agencies was the manifestation of such common operating procedures during the 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak. The CMGs oiled the whole-of-government approach during that crisis by ensuring there was clarity in the chain-of-command and division of labour.

Finally, Mr Lui noted that in order to achieve timely responses against swiftly evolving threats, organisations need to empower the lower levels of the whole-of-government team to solve problems. He stressed it is necessary to empower whole-of-government team members to make decisions and resolve issues at their level, especially those where the feel of the ground or direct operational contact is critical. For such empowerment to succeed, the commander's intent, not necessarily the exact actions taken to achieve it, is the most important part of the orders. Understanding the commander's intent enables an effective and sensible exercise of initiative by his subordinates. In the same vein, Mr Lui reminded the audience that for the whole-of-government approach to work, its representatives at all levels need to understand how their purpose and roles fit in with the broader objectives.

Mr Lui concluded his address with the hope that this year's APPSMO would help to enhance participants' understanding of how whole-of-government approaches could be applied to increase the effectiveness of their respective military organisations, and that the week's activities would be professionally fruitful and personally enriching.

## DISTINGUISHED LUNCH TALKS



**Mr Peter Ho**  
**Senior Advisor, Centre for Strategic Futures**  
**Singapore**

**Mr Peter Ho** began his speech by pointing out that a major challenge faced by any military organisation is that of strategic surprise. He shared that during his stint as a naval officer, he picked up critical life skills such as Morse code and the ability to use the sextant. He added that technological advances like satellite navigation and the Global Positioning System would soon make the aforementioned skills redundant. After his navy stint, Mr Ho got involved in defence planning. Then, he said he could not have foreseen seminal events such as the rise of China, the Revolution in Military Affairs, and the spread of transnational terrorism. Mr Ho queried if these were strategic surprises.

Mr Ho introduced the concept of a “black swan”, which is basically a rare, hard-to-predict event with game-changing repercussions. The 1997/1998 Asian Financial Crisis, the 2001 arrests of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) suspects in Singapore, the 2003 SARS crisis, the 2008/2009 Great Recession, and the 2014 decrease in the price of oil—were these game changers? The frequency of strategic shocks seems to be increasing and so is their amplitude, Mr HooHo maintained. With that, he put forth the notion that “Everything connects to everything else”, a notion previously asserted by historical figures like Vladimir Lenin and Lao Tzu. Indeed, Mr Ho contended that this is especially true as globalisation increases connectivity worldwide, putting forth the case of Mohd Bouazizi, the Tunisian man who would inadvertently set off the Arab Spring and related events such as the Syrian Civil War and the rise of ISIS. Such far-reaching events would not have occurred without connectivity, he maintained.

Mr Ho then discussed various cognitive biases—confirmation, knowledge, and information—among others. He introduced the concept of a black elephant, which is a cross between a black swan and the elephant in the room—a problem visible to everyone, but which no one wants to deal with. Was the rise of ISIS a black swan or a black elephant? He added that cognitive biases often lead to inertia and the tendency of people to underestimate things, and this was arguably what happened during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the Ebola and MERS outbreaks of recent times.

Mr Ho next quoted Mr S. Rajaratnam as having said that in a world of accelerating global changes, only a future-oriented society could cope with the problems of the 21st century. Therefore, the issue for governments is how to anticipate, prepare for, and cope with change. However, the conundrum for them is how to plan for programmes that will last for decades, Mr Ho argued. He cited the problem of planning for a big-ticket military platform that would be affected by changes in the strategic environment and technology as time progresses. Having said that, he introduced the concept of scenario planning that was introduced by Shell, which helped it avoid the oil shocks of the 1970s. But scenario planning, though useful, does not take into account non-linear events such as black swans. Therefore, in order to enhance scenario planning and reduce its limitations, there are other tools, one of which is the Risk Assessment Horizon Scanning System.

Simply put, horizon scanning involves detecting emerging issues/trends and assessing the opportunities and threats they pose. It is essentially about looking out for game changers, which include revolutions in the realms of shale gas and the digital economy. On shale gas revolution, Mr Ho argued that it was a black elephant as people were

cognisant of its potential but did not act on it. He also alluded to the revolutionary potential of 3-D printing and drones. Mr Ho next talked about water and demographic changes being emerging strategic issues.

Mr Ho also stressed the significance of the “wicked problem”—highly complex issues involving multiple stakeholders and with no immediate solutions. He cited terrorism and cyber threats as two major wicked problems faced by nations today. Indeed, a whole-of-government approach is needed to tackle such problems. In Singapore’s case, the National Security Coordinating Secretariat exemplifies such an approach as it coordinated the various agencies in fighting the JI militant threat. Mr Ho maintained that the main obstacle to the whole-of-government approach is the issue of turf, an issue that is arguably present in every single organisation. He also stressed that groupthink must be avoided to allow the approach to work.

Big decisions often have to be made with incomplete information and uncertain outcomes, Mr Ho said. In such situations, one has to be prepared to experiment and if failure does occur, alleviative measures must be taken. He then talked about being involved in the setting up of the Future Systems Directorate to experiment with operational concepts. The Directorate was tasked to step on the toes of various organisations within the

defence ministry so as to push the envelope. Mr Ho turned to the issue of leadership with an emphasis on transformational leadership, which is about the willingness to make fundamental changes, set aside tried-and-tested approaches and lead people out of their comfort zones. He added that any proposed plan must be properly executed.

Mr Ho said that the rise of Thatcherism and Reaganomics in the 1980s led to governments of the 1990s seeing the need for a more efficient public administration. However, he asked: “In the current strategic environment, is it just about efficiency, or is it about resilience?” With regard to the 2003 SARS outbreak in Singapore, Mr Ho said that one key factor that enabled the country to ride out the crisis was the decision by the government to declare it as a national rather than just a medical crisis as this meant the resources of the entire nation could be used to deal with the outbreak. Mr Ho added that the efforts by the SAF—an entire army division was roped in to assist with tasks such as contact tracing—certainly helped. The technological sector also played a crucial role, coming up with the infrared fever screening system which is now commonplace in hospitals.

Summing up his presentation, Mr Ho argued that in dealing with strategic shocks and other non-linear events, governments have to be willing to experiment and be prepared for unexpected outcomes.



**Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan**  
**Ambassador-at-large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**  
**Singapore**

Commenting that the original topic of “Adapting the Nation Building Narrative for a New Generation” might not be the most interesting for an international audience, **Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan** said he would instead discuss the influence of history on the contemporary geopolitics of East Asia. He said that none of the principals involved in the Second World War in Asia were guiltless, and that his presentation would focus on the United States, Japan and China.

First, on the U.S., Amb Kausikan opined that in the American consciousness, the Second World War in Asia was a romanticised version of history focusing on the ultimate triumph of liberty, justice and democracy. Yet many inconvenient facts were ignored. America truly believed in the myth of universality, which had been used to justify many American-led or supported interventions abroad. Amb Kausikan opined that the myth of universality was at the heart of the Western sense of self, but it was ahistorical and this approach had also aroused doubts and anxieties in many countries including China. The idea of universality would also make it politically difficult for the U.S. to explicitly endorse the legitimacy of communist rule in China, which was the most vital of Beijing’s core interests. This could further complicate the already complex Sino-U.S. relations, as well as Washington’s relations with ASEAN.

Second, Amb Kausikan noted that Tokyo had repeatedly been accused of being reluctant to acknowledge its wartime responsibility. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had also been accused by China and some in South Korea of wanting to revise history in order to remilitarise Japan. Amb Kausikan said that while it did not make sense for anyone to equate contemporary Japan with early Showa Japan given significantly different conditions, the question as to whether

Japan had really been reluctant to accept responsibility for the Second World War was a less straightforward one. Noting that two Emperors and several Japanese Prime Ministers had already expressed remorse, Amb Kausikan opined that it was difficult for any Japanese government to substantively go further. All ASEAN member states had also taken political decisions to look forward in their relations with Japan. However, Amb Kausikan felt that Tokyo should do more to decisively disassociate the government from right-wing statements made in individual capacities by certain politicians and academics. This would avoid implicating Tokyo and undercutting its desire to play a more active diplomatic and security role in the region.

Third, Amb Kausikan cautioned that Chinese leaders and officials should resist the temptations of a triumphalist and xenophobic nationalism. China’s sense of destiny in reclaiming its historical place in East Asia, coupled by the fact that China was growing, had evoked anxiety in its neighbours. He opined that the Communist Party of China (CPC) was increasingly relying on nationalism to legitimise its rule. It did not help that contemporary Chinese nationalism was far more outwardly directed. Beijing was also increasingly defining its claims in the East and South China Seas in terms of historical rights. Amb Kausikan noted that while China was unlikely to be a “recklessly revisionist power”, the primary risk lies in accidental conflict instead of a war by design. A highly nationalist public opinion that the CPC had cultivated, as well as its own historical narratives may force China down paths that it would not want to travel, to everybody’s detriment. Even if the worst did not occur, Chinese nationalism did not help in assuaging anxieties. This was a stark counterpoint to the theory of peaceful development that Beijing had tried to promote.

In conclusion, Amb Kausikan commented that there were “no angels in this affair”, and warned that history had a way of coming back to bite those who sought to manipulate it.



**Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani  
Dean, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy**

**Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani**, also a former Ambassador in Singapore's Foreign Service, began his talk by stating what in his view has been the secret to Singapore's success. Using the simple acronym of MPH, which stood for Meritocracy, Pragmatism and Honesty, Amb Mahbubani stressed to those present that if a society were to fully adopt these stated principles, it would undoubtedly lead to good governance and prosperity for all those involved.

Highlighting Singapore's system for recruiting and nurturing the best and the brightest, Amb Mahbubani also stated for those attending just where and how Singapore adopted systems such as HAIR (Helicopter and Analytical ability, with a sense of Imagination and Reality) when promoting civil servants of the past. Utilising this scheme that was first created by Shell, he reiterated Singapore's distinct vigour in seeking out the most productive practice of talent attainment wherever it may be; in government or private companies.

Shifting to the principle of Pragmatism in his MPH formula, Amb Mahbubani went on to underscore the late Dr Goh Keng Swee's mimicking of the Japanese model and their pragmatic approach to study best practices all over the world. He noted that Singapore was becoming the best "copycat" country, however, many countries astonishingly did not utilise this easy-to-follow method despite its simplicity. While plagiarism was bad in theory, it could also be useful for the betterment of life.

Though his MPH formula seemed easy to pursue, Amb Mahbubani was equally adamant about how hard the third pillar of his formula was. Stressing that corruption, or the lack of honesty, was the single biggest reason why most developing countries fail, he also expressed his admiration for Singapore's founding fathers and their steadfast ability to be forthright and honest in their governance.

Amb Mahbubani concluded his speech by reminding the participants how difficult it may be to have all three ingredients of MPH in line, yet they are undoubtedly a guarantor for success if done correctly.

During the Q&A session, Amb Mahbubani was asked whether he personally felt if Singapore had become overconfident much like the Japanese did during their rise and if that could pose a problem for its future. Acknowledging that arrogance was a natural outgrowth after long periods of success, he candidly proffered that his biggest worry would be a sense of overconfidence creeping into the Singapore society. Using examples of how countries such as post-Cold War U.S. and even private firms such as Kodak Film have had complications as a result of hubris, Amb Mahbubani reiterated the importance of humility yet not being so humble that one loses self-confidence. Though the narrative for modesty and "self-sacrifice" could not repeat itself over and over again across generations, Amb Mahbubani argued for a sense of balance that would ensure Singapore's continued success.



### **Admiral (Ret.) Arun Prakash** **Indian Navy**

**Admiral (Ret.) Arun Prakash** spoke about preparing for future security challenges. He first cautioned against predictions and arrogance, citing examples from Nikita Khrushchev's famous quote, "History is on our side", Francis Fukuyama's "end of history" thesis, and the assortment of generals who have miscalculated or failed due to hubris. He also advocated a new geostrategic term for analysing the region, by broadening the notion of the "Asia Pacific" to the "Indo-Asia Pacific", arguing that the South India region, with its growing strategic importance and geopolitical relations with China and Pakistan, was too great to ignore.

ADM Prakash argued that the Realist school of international relations still held ground in today's security landscape: that the international system is governed by anarchy, that states act in their self-interest and are essentially obsessed with security, and that territorial expansion could only be constrained by an opposing power. Nevertheless, he shared the view of China's military leadership: that in the foreseeable future, a world war is unlikely and the international situation was expected to remain peaceful.

Yet, there were issues of concerns that remained, ADM Prakash cautioned that there were persistent memories of the Japanese invasion and colonisation, the challenge posed by North Korea's ballistic and nuclear weapons development, Taiwan's relations with mainland China, as well as Indo-Pakistani and Sino-Indian relations. He added that there were now also non-traditional security threats such as transnational terrorism, resource shortages, piracy and maritime crime, climate change, and cyber warfare. Terrorism was especially an area of concern, with Al-Qaeda still remaining a deadly threat, and new affiliates being constantly created in the Middle East and North African regions, including the far more savage ISIS. These are inevitable developments that all security thinkers would have to grapple with today, ADM Prakash opined.

Finally, ADM Prakash concluded his talk by sharing his view that countries in the Indo-Asia Pacific, whether big or small, do want to ensure that international norms and laws are respected, commerce and navigation remain unimpeded, and that strength and coercion do not decide the outcome of disputes.

## DISTINGUISHED DINNER TALK



**Professor Wang Gungwu**  
**Chairman, East Asia Institute and**  
**University Professor,**  
**National University of Singapore**

**Professor Wang Gungwu** began his talk with the observation that while the “great leaders” of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) shared a common experience of having to fight for freedom and for the right to build nation-states, the post-independence experiences of the respective ASEAN militaries had been remarkably different. Prof Wang focused his presentation on how ASEAN militaries have evolved given their countries’ different histories and experiences.

Prof Wang noted that unlike the other ASEAN countries, Thailand never had a colonial master and survived as an independent nation-state through the last world war. There was another unique feature to Thailand, he pointed out, which was that the military in Thailand served the monarch and not the nation. Myanmar, on the other hand, fought three wars and suffered grievously each time. Myanmar had to fight to expel imperialist powers. As such, Myanmar had a martial history, and its military remained powerful to this day.

On the Philippines, Prof Wang reminded the audience that the Filipinos were among the first people to fight against the colonial powers (i.e. the Spanish). While the Americans were “gentler” and a modern military was introduced to the Philippines, there remained residues of a revolutionary army and the likelihood of a military coup. Turning to Indonesia, Prof Wang said that it too had a revolutionary army, albeit one led by civilians. However, even though the present civilian political leadership has been accepted in Indonesia, the military might very well intervene if the former fails. While Indonesia turned to democracy in recent times, it remained

unclear what the Indonesian military might do in times of uncertainty.

Prof Wang observed that the history of Indochina was one of the nationalists and communists both fighting for the same cause, albeit with different goals in mind. The nationalists unexpectedly lost to the communists despite American intervention. Communist leaderships in Indochina possessed nationalist agendas. In this regard, Vietnam was similar to China in that its military was subordinate to the ruling communist party and not the nation. This raised many questions about the relationship between politics and the military in Vietnam.

Noting that Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore all shared a similar colonial heritage, Prof Wang said that Singapore was unique because it did not have a military when it first gained independence. The country had to create a military that suits a non-nationalistic society. At the same time, the military serves as a nation-building institution for instilling the loyalty of Singaporeans towards their country.

Given the above, Prof Wang said that there were at least six to seven different models of militaries amongst the ten ASEAN member countries. Different traditions, as well as different normative ideals of the relations between politics and the military, prevailed in the region. That being said, however, Prof Wang cautioned that the Western model of the military being subordinate to the nation-state and the civilian political leadership should not be taken for granted in this region. Stressing the importance of history on the normative ideals about politics and the military, Prof Wang opined that while the Western model might be preferred, there was always a distinct possibility in this part of the world that the militaries might feel the right and responsibility to take over in the event the civilian political leadership fails.

## SESSION I: INSTRUMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER



**Ambassador Kirk Wagar**  
**Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore,**  
**United States of America**

**Ambassador Kirk Wagar** began by explaining that national power was simply how a country applied the full range of national resources at its disposal to achieve its national interests. He pointed to D.I.M.E.—Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economy—a framework that highlights the different components of such an approach. Amb Wagar however acknowledged that the visibility, and the amount of resources allocated to each component is unequal. He cited how the budget of the U.S. Department of Defense is roughly fifty times that of the Department of State. The U.S. military, he continued, is also arguably the most visible instrument of U.S. national power.

Amb Wagar stressed that even though each component received different resources, they were all equally important as the U.S. government strongly believes in a whole-of-government approach in tackling challenges the U.S. faces. Amb Wagar highlighted that this was especially important in dealing with threats such as

violent extremism, which could not be addressed by a single component of D.I.M.E. He gave the example of how senior U.S. military officers often benefitted from having access to a Department of State foreign affairs advisor when undertaking missions against these threats abroad.

The rest of Amb Wagar's presentation focused on the diplomatic and economic aspects of national power. He observed that while the overseas deployment of the U.S. military has garnered a lot of attention, its diplomats have been equally, if not more, busy. Amb Wagar argued that the U.S. has invested heavily in diplomacy and face-to-face meetings. He noted how the Secretary of State, Mr John Kerry, is a frequent flier to meetings around the world, and how President Barack Obama has had frequent diplomatic engagements in Asia, especially with ASEAN. In particular, the U.S. has invested effort in trying to resolve challenges in the South China Sea. Amb Wagar acknowledged that while the U.S. is not directly involved in any of the disputes there, it still believes it can play a role in facilitating the reduction of friction between the claimants in the interest of regional security.

Amb Wagar also highlighted how economic power has been an important instrument of American national power. In this area, he remarked that the U.S. has been subtle—not showy—in its economic influence, yet it has still been extensive. Amb Wagar cited the work done by the Department of Commerce in helping further U.S. business interests abroad. He highlighted that some of this work has resulted in the U.S. being the largest source of foreign direct investments in Singapore and in Southeast Asia—more than the next three countries combined. Amb Wagar argued that such massive investments has facilitated international economic growth and allowed a global middle class to develop. This would in turn result in more opportunities for U.S. engagement in the future, possibly in areas beyond business alone.

The proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was touted by Amb Wagar as an example representing a 21st century, state-of-the-art trade agreement that extends beyond business development to include infrastructure development, workers' rights and greater economic transparency and freedom. Given the wide-ranging impact that the TPP might have for national power, he admitted that the quest for a common ground between the negotiating parties has been difficult.

As important as it is in this day and age, Amb Wagar concluded that applying all the instruments of national power is never a straightforward task. Nevertheless, he emphasised that the only way forward was for the whole-of-government approach.



**Professor Rajesh Basrur**  
**Professor of International Relations & Coordinator of**  
**South Asia Programme,**  
**IDSS, RSIS**

**Professor Rajesh Basrur** began his presentation by emphasising the importance of a holistic whole-of-government approach in dealing with contemporary security challenges. At the same time, however, he cautioned that it was also important to question what exactly national power was, and what power can and cannot achieve. Prof Basrur noted that across history, Realists tend to see a particular type of national power, namely military power, as the key driving force behind international relations. He offered two reasons in this regard. First, military power has historically been used to control wealth and resources, as well as for states to dominate their neighbours. Second, Realists perceive the world as an anarchic system with no supranational institution to regulate interstate behaviour. Therefore, military power has been seen as a key means to guard one's sovereignty.

Prof Basrur however argued that over the last century three forms of inter-dependence had emerged, which consequently raised the cost of conflict and thereby diminishing the role of this "traditional", military-focused notion of national power. First, economic inter-dependence, a tight network of economics and finance, has kept nation-states from going to war as doing so would disrupt trade. Second, the possession of nuclear weapons has paradoxically created a form of "military inter-dependence" where the maintenance of peace becomes the preferred option given that the cost of nuclear conflict is simply too high. Finally, global threats across state

boundaries have resulted in ecological or environmental inter-dependence, thereby forcing states to cooperate with one another. Climate change was one such instance.

As a result of these three contemporary forms of inter-dependence, Prof Basrur argued that there had been several fundamental consequences, for example, ushering in an era of transition away from the mere use of military power alone. He observed that today's economic, security and environmental problems, could only be resolved by states through negotiation rather than merely an application of raw power. As such, the application of national power has changed. Prof Basrur noted that this has led some to wonder how relevant is the traditional instrument of national power — the military. They suggested an inverse relationship between inter-dependence and the utility of military power. Given the limited use of the military, interstate conflicts have been consequently marginal, if they ever erupt. Nation-states often do not wish to risk escalation in an inter-dependent world. They therefore tread carefully. That having been said, however, Prof Basrur pointed out that military power is still useful against extremist non-state actors who may have to be eradicated since they are not open to diplomacy.

Concluding his presentation, Prof Basrur observed that nation-states often learn what does not work through the hard way, incurring significant human and financial costs. The ultimate objective is for states to learn what does work. This often only happens when a whole-of-government, "smart" power approach—where "hard" power is tempered by "soft" power using other components of national power—is adopted.

## SESSION II: HYBRID THREATS



### **Associate Professor Ahmed Salah Hashim** **Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS**

**Associate Professor Ahmed Hashim** observed that Carl von Clausewitz made a clear distinction between the objectives of various forms of warfare. In conventional or direct warfare, both sides seek to achieve decisive and unequivocal victory over the other by defeating its military forces. Though conventional war did not break out between the superpowers, it would be imprudent to rule it out totally, especially with the rise of new powers to challenge America. As for indirect war, the side waging it seeks to achieve political objectives by exhausting the enemy's will without defeating its military. Such an approach has always been preferred by weaker states and non-state actors such as insurgent and terrorist groups.

Assoc Prof Hashim then alluded to the definitional problem of indirect war. This form of fighting has been called various names; they include irregular warfare, partisan warfare, fourth-generation warfare, and low-intensity conflict. In his view, the proliferation of terms associated with indirect war is due to the "dog pissing on the fire hydrant syndrome". Simply put, this comes about when scholars create new terms to leave some form of dubious intellectual legacy about their contributions to the field of strategic studies. But he also pointed out that each new term may have a purpose: it brings out certain aspects of indirect war associated with particular technologies,

operational art, tactics, environment and cultural context, and this allows one to focus on those seemingly novel characteristics. That said, however, hybrid warfare does have resonance in Singapore. Assoc Prof Hashim recalled that Defence Minister Ng Eng Hen mentioned earlier this year that the hybrid threats are what Singapore might face in the near future, adding that they seek to fracture the solidarity of the targeted nation.

Assoc Prof Hashim discussed the various milestones in the evolution of hybrid warfare theory and practice. For instance, during the Cold War, Raymond Aron introduced the concept of the polymorphous war. Then in the 1990s came the military lessons of the First Gulf War and the Chechen Wars. Assoc Prof Hashim also cited other examples of hybrid war, including the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah conflict and the Russian intervention in Ukraine from 2013. He defined hybrid warfare as a composition of different ways of waging war either simultaneously or in a coordinated manner. It could also refer to having the capabilities required to go up and down the spectrum of conflict according to environmental factors, enemy faced, operational art and tactics needed at a particular time in a battle space. Hybrid warfare is therefore a cocktail of conventional military capabilities, insurgency, terrorism, organised crime, and cyberwarfare. Violations of international law, non-state actors and organisations may also be included.

Assoc Prof Hashim then discussed Frank Hoffman's theory of hybrid warfare. According to Hoffman, hybrid threats incorporate a full range of different modes of warfare such as conventional capabilities, irregular tactics and formations, terrorist acts, and criminal disorder. In a hybrid war, these elements act in a coordinated, coherent way, and are utilised by both non-state and, more significantly, state actors.

Assoc Prof Hashim said that hybrid war can be conducted by both states and non-state actors. States conduct hybrid war using all instruments of national power – kinetic and non-kinetic in a parallel and coordinated manner. It can also be used in lieu of escalation to outright war as it might enable the user to attain political goals without the costs of outright war. Moreover the use of multi-varied instruments prior to a shooting war for states causes cognitive dissonance in the target and slows its reaction time. As for non-state actors, some of their aims are similar to that of their state hybrid counterparts. But there are some differences – non-state actors do not have the resource capabilities of a state and it takes them longer to

build up the hybrid capabilities. Their hybrid capabilities must therefore be socially embedded within the society in which they ostensibly claim to represent, and the cases of Hezbollah and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) exemplify this feature.

Assoc Prof Hashim also characterised hybrid warfare as flexible in the use of means and methods, adding that there is conscious blurring of the lines between peace and war when it is employed. He then cited the example of the Chechnya War, stating the Chechens were among others, innovative, flexible, and decentralised. Assoc Prof Hashim then turned to the recent Russo-Ukraine conflict. Basically, Russia wants to regain control over the geopolitical orientation of Ukraine and Crimea without escalation to outright war. However, he warned that this cannot be replicated in other parts of the world. The centrality of psychological warfare, information operations and "lawfare" in Ukraine was also discussed. Finally, Assoc Prof Hashim argued that there are three distinct levels of organisational structure in ISIS: "organising to organise", "organising to fight", and "organising to build".



**Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna**  
**Head of Policy Studies, Executive Deputy Chairman's**  
**Office, RSIS**

**Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna** began his presentation by providing a definition of hybrid warfare, where he stated that it is also known as “multi-dimensional warfare”, involving not just inter-state war but also conflict between state and non-state actors. He added that hybrid terrorist organisations use not only kinetic force, but also information operations via social media, as well as other instruments to both win popular support and weaken the political will of states. Assoc Prof Ramakrishna argued that it is not a new phenomenon as it was used in the Indochina wars and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He went on to examine the case of the Malayan Emergency, where use of propaganda by the British showed that in hybrid warfare, kinetic force alone would never be decisive and might even worsen the situation.

Assoc Prof Ramakrishna then gave a short overview of the Emergency that saw the Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA) fight against the British colonial authorities. Through force of arms, the MNLA sought to evict the British from Malaya and establish a Communist Republic of Malaya based on the Maoist model thereafter. At their peak in 1951, the communists had about 8,000 men under arms, supported by a 50,000-strong logistics network scattered throughout the jungle fringes of western Malaya. This manpower was drawn largely from the rural Chinese community. To counter the insurgency, the British initially undertook coercive measures such as the forced resettlement of rural Chinese to ill-equipped Resettlement

Areas, and the mass detentions and deportations of rural Chinese communities deemed guilty of non-cooperation with authorities.

There were two key reasons for this approach, Assoc Prof Ramakrishna pointed out. Firstly, it was due to British imperial policing habits where many police officers were recruited from the ranks of soldiers and they therefore had a “military mind-set”. As a result, they lacked the cultural affinity with the people they were policing. The second reason was racial stereotypes, where there was an assumption by non-Chinese speaking European officers that every Chinese was a potential Communist. The Chinese were also deemed to have a “secret society complex” and a tough approach had to be adopted to keep them in line. Unsurprisingly, this resulted in a widespread alienation of the rural Chinese.

Assoc Prof Ramakrishna observed that the turning point in the Emergency came in 1952 with the arrival of High Commissioner and Director of Emergency Operations Gerald Templer and A. E. Young from the City of London Police. They initiated a community policing approach where “police must be part of the people and people part of the police”. The upshot was that by late 1954/early 1955, confidence of the rural Chinese in the police and government gradually increased. Assoc Prof Ramakrishna contended that Templer’s secret was that he had a nuanced understanding of propaganda. During the Emergency, the propaganda covered not just words, but also deeds, both planned and unplanned. “Propaganda of the deed” can be negative or positive. Examples of the former during the Emergency included the mass detentions

and deportations, whereas examples of the latter included Templar's upgrading of Resettlement Areas into properly sited, well-guarded and equipped "New Villages".

Assoc Prof Ramakrishna discussed the philosophy of A. E. Young where minimum force was the key and the police, not the military, should take the lead in fighting insurgents. This was because soldiers were trained to make up their minds fast so as to act quickly—and sometimes they believed that a wrong decision was better than none at all. On the other hand, the police had to take more time, "because the important thing wherever the law is involved is to be right from the start". All in all, the British colonial government began to slowly turn things around in the Emergency when it recognised that the most important thing was to deny the MNLA the hearts and minds of the key community—the rural Chinese. This meant that "all-of-government", not just the Malayan police, but the army, the District Officers on the ground, had to be more community-oriented, more politically sensitised.

Assoc Prof Ramakrishna then discussed the lessons drawn from the Emergency for countering hybrid terrorist groups today. He stressed the need to recognise the essential nature of religiously inspired terrorism today in

Southeast Asia—because the terrorists employ religious justifications for their actions, they do have some degree of support in the wider religious community. Thus, it is all the more important to understand that kinetic operations alone are not enough; indeed, excessive force may fuel the militant storyline of a religious community being treated like second-class citizens. What is needed to counter extremists, Assoc Prof Ramakrishna suggested, is a "propaganda-minded" policy. This involves training officers and men not merely in technical aspects of operations against insurgents and the wider community of support, but also in the potential political consequences of those procedures in the context of the campaign. A "Brains Trust" on a whole-of-government basis tasked with promoting propaganda-minded counter-terrorism policy across the board should also be created. In short, deliberate and conscious care should be taken to avoid generating "political oxygen" that could inadvertently fuel the militants' mobilising narrative.

Summing up, Assoc Prof Ramakrishna said that effective counter-terrorist policy today must seek to diminish the appeal of the extremists' message and that an integrated propaganda-minded approach is essential for ultimate success in the overall effort against hybrid terrorist threats.





## SESSION III: CONFLICT RESOLUTION & COUNTER-TERRORISM



### **Professor Pascal Vennesson** **Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS**

**Professor Pascal Vennesson** began his presentation with the observation that relations between non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and military organisations during complex humanitarian emergencies varied widely, ranging from hostility to cooperation. Through a detailed study of Italian and French experiences of NGO-military relations during the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) II from 2007 to 2011, Prof Vennesson highlighted several “dos and don’ts” to improve NGO-military relations in complex humanitarian emergencies.

Prof Vennesson highlighted three main pitfalls to NGO-military relations that militaries could seek to avoid. First, militaries should watch out for negative stereotypes about NGOs. Such examples included views that NGOs were not entirely “non-governmental”, or that they were self-interested, hostile to the military, or simply incompetent. Second, militaries should avoid trivialising the planning stages and perceiving local improvisation as being sufficient. This included perceiving NGO-military relations as a “non-issue”, and relying on ground improvisation. Third, militaries must resist the urge of perceiving themselves as being the “real humanitarians”, or as sharing the same responsibilities as the NGOs.

Prof Vennesson went on to provide three suggestions for facilitating smooth NGO-military cooperation during complex operations. First, militaries could refrain from judging too soon, and spend more effort in examining the nature of the NGOs, as well as specificities of the

political contexts that they would be operating in. Militaries could also engage the NGOs staff to better understand their mission objectives. Second, there could be a more conscious planning effort, which includes recognising NGO-military relations as a distinctive issue. This was important as spontaneous improvisations by militaries were often unsustainable and counter-productive. Militaries should also learn to recognise and respect the “humanitarian space”. At the same time, they could also encourage NGOs to acknowledge the limits and trade-offs of the “humanitarian space” in some circumstances. Third, militaries should avoid pretending, or attempting to do the job of NGOs. This could avoid duplicating the job of NGOs and wasting resources. Militaries may also have imperfect understanding of the needs of the local population. NGOs would also likely see such efforts as the militaries’ direct interference with their work.

Prof Vennesson emphasised that the shared operational space between militaries and NGOs was here to stay and soldiers would likely continue encountering NGOs and their projects and actions. NGO-military relations mattered for missions and local populations, and institutionalised cooperation such as Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in the case of Afghanistan were useful but insufficient. The attitudes of both military professionals and NGOs staff mattered greatly when it came to resolving potentially dysfunctional aspects of missions.

In conclusion, Prof Vennesson said that these issues were also likely to become increasingly relevant in Asia, including among ASEAN countries, as well as China, Japan and Korea.



**Mr Shazryll Zahira**  
**Deputy Director General, Southeast Asia Regional**  
**Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT),**  
**Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia**

**Mr Shazryll Zahira** started his presentation by first pointing out that Malaysia's experience with terrorism did not begin with the September 11 attacks. Malaysia's first terrorist encounter was when Malaya was faced with the threat of militants belonging to the Communist Party of Malaya, during the first and second Malayan Emergencies. He shared that as a result of misinterpretation and poor understanding of the religion, the threat of terrorism in Malaysia began to shift from a communist-based ideology to a religious-based one in the 1970s and 1990s. Some examples include the Kumpulan Mujahiddin Malaysia (KMM), JI, as well as the Darul Islam (DI) and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) cells in Sabah.

Moving on to ISIS activities in Malaysia, Mr Zahira shared that internet radicalisation through radical websites and social media was the extremist organisation's primary avenue of recruitment. ISIS also recruited in Malaysia through local recruiters, as well as through marriage or familial ties. He cited examples of Malaysians who had formed part of the ISIS leadership, suicide bombers, radicalised youths, as well as the ISIS "safe houses" and training grounds in Malaysia. Mr Zahira said that radicalised Malaysians were attracted to ISIS for various religious, political or personal reasons.

Mr Zahira said that Malaysia's concerns with ISIS include whether its returnees would continue terrorist activities in Malaysia, especially given their experiences abroad and established networks. The rapid spread of its ideology through social media, its ability to recruit foreign fighters from all around the world, as well as its call for fighters to strike terror at home were all significant causes of concern. Malaysia had sought to counter these threats by acknowledging ISIS as a terrorist group, as well as through employing "hard power" and "soft power" measures. These included the arrests of suspected individuals with links to ISIS, the passing of key legislations such as SOSMA/POTA/POCA, as well as "softer" aspects such as the release of fatwas by Malaysian religious agencies and the promotion of public awareness and capacity-building programmes. Mr Zahira further shared that SEARCCT, which was officially established two years after the September 11 attacks, contributed to these efforts by working with local and foreign partners on capacity-building programmes.

In conclusion, Mr Zahira said that there were many challenges in ensuring the peace and stability of a country. It was necessary to keep a lookout for cases of recidivism, strengthen rehabilitation programmes, and also involve women and families to play more direct roles in countering threats and challenges. The need for a whole-of-society approach to counter the threat of ISIS and its related groups was paramount.

## SESSION IV: INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION



**Mr Jeremy England**  
**Head of Regional Delegation, International Committee**  
**of the Red Cross (ICRC)**

**Mr Jeremy England** began his presentation by highlighting a pessimistic perspective that when looking at the responses to humanitarian crises thus far, the most important players were not on the scene. Mr England emphasised that if one were to combine the funding of the UN, Red Cross, and various NGOs in conjunction with government aid, one would easily notice that much of the assistance needed by the locals came from rather unnoticed channels such as the diaspora communities. Based on his personal experience, what truly possessed financial impact were not so much reputable institutions but more others such as the Western Union and its various branches located in troubled regions.

Giving a brief overview of what the aid sector really looked like, Mr England was quick to illustrate for the audience the context in which “inter-agency cooperation” actually occurred. From his point of view, when looking at the issue holistically, relevant stakeholders may in fact have been and are still talking about “cooperation” and “coordination” between the wrong parties. By stating the need to address more clearly what the exact parameters should be for cooperation, such as who the partners are (warlords or internationally sanctioned bodies), what coordination and cooperation actually meant to different civilian and military institutions, and how perception problems still persist between all of them, a constant recurring theme for Mr England was the need for clarity among all participants.

Having mentioned the various cultural and legal differences between the military and civilian aid workers, Mr England went on to describe his own institution, the ICRC, and how as a case study, it depicted much of the confusion that was so prevalent in “inter-agency cooperation”. Referring to the importance of proximity, be it in hotspots but also in its usefulness in facilitating contact with local governments, Mr England mentioned that even though the ICRC and various militaries may not be on the same side, they were in fact playing the roles laid out for them and that it was important for all parties to respect the differences.

While concluding his presentation with the notion that a comprehensive and effective approach did not necessarily equal a fully integrated approach, Mr England stressed the need for trust between the ICRC and perceivably “hostile” elements. Referring to past episodes where the organisation was viewed by locals as not being neutral, resulting in attacks on its members, Mr England was equally resolute in the ICRC’s principle of confidentiality, stating that the organisation would not trade trust for access. For Mr England and the ICRC, to gain access in order to assist those in need, information such as potential witnesses to atrocities committed could not be shared with the authorities. The reason was clear; vital humanitarian assistance would inevitably have to be carried out even long after militaries have left the scene. To do exactly that, Mr England emphasised credibility. To have credibility, he added, one needed a certain degree of confidentiality and independence.



**Brigadier General Benedict Lim**  
**Group Chief, MINDEF Communications**  
**Singapore**

**Brigadier General Benedict Lim** began his presentation by outlining a brief historical summary of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). Stating just how far the institution had come from its humble beginnings, BG Lim furnished a list of contemporary accomplishments, such as the Volunteer Corps, to illustrate the ways in which Singapore has been creating platforms whereby contribution to national defence and security could be made by citizens and permanent residences alike. He further noted that with the evolution of the SAF through the years, there were also external changes in the security landscape and operating space that militaries currently find themselves in. Citing the recent drastic changes in Europe's security environment, shifts in the balance of power with the rise of China, along with the increase of non-traditional security threats, BG Lim reiterated a need for the SAF to expand its spectrum of operations to face such mounting challenges.

Proceeding to the "Strategic Communications" aspect of his presentation, BG Lim noted that with the sheer amount of media fragmentation that was now present, along with the increase in the number of actors in cyberspace, including the "noise" and counter-narratives linked to the upsurge of Internet access, the room for potential adversaries to distort information was rising. Though admitting that the ability to communicate effectively to the masses had become more difficult, BG Lim was also quick to point out what exactly the SAF had done in response to this more central role for the information domain.

Emphasising that "Strategic Communications" could not be performed by the military alone, BG Lim illustrated the importance of community engagement and the building of networks within communities. Stating the SAF's desired outcome as to "preserve public mindshare for, and instil enduring belief for a safe and secure Singapore" in addition to "maintain public support for defence and National Service", BG Lim detailed case studies of where the SAF had done precisely that. From events that honoured the pioneer generation and national holidays, to overseas operations in which the SAF was instrumental in giving assistance, such as evacuating Singaporean personnel from Nepal, and supporting the Singapore Civil Defence Force and Police, BG Lim also furnished a summary of the Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (RHCC) and its importance to Strategic Communications.

In response to a question raised on whether the SAF had a communication strategy in dealing with possible "lone wolf" type of actions and belief systems, BG Lim acknowledged that it may be impossible to win over everyone in this battle over narratives. He opined that it was equally important to understand that too much encroachment in the information space, such as targeting cyberspace sites deemed to be in the "red" may in fact give credibility to the adversary's narratives. On the whole, he stressed that a certain amount of "noise" and balance had to be expected in any communications strategy.

## SESSION V: NATIONAL SECURITY



**Mr T. Raja Kumar**  
**Deputy Secretary (International),**  
**Ministry of Home Affairs**  
**Singapore**

**Mr T. Raja Kumar** outlined Singapore's development of national-level responses to security threats, provided an overview of Singapore's security landscape and the ways in which the country has sought to tackle those challenges. He emphasised a more holistic approach towards tackling these challenges.

According to Mr Kumar, the risks and threats Singapore face are now increasingly wide-ranging and multi-dimensional, and exist along a continuum: from illegal migration and drug smuggling, to pandemics and cyberattacks, to what he called "low-intensity conflict" and through to the prospect of war. Singapore's open economy, high visitor flow, wide internet penetration and high urban density has resulted in this volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment. There is also now a new social landscape that Singapore would have to contend with.

In view of those challenges, Mr Kumar said Singapore has adopted a multi-layered security defence: (i) intelligence

and international cooperation, especially participating in international counter-terrorism initiatives; (ii) border security, i.e. leveraging technological advances and risk-profiling methods; (iii) target hardening, via factoring security considerations upstream during the design and planning of buildings and infrastructure; (iv) community involvement through engaging business and social communities in safety and security watch groups; and (v) crisis and consequence management for effective mitigation of incidences, as well as swift recovery.

A Homefront Crisis Management System was also set up to ensure inter-agency linkages and integrated responses. Mr Kumar highlighted that this is in addition to organising and participating in major contingency exercises involving multiple agencies and stakeholders, such as Exercise Northstar (2015), Exercise Highcrest (2013), and Exercise Heartbeat—an annual exercise involving community partners.

In closing, Mr Kumar stated that Singapore needed to stay relevant through adaptability, innovation, and learning from others, in order to work together for a safe and secure Singapore.



**Rear Admiral (Ret.) Bernard Miranda**  
**Republic of Singapore Navy**

**Rear Admiral (Ret.) Bernard Miranda** spoke on leadership in national security and how to apply operational lessons in tackling these issues. He said that the national security challenges in the Asia Pacific are multiple and diverse. They ranged from unknown emerging threats to unbalanced economic growth, to territorial disputes, demand for resources, and to demographic and social changes.

RADM Miranda highlighted that Singapore's operational experiences in maritime security operations contributed greatly in helping to tackle these challenges. There were 5 missions conducted under Operation Blue Orchid in the Arabian Gulf from 2003-2008, and 9 missions conducted under Operation Blue Sapphire in the Gulf of Aden from 2009-2015. These initiatives helped Singapore build on a few leading capabilities: (i) providing strategic and operational imperatives; (ii) framing the issues; (iii) setting clear and achievable directions; (iv) command and control operations; and (v) optimising scarce resources.

RADM Miranda also pointed out that such experiences abroad in international operations also provided Singapore with invaluable operational lessons for its own national security operations. These include enabling Singapore to understand its operating space, be it terrorist activities or territorial disputes; recognise emerging threats; determine the rules of engagement by applying Rules of Engagement principles and clarifying doubts; win partners over; harnessing technology; as well as managing information.

RADM Miranda opined that innovative technology would help improve operational effectiveness and be a force multiplier. By keeping a tight media cycle, Singapore would be able to maintain a coherent narrative and utilise social media to shape perceptions. In winning over coalition and partnership during multi-national and inter-agency operations, he concluded, Singapore would be able to harness the advantages of diversity, social energy and gain the trust and respect of its partners, and in turn positively feeding back into its own operational learning goals.

## SESSION VI: PERSPECTIVES ON SECURITY IN THE ASIA PACIFIC



### **Vice Admiral (Ret.) Yoji Koda** **Japan Maritime Self Defense Force**

**Vice Admiral (Ret.) Yoji Koda** proffered the Japanese perspective on security in the Asia Pacific region. He stressed that Japan's role in this regard has been primarily to facilitate the continued U.S. military presence in the region. However, he pointed out that contemporary security developments in Japan's neighbourhood and further abroad would necessitate some adjustments to this role. Neighbourhood security challenges comprise the serious threat posed by North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear weapons programmes. VADM Koda particularly highlighted the potential strategic and economic ramifications in the next two to three decades for Asia Pacific security due to the melting of Arctic ice-caps, the opening up of the North-Eastern Sea Route, Russia's resurgence, as well as China's forays into the Arctic.

VADM Koda especially highlighted a myriad of security challenges ranging from rising sea levels, to transnational crimes, to natural disasters facing the Pacific Island states that had been largely overlooked. He pointed out that altogether these states muster weak military capacities to cope with those challenges. VADM Koda drew the participants' attention to the recent tensions in the South China Sea. He highlighted the potential risk of military clashes as a result of intensified regional military build-ups, land reclamation and infrastructure development activities

in disputed waters. In particular, he argued that China had sought to develop the major naval base at Sanya, Hainan Island into a "key hub" for its expansion in the South China Sea.

VADM Koda postulated a two-phase Chinese strategy to strengthen physical control over the area. According to him, Phase One focused Chinese build-ups on Hainan Island and the Chinese-occupied Paracel Islands, especially Woody Island where a sizeable airstrip exists. Together with those artificial islands built recently by China, these features formed what he called the "North-South line". This would lead to Phase Two which would envisage the build-up at Scarborough Shoal. The "North-South line" would finally connect with the shoal to form an imaginary triangle which would constitute Beijing's network of outposts to facilitate physical control over the disputed waters. VADM Koda opined that one of the primary objectives would be to provide for a more secure sanctuary, compared to the Bohai Gulf, for China's burgeoning sea-based nuclear deterrent capability.

Given the force constraints of the U.S. military in the Asia Pacific, and in view of the vast geographical distance between U.S. bases in Japan and the South China Sea, VADM Koda concluded that it therefore became vital for Japan to bolster its defence posture and stand ready to cooperate with Washington to help maintain peace and stability in the Asia Pacific.



**Major General Zhu Cheng Hu**  
**National Defense University,**  
**People's Liberation Army China**

**Major General Zhu Cheng Hu** presented the Chinese perspective on security in the Asia Pacific. He opined that generally, recent security developments presented a rather mixed and complicated picture. There were some positive developments, for instance a general desire among Asian countries which had suffered much from past wars to avoid armed conflict so as not to derail peace and stability conducive for socio-economic development. Moreover, MG Zhu said that the Asian economy remains a “locomotive” of the world economy and this looks set to continue in the next two to three decades. Despite the lack of formalised institutions, Asian economies are strongly integrated with each other. Lastly, the Asia Pacific accounts for a host of existing security mechanisms, chiefly of all the ASEAN-centric regional architecture, that will continue to play a key role in maintaining regional peace and stability. MG Zhu specifically highlighted Sino-U.S. security cooperation, expressing his optimism for continued stable bilateral relations, notwithstanding dire predictions about a looming Sino-U.S. war.

However, MG Zhu highlighted some key contentious issues. He argued that despite its rise, Beijing had no intention to challenge the U.S., yet at the same time felt compelled to respond asymmetrically to a potential U.S. pre-emptive attack. MG Zhu opined that China's remarkably growing influence in the Asia Pacific inevitably sparked Washington's concerns, including a misplaced view that Beijing had been seeking to expel the U.S. from the region. However, he opined that recent tensions, especially in the South China Sea, should not be attributed to China but the existing U.S. regional alliances. MG Zhu cautioned that the present U.S. rebalancing strategy may

compel regional governments to take either the side of the U.S. or China—a potentially destabilising prospect. He emphasised that most Chinese activities in the South China Sea, except for its actions against South Vietnam over the Paracels back in the 1970s, were essentially reactive in nature.

Nevertheless, MG Zhu strongly believes that the South China Sea situation can be controlled. He stressed that China stands ready to be a good friend and cooperative partner if regional governments treat it as such, but he also cautioned that Beijing would inevitably have to prepare for the worst if it were regarded as a foe. In this regard, MG Zhu opined that while the Obama Administration might have no intention to contain China, he was not too sanguine about perceptions held by the U.S. military community. MG Zhu contended that the perceived Cold War-style American mentality was evident in the persistent U.S. close-in military surveillance of China's coasts in recent years. He felt that such provocative activities ran contrary to the Obama Administration's claim that the U.S. had no intention to contain China, and this also aroused unnecessary regional concern about China. Even though he did not believe that a Sino-U.S. war is likely, MG Zhu expressed hope that bilateral relations could proceed in a positive, constructive manner. He called for enhanced security cooperation in the Asia Pacific, especially the need for a more robust regional architecture. However, he also cautioned that the network of U.S. alliances would pose a hindrance to the realisation of this architecture.

Summing up his presentation, MG Zhu outlined five key developments to watch out for the future of Asia Pacific security, namely: (i) the rise of China; (ii) Korean reunification; (iii) the “normalisation” of Japan; (iv) the likely withdrawal of U.S. military presence in the region; and finally (v) the nuclearisation of Japan.

## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### Day 1

**4 August 2015 (Tuesday)**

**09:30**      **Arrival and Registration of Participants**

**16:00**      **Ice-Breaker Event**

**19:00**      **Welcome Dinner**

### Day 2

**5 August 2015 (Wednesday)**

**09:30**      **Welcome Remarks**

**Ambassador Ong Keng Yong**  
*Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS*

**09:35**      **Keynote Address**

**Mr Lui Tuck Yew**  
*Minister for Transport and  
Second Minister for Defence*

**10:20**      **Group Photo-taking**

**11:00**      **Session I**  
***Instruments of National Power***

**Speakers:**  
**Ambassador Kirk Wagar**  
*Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore*

**Professor Rajesh Basrur**  
*Professor of International Relations, Coordinator  
of South Asia Programme, IDSS, RSIS*

**Chairperson:**  
**Assistant Professor Irm Haleem**  
*Assistant Professor and Manager  
(Research & Publications), RSIS*

**14:00**      **Visit to Urban Redevelopment Authority**

**19:30**      **Opening Dinner**

**Guest-of-Honour:**  
**Major General Perry Lim**  
*Chief of Army, SAF*

### Day 3

**6 August 2015 (Thursday)**

**08:30**      **Introduction by Participants**  
Australia, Brunei, Cambodia,  
Canada, China

**09:30**      **Session II**  
***Hybrid Threats***

**Speakers:**  
**Associate Professor Ahmed Hashim**  
*Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS*

**Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna**  
*Head Policy Studies Office of the  
Executive Deputy*

**Chairperson:**  
**Dr Graham Gerrard Ong-Webb**  
*Research Fellow at IDSS, RSIS, NTU*

**11:00**      **Book Launch by Mr S. R. Nathan**

**12:00**      **Distinguished Lunch Talk**

**Speaker:**  
**Mr Peter Ho**  
*Senior Advisor, Centre for Strategic Futures*

**Chairperson:**  
**Associate Professor Ralf Emmers**  
*Associate Dean, RSIS*

**14:00**      **Visit to Information Fusion Centre  
and Changi Regional HADR  
Coordination Centre**

**Day 4**  
**7 August 2015 (Friday)**

- 08:30**      **Introduction by Participants**  
India, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia
- 09:30**      **Session III**  
***Conflict Resolution and Counter-Terrorism***
- Speakers:**  
**Professor Pascal Vennesson**  
*Professor, Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS*
- Mr Sharzyl Zahiran**  
*Deputy Director, SEARCCT*
- Chairperson:**  
**Associate Professor Bilveer Singh**  
*Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), RSIS*
- 12:00**      **Distinguished Lunch Talk**
- Speaker:**  
**Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan**  
*Ambassador-at-Large, MFA*
- Chairperson:**  
**Ambassador Barry Desker**  
*Distinguished Fellow, RSIS*
- 14:00**      **Battlefield Tour**
- 19:00**      **Distinguished Dinner Talk**
- Speaker:**  
**Professor Wang Gungwu**  
*Chairman of the East Asia Institute and; University Professor, National University of Singapore*
- Chairperson:**  
**Ambassador Ong Keng Yong**  
*Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS*

**Day 5**  
**8 August 2015 (Saturday)**

- 08:30**      **Introduction by Participants**  
France, Myanmar, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan
- 09:30**      **Session IV**  
***Interagency Cooperation***
- Speakers:**  
**Mr Jeremy England**  
*Head of Regional Delegation of the ICRC in KL*
- Brigadier General Benedict LIM**  
*Group Chief, MINDEF Communications*
- Chairperson:**  
**Mr Eddie Lim**  
*Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS*
- 12:00**      **Distinguished Lunch Talk**
- Speaker:**  
**Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani**  
*Dean, LKYSPP*
- Chairperson:**  
**Dr Shashi Jayakumar**  
*Head, CENS, RSIS*
- 14:15**      **RSIS Presentation & Military Tour on Defence & Fall of Singapore 1942**

**Day 6**  
**9 August 2015 (Sunday)**

- 08:30**      **Introduction by Participants**  
Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia,  
Singapore, Sweden
- 09:30**      **Session V**  
***National Security***
- Speakers:**  
**Mr Raja Kumar**  
*Deputy Secretary, MHA*
- Rear Admiral (Ret.) Bernard Miranda**  
*Director, National Maritime Operations Group*
- Chairperson:**  
**Brigadier General (Ret.) Jimmy Tan**  
*Director, SAF-NTU Academy, NTU*
- 12:00**      **Distinguished Lunch Talk**
- Speaker:**  
**Admiral (Ret.) Arun Prakash**  
*Former Chief of Naval Staff, Indian Navy*
- Chairperson:**  
**Associate Professor Tan See Seng**  
*Professor of International Relations,  
Deputy Director and Head of Research of the  
Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies*
- 16:30**      **National Day Celebrations**

**Day 7**  
**10 August 2015 (Monday)**

- 08:30**      **Introduction by Participants**  
Thailand, Timor-Leste, United Arab  
Emirates, United Kingdom, United States  
of America, Vietnam
- 09:30**      **Session VI**  
***Perspective on Security in the  
Asia Pacific***
- Speakers:**  
**Vice Admiral (Ret.) Koda Yoji**  
*Vice Admiral, Japan Maritime Self Defence  
Force (JMSDF)*
- Major General Zhu Cheng Hu**  
*PLA, NDU*
- Chairperson:**  
**Professor Jusuf Wanandi**  
*LKYSPP*
- 12:30**      **Presentation of Certificates followed by  
Farewell Lunch**

## SPEAKERS

### **AMBASSADOR KIRK WAGAR**

Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore

### **PROFESSOR RAJESH BASRUR**

Professor of International Relations, Coordinator of South Asia Programme, IDSS, RSIS

### **MAJOR GENERAL PERRY LIM**

Chief of Army, SAF

### **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AHMED HASHIM**

Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS

### **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KUMAR RAMAKRISHNA**

Head Policy Studies Office of the Executive Deputy

### **MR PETER HO**

Senior Advisor, Centre for Strategic Futures

### **PROFESSOR PASCAL VENNESSON**

Military Studies Programme, IDSS, RSIS

### **MR SHARZYL ZAHIRAN**

Deputy Director, SEARCCT

### **AMBASSADOR BILAHARI KAUSIKAN**

Ambassador-at-large, MFA

### **PROFESSOR WANG GUNGWU**

Chairman of the East Asia Institute and; University Professor, National University of Singapore

### **MR JEREMY ENGLAND**

Head of Regional Delegation of the ICRC in KL

### **BRIGADIER GENERAL BENEDICT LIM**

Group Chief, MINDEF Communications

### **AMBASSADOR KISHORE MAHBUBANI**

Dean, LKYSPP

### **MR RAJA KUMAR**

Deputy Secretary, MHA

### **REAR ADMIRAL (RET.) BERNARD MIRANDA**

Director, National Maritime Operations Group

### **ADMIRAL (RET.) ARUN PRAKASH**

Former Chief of Naval Staff, Indian Navy

### **VICE ADMIRAL (RET.) KODA YOJI**

Vice Admiral, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF)

### **MAJOR GENERAL ZHU CHENG HU**

PLA, NDU

## CHAIRPERSONS

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Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS

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Professor of International Relations, Deputy Director and Head of Research of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies

**PROFESSOR JUSUF WANANDI**

LKYSPP

## PARTICIPANTS

### AUSTRALIA

#### COL DAVID HAY

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Director

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- MILITARY CIOG)

#### GPCAPT MARK McCALLUM

Group Captain  
Director Strategic Design - Air Force

#### CAPT M.H.J. MIKO, RAN

Director International Logistics  
Joint Logistics Command

### BRUNEI

#### LT COL HAJI MOHAMMAD MULLUDDIN AWG HAJI LATIF

Lieutenant Colonel  
Acting Director

### CAMBODIA

#### LT COL VONG NIMOL

Lieutenant Colonel

#### LT COL SOWATHEY NEM

Lieutenant Colonel

### CANADA

#### LT COL JEAN JOBIN

Lieutenant-Colonel  
Royal Canadian Air Force

### CHINA

#### COL JIANG BO

Colonel  
Director of Legal Affairs Section, PLA Hong Kong Garrison  
Spokesman of Hong Kong Garrison

#### COMMANDER LIU XIAOBO

Commander  
Research Fellow  
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PHD Candidate  
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#### COL ERIC CHASBOEUF

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Joint Chief of Staff

### INDIA

#### GPCAPT SUCHARU RAI

Group Captain, Base Commander

### JAPAN

#### COL HAJIME KITAJIMA

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Military Intelligence Command

#### COL TAKAHIRO KUBOTA

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### LTC BOUAVANH ATHANAXAY

Lieutenant Colonel  
Director of National Defence  
Ministry of National Defence

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Deputy Director of Planning and Research Division

## MALAYSIA

### COL MOHD SOFIBIN MD LEPI

Colonel  
Training Director, Operation & Training Branch, Malaysian Army  
Head Quarters

## MYANMAR

### CAPT KO KO KYAW

Captain  
Assistant Chief of the Armed Forces Training (Navy)

### BG TOE YEE

Brigadier General  
Head of Department (OCMSA)

## NEW ZEALAND

### CAPT MAXINE GAYE LAWES

Captain  
Royal New Zealand Navy  
Commanding Officer  
HMNZS PHILOMEL

### GPCAPT TIM EVANS

Group Captain  
Assistant Chief of Air Force Strategy

## PAKISTAN

### CAPT MUHAMMAD SALEEM

Pakistan Navy

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### COL ALEKSANDR ZORIN

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Chief of Division  
Ministry of Defence

## SAUDI ARABIA

### COL ADEL A. ALOTAIBI

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Defence Management Course Director

### COL AWAD MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI

Staff Colonel

## SINGAPORE

### COL CHUA JIN KIAT

Commander / Colonel

### LTC ANG WEE KHEE

Commander / Lieutenant-Colonel

### LTC CHEONG YUNN SHAUR

Branch Head / Lieutenant-Colonel

### LTC CHOW WING CHEONG

G4, 3 Div / Lieutenant-Colonel

### LTC DAVID KOK

Branch Head / Lieutenant-Colonel

### LTC LIAO MING HAO

Senior Force Transformation Officer (Air) / Lieutenant-Colonel

### LTC LIM HUAY WEN

Commanding Officer/Lieutenant-Colonel

### LTC NG XUN XI

Commanding Officer/Lieutenant-Colonel

**SLTC NG PAK SHUN**

Deputy Director / Senior Lieutenant-Colonel

**LTC WONG PUI PIN**

Branch Head General Staff (Operations) / Lieutenant-Colonel

**ME6 GUO JING HUA**

Commanding Officer / Military Expert

**ME6 LAN CHI WAI OLIVER**

Branch Head / Military Expert 6

**ME6 YONG CHYE MENG BENNY**

Branch Head / Military Experts 6

**MR HUANG EE CHOON**

Branch Head

**DR JASON LEE**

Group Head Physiology, Principle Member of Technical Staff

**SOUTH KOREA****LT COL HWANG SOO CHUL**

Lieutenant Colonel

**SWEDEN****LT COL ROGER NILSSON**

Lieutenant Colonel

Royal Swedish Marines

**COMMANDER KENNETH RAUN**

Commander

Swedish Defence Attaché to Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei

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Colonel

**UNITED KINGDOM****COMMANDER MARCUS JACQUES**

Commander

Royal Navy

Liaison Officer

US Pacific Command

**MS MARY NOONE**

UK Ministry of Defence

International Plans and Policy

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA****CAPT DONALD CRIBBS**

Captain

**CAPT PATRICK KELLY**

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Commodore

07 J5 Deputy Director Regional

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**SNR COL PHAM THUNG DUNG**

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Dean of Faculty of Control Engineering

Associate Professor of Military Technical Academy

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE OF DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

The **Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)** is a key research component of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). It focuses on defence and security research to serve national needs. IDSS faculty and research staff conducts both academic and policy-oriented research on security-related issues and developments affecting Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific. IDSS is divided into three research clusters: (i) The Asia Pacific cluster – comprising the China, South Asia, United States, and Regional Security Architecture programmes; (ii) The Malay Archipelago cluster—comprising the Indonesia and Malaysia programmes; and (iii) The Military and Security cluster—comprising the Military Transformations, Maritime Security, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) programmes. Finally, the Military Studies Programme, the wing that provides military education, is also a part of IDSS.

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

## 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.

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