**Military Studies Programme SAF Day Panel**

**“Future Challenges for the SAF”**

The Military Studies Programme (MSP), from the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), commemorated the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Day by organising a panel entitled "Future Challenges for the SAF" on 30 June 2016. Chaired by Mr Eddie Lim, Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the MSP, the objective of the discussion was to discuss issues close to the SAF, and the MSP. The panel comprised Dr. Thomas X. Hammes and Dr. Paul T. Mitchell from the U.S. National Defense University and the Canadian Forces College respectively.

Dr. Hammes started off with an analysis on the impact of technologies such as 3D printing and drones on future kinetic operations. He posited that 3D printing made possible an operational environment full of drones made cheaply and in large numbers. The ubiquity of drones and the ease of their application raised many challenges for modern armed forces. An example Dr. Hammes highlighted was the ease in which drones could be carried to their destination – through any number of 20-foot containers travelling through commercial waters. For Singapore, this might render every vessel sailing through our waters daily a possible threat. Dr. Hammes further highlighted numerous other examples for discussion, all of which would complicate today’s operational environment.

Dr. Mitchell followed the conversation by examining the challenges of educating professional military servicemen and women to operate in today’s dynamic and complex environment. He spoke with reference to his development work in the Canadian Forces College (CFC), especially in the areas of syllabus design and curriculum development suitable for the Canadian Armed Forces’ officers’ professional development and education. One challenge highlighted by Dr. Mitchell, which could be faced by the SAF, was the difficulty in finding experienced educators for countries with small militaries. The lack of professional military servicemen and women who have served in operational kinetic environments meant that CFC and the SAF should consider a design-thinking approach towards course content.

The SAF Day Panel, is part of the Military Studies Programme’s Strategic Studies Series of talks, aimed at engendering discussions on military and strategic affairs.

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