APPSMO 2017

By Andre Foo

The 19th Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2017) was held at Village Hotel Changi, Singapore, from 4 to 10 August 2017. Organised by the Military Studies Programme of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, RSIS, APPSMO 2017 was attended by more than 50 military officers from over 20 countries spanning Asia, North America, and Europe.

The theme of APPSMO 2017 – “International Politics in the Asia Pacific: Implications on the Security Policies and Defence Relations” – addressed some of the region’s most pressing security concerns, as well as how civil and military institutions hope to build sustainable peace in the region.

Dr Mohamad Malik Bin Osman, Senior Minister of State for Defence, Singapore, delivered the keynote address, while Singapore’s Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant-General Perry Lim was the guest of honour at the opening dinner.

Over the past 18 years, APPSMO has consistently provided a valuable platform for defence diplomacy and related discussions, a platform which allows military professionals, policymakers, practitioners, academics, as well as other domain experts to exchange views on a broad range of topics pertaining to defence and security.

Over the week, APPSMO participants attended a series of panels dealing with topics relevant to today’s security context such as terrorism, information and cyber warfare, crisis management, defence diplomacy, and the future of conflicts. The panels were led by speakers from all over the world such as South Korea, the United States, Australia, the Netherlands, Israel, Philippines, China, Indonesia, India, and Singapore.

This year, there were also two Distinguished Dinner Lectures conducted. The first lecture, titled “China’s Responses to a Changing World”, was delivered by Professor Wang Gungwu, Chairman, East Asian Institute. The second Distinguished Dinner Lecture, titled “ASEAN at 50, a Force for Stability”, was delivered by Professor Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Deputy Secretary for Political Affairs to the Vice President of Indonesia.

As part of the programme, participants also had the opportunity to visit the Multi-Mission Range Complex, the Port Operations Control Centre, as well as the Seletar Aerospace Park. They also toured the various military heritage sites around Changi and the Battlebox at Fort Canning which served as an underground British Command Centre during World War II.

APPSMO 2017 brought together a list of distinguished speakers:

- **Ambassador Oh Joon**
  Professor of United Nations Studies, Kyung Hee University

- **Rear-Admiral Don Gabrielson**
  Commander, Task Force 73, Logistics Western Pacific of the U.S. Navy

- **Dr TX Hammes**
  Distinguished Research Fellow, Center for Strategic Research, National Defense University

- **Ms Jacinta Carroll**
  Head of Counter-Terrorism Policy Centre, Australian Strategic Policy Institute

- **Mr David Heyman**
  Former Assistant Secretary for Policy, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

- **Mr Stephen De Spiegelaire**
  Principal Scientist, Hague Center for Strategic Studies

- **Dr Linton Wells II**
  Executive Advisor to the Center of C4I and Cyber, George Mason University

- **Professor Gabriel Weimann**
  Professor, Department of Communication, Haifa University

- **Ms Bonnie Glaser**
  Director, China Power Project, Center for Strategic and International Studies

- **Associate Professor Jay Batongbacal**
  College of Law, University of the Philippines

- **Professor Zhu Feng**
  Executive Director, China Center for Collaborative Studies of the South China Sea, Nanjing University

- **Senior Colonel Xu Qiyu**
  Deputy Director, Strategic Research, National Defense University, People’s Republic of China

- **Dr Jusuf Wanandi**
  Center for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia

- **Dr Sanjaya Baru**
  Distinguished Fellow, United Service Institute of India

- **Mr Mattia Tomba,**
  Senior Research Fellow, Middle East Institute

- **Dr Michael Vatikiotis,**
  Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Singapore

- **Professor Ralf Emmers,**
  Associate Dean, RSIS

- **Professor Tan See Seng,**
  Deputy Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)

- **Dr Shashi Jayakumar**
  Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)

- **Professor Pascal Vennesson**
  Professor of Political Science, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)

- **Associate Professor Bilveer Singh**
  Adjunct Senior Fellow, Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)