

Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies

# Year In Review 2017



RSIS CENTRE FOR  
NON-TRADITIONAL  
SECURITY STUDIES  
*YEAR IN REVIEW 2017*

RSIS CENTRE FOR NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES,  
S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES,  
NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, SINGAPORE 2017

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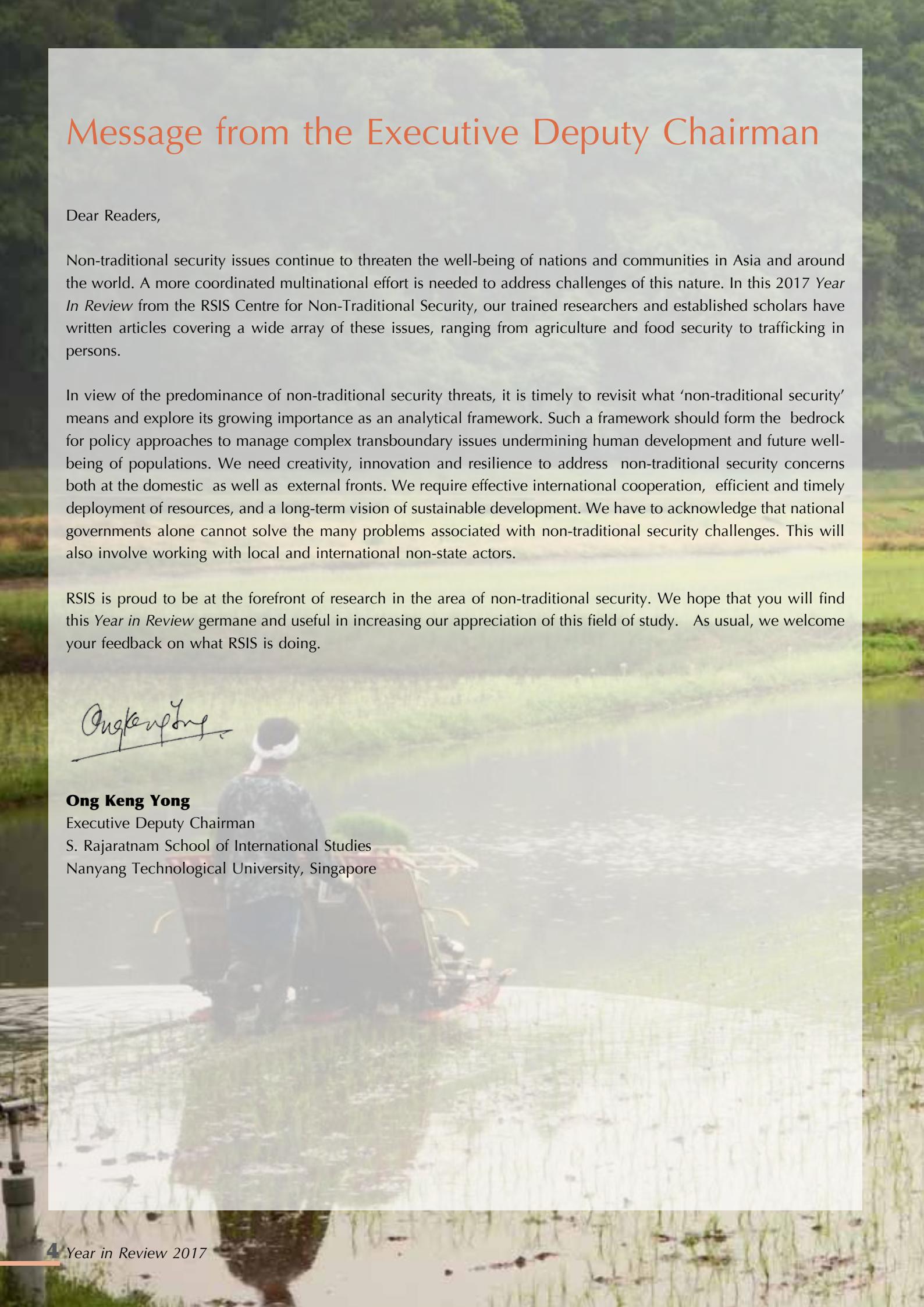
# Message from the Executive Deputy Chairman

Dear Readers,

Non-traditional security issues continue to threaten the well-being of nations and communities in Asia and around the world. A more coordinated multinational effort is needed to address challenges of this nature. In this 2017 Year *In Review* from the RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security, our trained researchers and established scholars have written articles covering a wide array of these issues, ranging from agriculture and food security to trafficking in persons.

In view of the predominance of non-traditional security threats, it is timely to revisit what 'non-traditional security' means and explore its growing importance as an analytical framework. Such a framework should form the bedrock for policy approaches to manage complex transboundary issues undermining human development and future well-being of populations. We need creativity, innovation and resilience to address non-traditional security concerns both at the domestic as well as external fronts. We require effective international cooperation, efficient and timely deployment of resources, and a long-term vision of sustainable development. We have to acknowledge that national governments alone cannot solve the many problems associated with non-traditional security challenges. This will also involve working with local and international non-state actors.

RSIS is proud to be at the forefront of research in the area of non-traditional security. We hope that you will find this *Year in Review* germane and useful in increasing our appreciation of this field of study. As usual, we welcome your feedback on what RSIS is doing.

A photograph showing a person in a green uniform, possibly a security or agricultural worker, operating a small boat with a motor. The boat is moving through a body of water, creating ripples. The background is a lush, green landscape, likely a rural area. The image has a slightly grainy, documentary feel.

Ong Keng Yong

**Ong Keng Yong**

Executive Deputy Chairman  
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies  
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

# Message from Head of Centre

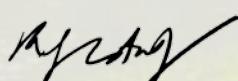
Dear Readers,

The year 2017 is a significant milestone for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN, commemorating the five decades of its journey. Having come this far, ASEAN has much to celebrate and reflect on as it charts its future direction with new challenges ahead that could well test its relevance as a regional organisation. Non-Traditional Security (NTS) issues pose challenges to how ASEAN and its member states have envisioned and designed the ASEAN community to unfold in the years to come.

Among the most significant challenges that occurred in 2017, the unexpected humanitarian crises that occurred in Marawi City in the Philippines and in the Rakhine State in Myanmar saw the devastation of lives and massive displacement of people. As a result, so many had to face other risks and vulnerabilities. Situations such as this have challenged ASEAN's vision to build a community that is caring, prosperous, peaceful and secure.

As these two examples have highlighted, the collaborative participation and engagement of different actors from local communities, civil society organisations, the private sector, governments, regional organisations, and other international agencies are important given the complexities of the non-traditional security challenges. How these actors work together to address the many non-traditional challenges in ASEAN is explained in the 2017 *Year In Review* from the RSIS Centre for Non-Traditional Security.

As ASEAN forges ahead with regional integration, it is more important than ever before to understand the common challenges confronting the ASEAN community of nations and peoples. We hope that you will find the articles in this *NTS Year in Review 2017* useful in presenting a holistic understanding of these challenges and the many approaches of addressing them.



**Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony**

Head

Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies  
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies  
Nanyang Technological University Singapore

# Key NTS Events 2017

Singapore and Philippine militaries together with the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance co-organised the Exercise Coordinated Response (Ex-COORES) 2017 from 23 to 25 January in Singapore. Participants tested cooperation mechanisms in response to a simulated natural disaster in the Philippines.

\* \* \*

Interpol conducted its Asia regional conference, focusing on strengthening policing capacity, in Kathmandu, Nepal from 18 to 20 January. It brought together 117 senior law enforcement officials from 26 countries in the Asia-Pacific.

\* \* \*

A total of 12 farms near Singapore's Pulau Ubin were affected by the oil spill on 3 January which was caused by a collision between two container vessels off Johor in Malaysia.

A strong magnitude-6.7 earthquake hit eastern Mindanao in the Philippines on 11 February, killing eight and leaving 202 injured.

\* \* \*

Indonesia's Environment and Forestry Ministry won a landmark case in court against a firm responsible for forest burning on 7 February. The local court in South Sumatra found palm oil company PT Waringin Agro Jaya (WAJ) guilty of burning forests in Ogan Komering Ilir, South Sumatra.

The ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), took effect on 8 March.

\* \* \*

To commemorate International Women's Day on 8 March, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Mr. Robert Glasser, called for greater advancement of women in disaster management and disaster risk reduction.

\* \* \*

US President Donald Trump signed a sweeping executive order that overturned at least six Obama-era executive orders aimed at curbing climate change and regulating carbon emissions.

## January

## July

The 2017 World Agricultural Forum, a biennial gathering of corporate chiefs, policymakers and experts in the field of agriculture and food production, was held in Singapore from 6 to 7 July.

\* \* \*

ASEAN started delivering various forms of humanitarian assistance to the Philippine government as it confronted Islamic State-linked militants in Marawi City in Mindanao. The conflict became a huge humanitarian crisis and displaced 600,000 civilians from Marawi and surrounding areas.

\* \* \*

On 19 July, the Bangkok Criminal Court found a Thai military general, police officers and local politicians guilty at a mass trial exposing official complicity in human trafficking and victimising Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants.

## February

## August

On 8 August, ASEAN celebrated its 50th anniversary.

\* \* \*

More than 140 participants took part in the third ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM) held in Singapore on 18 August in commemoration of ASEAN's golden jubilee celebration and the World Humanitarian Day.

\* \* \*

Typhoon Hato hit the southern coast of China on 23 August, and affected Macau, Hong Kong and Guangdong. Typhoon Hato left 16 people dead and 27,000 people were evacuated.

\* \* \*

Attacks by Rohingya militants on Myanmar security forces in Rakhine on 25 August triggered heightened armed violence and an exodus of about 600,000 Rohingya across the Bangladeshi border. The military was accused of attacking villages, killing civilians and torching homes.

## March

## September

Malaysia signed a cross-border power deal with Thailand and Laos on 27 September. Malaysia will be able to purchase up to 100MW of hydropower from Laos starting 2018.

\* \* \*

On 20 September 51 countries signed the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that has been fiercely opposed by the US and other nuclear powers. The treaty was the outcome of negotiations led by Austria, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, New Zealand and global NGO coalition International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

\* \* \*

On 25 September, the World Health Organisation warned of a cholera outbreak in Bangladesh's Rohingya camps where more than 435,000 Rohingya Muslims have sought refuge from violence in Myanmar. The camps do not have enough safe drinking water, hygiene facilities, food supply and medicine.

In the wake of heightened armed violence across Thailand's restive southern provinces, the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) rebel group declared on 10 April that the ongoing peace talks were invalid - and that international mediation is the only approach to resolution.

\* \* \*

On 5 April, 57 delegates from national disaster management offices of ASEAN Member States met in Vientiane, Laos to seek ways for future cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

\* \* \*

Singapore authorities and agencies together with industry stakeholders formed a new partnership on 24 April, named the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Industry Partnership (ACIP) to combat financial crimes.

**April**

**October**

**May**

**November**

**June**

**December**

Tokyo Electric Power Co. got safety approval on 4 October from Japan's Nuclear Regulatory Authority to restart two nuclear reactors at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa plant. This is one of the world's biggest and the largest in Japan, and signifies Japan's gradual restoration of its nuclear industry after the 2011 Fukushima accident.

\* \* \*

The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize on 6 October to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, which has been the leading civil society actors to campaign for the prohibition of nuclear weapons under international law.

\* \* \*

On 24 October, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde warned that the world will have a "dark future" if it fails to tackle climate change and inequality in the next 50 years.

Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to protect the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, despite the withdrawal of the US from the pact. He made the promise with then-incoming French President Emmanuel Macron on 9 May.

\* \* \*

On 12 May, UN Food and Agricultural Organisation issued new guidelines to help governments balance the needs of the agricultural sector and climate change when making policy decisions.

\* \* \*

Military personnel from the United States, Vietnam, Japan, Australia and the United Kingdom jointly participated in humanitarian assistance training drills in Da Nang Province, Vietnam as part of the Pacific Partnership 2017 on 8 May.

The UN organised the first-ever global Ocean Conference from 5 - 9 June in New York which highlighted the world leaders' commitment to sustainable ocean-based economies and poverty eradication. More than 6000 participants representing state agencies, environmental NGOs, corporations, and philanthropists took part in the meeting.

\* \* \*

The Mekong River Commission (MRC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Morocco for knowledge exchange in Water Resource Development and Management.

\* \* \*

Labour officials, labour inspectors, prosecutors and investigators from ASEAN Member States attended the Regional Workshop on Effective Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons (TIPs) for Labour Exploitation from 6 to 8 June in Manila, the Philippines.

ASEAN leaders signed the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant at the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila on 14 November. The ASEAN Consensus contains fundamental rights of migrant workers as well as obligations and commitments of ASEAN member states.

\* \* \*

The leaders of ASEAN and China jointly issued the Declaration for a Decade of Coastal and Marine Environmental Protection in the South China Sea in Manila on 13 November.

\* \* \*

On 23 November, Myanmar and Bangladesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the repatriation of Rohingya Muslims who fled from violence in Rakhine state. Rights groups raised concerns over the repatriation process.

On 4 December, the Philippines halted the sale, distribution and marketing of Dengvaxia, the world's first vaccine for dengue. Its French manufacturer Sanofi said in late November that it may worsen symptoms for those not previously infected with dengue.

\* \* \*

At least fifteen people died and one million were affected by flooding in Thailand's conflict-afflicted deep south as of 5 December. The monsoon rains that started late November inundated eight provinces and hit hundreds of thousands of households.

\* \* \*

On 12 December, 50 world leaders attended the One Planet Summit in Paris, France. Hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron, the conference focused on how to finance both the global shift away from fossil fuels and measures needed to adapt to ongoing changes caused by global warming.

# Non-Traditional Security : An Evolving Solution to New Challenges

*Martin Searle*

The formulation of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) made three principle contributions to security sector discourse in the face of peculiar security challenges of the Post-Cold War era. First, it opened space for non-military threats to be considered, allowing issues ranging from infectious disease, illegal drug trafficking, irregular migration, environmental degradation, financial turmoil, and natural disasters to be framed as legitimate security concerns. The resonance of this for the Asia Pacific is plain, having experienced a financial crisis in 1997-8; regular issues of pollution, haze and the early impacts of climate change; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and Avian Flu pandemics; massive migration; and regular and periodically massive natural disasters. Second, it stressed that many, if not most, of these newly recognised security threats are transnational, rather than inter-state. Therefore, the scope for resolving security threats was expanded beyond simply engaging the appropriate state diplomatically or militarily to include private and non-governmental actors, and in so doing shifting from a default of bilateral resolutions to one of multilateral ones including various state and non-

state parties, producing a greater emphasis on broader societal coordination.

Third, NTS expanded potential security referents – those whose security is considered of concern – beyond just the state to include individuals and communities as well; although, unlike the related doctrine of human security, NTS retained a state focus still in parallel. Nonetheless, this opened space for issues that do not pose a direct threat to the state to be incorporated into security discourse and considered legitimate security issues. The inclusion of threats to the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities within the category of security threats worthy of mitigation has no doubt facilitated better preparation and response to natural disasters and pandemics in the region, and driven efforts for improved regional coordination that have borne fruit in the form of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), the Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (RHCC) and the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) Centre. While



*Multinational service members conduct a Search and Rescue demonstration during the opening ceremony for ASEAN Exercise 16-3 at 14th Military Circle Airfield, Chonburi Province on 5th September 2016. The conceptualisation of non-traditional security has helped create space for military involvement in disaster relief.*

Source: U.S. Pacific Command

progress has been more limited, this conceptual shift has nonetheless grounded discussions on migration and environmental degradation regionally, including the ASEAN Declaration on Environmental Sustainability and, to some extent, the Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, more commonly referred to as the Bali Process.

## Challenges to NTS

As crucial as the notion of NTS has been for the challenges that have faced this region since the end of the Cold War, it nonetheless has problems both conceptually and materially. On the material level, the decision to designate something as a security issue remains, at root, a political one; and yet paradoxically, such a decision removes that issue from the realm of politics, and hence contestation. While this can be critical for achieving an efficient and effective solution, it is also clearly subject to abuse for the benefit of short-term political interest. Many problems – indeed most problems – require politics and the creative tension of competing ideas, disagreement and compromise to be

properly resolved. While several decision-makers have benefitted politically from presenting irregular migration as an urgent security threat, it is likely that resolution of that particular challenge would benefit from its de-securitisation and the subsequent widening of space to debate and disagree. Beyond this, NTS scholars too must acknowledge that their short-term interests lie in expanding what can be considered a specifically NTS threat, and must therefore remain duly on their guard against unwarranted growth in, or undue reification of, their remit.

On the conceptual-level, stretching security concepts to include more potentially compromises their analytical value. This reflection is given added urgency since, while NTS threats are by definition non-military, martial agendas have broadened to consider some as within their remit. In many cases, such as disaster relief, this has proven beneficial. However, reforming security concepts may have also created space for military involvement in migration, which is arguably less appropriate. Here at RSIS, proponents of NTS have long voiced a desire to achieve a stable orientation between traditional and non-traditional security studies and ultimately doing





Source: University of Hawai'i News

*Disaster managers and stakeholders at the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) in Indonesia in April 2012, using the Disaster Monitoring and Response System, based on the Pacific Disaster Centre's DisasterAWARE software, to monitor hazards and potential impacts. The multilateral agreements undergirding the creation of the AHA Centre stem directly from Non-Traditional Security thinking.*

away with the qualifiers of "traditional" and "non-traditional" altogether. This would help open the way to clarify questions such as these. While we have not yet achieved this, some of the threats borne of technologies that have come to the fore this past year suggest again why it is important.

## Cyber: A traditional and non-traditional security threat

WannaCry, Petya, the Macron Campaign Hack: there have been a raft of high profile cybersecurity attacks in 2017. This follows the hack of the US Democratic National Committee in late 2016, as well as the US Office of Personnel Management for a second time, with attackers targeting personal information of military and intelligence personnel applying for security clearance. These are non-military threats and can be transnational – both typically NTS characteristics; or, to the extent they are state sponsored, inter-state in nature, and thus considered more traditional. Meanwhile, the targets, in the form of state institutions and critical, if sometimes privatised, infrastructure, can be the referents of traditional security; or, in the case of media-based disinformation campaigns and psychological operations that have sought to subvert the public sphere in the US, Germany, France, Latvia, and the Czech Republic, they can be individuals and communities. Given this overlap, cyber threats represent a particular challenge

to this traditional/non-traditional security bifurcation, and it is no surprise that security scholars from both fields are working on their implications.

There is strong reason to think that conceptualising, and subsequently addressing, cyber threats in particular would benefit from dropping the qualifiers of traditional/non-traditional from security discourse. While we wait to see if China's attempt to control information flows in and out of its cartographical borders through its Great Firewall create something analogous to state sovereignty within cyberspace, it is clear that the Westphalian state order does not easily transpose into a cyber realm predicated on interoperable platform protocols and networked and thus dispersed information flows, rather than geographical envelopes and monopolies of force. These different governing logics mean threats within cyberspace can be simultaneously state-driven, like traditional security threats, and transnational and nebulous, similar to existing NTS threats of climate change, pandemics and even organised crime. By extension, determining solutions would likely benefit from a conceptual architecture that allows for both non-traditional transnationalism alongside traditional inter-statism, and, with the advent of a corresponding hybrid warfare that also includes cyber components, military and non-military threats as well.



Source: blog.entrepreneur.com/tech

*In many ways, cyber space fundamentally challenges the principles underlying the Westphalian state order, particularly the notions of territoriality and monopolies of force. Nonetheless, states remain key targets and perpetrators of attacks. Together, these considerations suggest an analytical and policy approach combining traditional and non-traditional security is necessary.*

# ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons: A Regional Approach To Fighting Human Trafficking

*Yen Ne Foo*

It was years in the making but the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), finally entered into force in March 2017. Since the 1990s, ASEAN has identified Trafficking in Persons (TIP) as a threat to economic, political and societal stability. The trade of human beings was seen to undermine regular migration, often linked to drug trafficking and a threat to the moral foundation of ASEAN member states. The idea of setting up a regional framework to combat trafficking in persons culminated in the ACTIP in 2015. Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam had ratified the convention. But, it was only when the Philippines deposited its instrument of ratification of the ACTIP in February 2017 that the convention converted itself from an emblem of good intention and goodwill to a legally-binding regional regime to combat human trafficking in Southeast Asia.

## Trafficking in Persons in Southeast Asia

A functional framework in Southeast Asia is important not only because of the scale and prevalence of TIP in the region but also because of the region's trafficking routes. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimates, in 2010, that one-third of the global trafficking trade is from Southeast Asia, out of which approximately 60% are intraregional trade of human bodies to major regional cities. Meanwhile, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported that in 2016, more than 85 percent of the trafficked victims in East Asia and the Pacific were trafficked from within the region.

Estimates for trafficked persons in Southeast Asia vary widely. The trafficking trade is complex, fluid and multi-faceted. The key ingredients needed for TIP – action,

means and exploitation – are not always discernable. State borders in Southeast Asia are also porous and non-contiguous, making TIP hard to catch. IOM noted that trafficking flows tend to mirror regular migration flows. Push factors like poverty, natural disasters, conflict, displacement and unemployment influence migration and trafficking flows. Meanwhile, the insatiable appetite of Southeast Asia's growing economies for labour as well as the demand within the sex and entertainment industry draw people away from home with the promise of greater financial or social security. Labour and sex trafficking are most common in Southeast Asia but many are also trafficked for forced marriages, domestic servitude, child prostitution, child soldier conscription and forced begging.

Every ASEAN state is, to some extent, a source, transit or destination country for TIP. Each has a commercial ecosystem consisting of recruitment agents, smugglers, human traffickers, and immigration consultants who are part of formal and informal networks that search out pockets of space in the global economy willing to host and facilitate the movement of trafficked persons.



Migrant fishermen on Thai fishing boat

Source: Flickr / ILO Asia and the Pacific

This is not for want of laws. National legislations and bilateral agreements in the region are available to outlaw TIP, punish traffickers and protect victims. But their application and effectiveness have been uneven, as pointed out by The United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report).

The TIP Report tracks governments' efforts for prosecution, protection and prevention (the 3P Paradigm) of trafficking in persons and places each country onto one of four tiers. In 2017, the Philippines was the only ASEAN state placed on Tier 1; it was deemed to have met the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia and Brunei were on Tier 2, not fully meeting the same standards but are making significant efforts to do so. Thailand, Laos and Myanmar were one rank lower at Tier 2 Watch List. This means that the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is significant or is significantly increasing and there is a failure to show increasing efforts to combat severe forms of TIP. As a barometer, the TIP Report is not foolproof. Its reliance on second-hand information for key data like prosecution rates and number of identified trafficked victims and the fitting of all anti-trafficking efforts within the 3P Paradigm are obviously flawed. Still, the observations on ASEAN states expose the gaps of national laws working in silos against a transnational crime that does not respect territorial borders.



*Mass graves found of trafficking victims at Thai-Malaysia border*



*Conflict in Myanmar exposes Rohingyas to the trafficking trade*

Source: Flickr EU Commission DG

To start, there is no uniform understanding of TIP among ASEAN states. For instance, Singapore's definition of TIP mirrors that of the United Nations Protocol to Suppress, Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (UN TIP Protocol) and attaches precise definitions to different forms of exploitation such as debt bondage, servitude and sexual exploitation. But, Vietnam's penal code criminalises sex and labour trafficking but does not prohibit all forms of trafficking and omits definitions of forms of exploitation. The effect is that what is TIP and criminal in Singapore is not necessarily so in Vietnam. Because TIP is regularly transnational in commission and effect, inconsistency and inexact legal definitions not only hinder consistent application of national TIP laws but also impede cooperation between states in combatting TIP.

Secondly, despite the enactment of national laws, prosecution and conviction rates of perpetrators remain woefully low. In Vietnam, no one has ever been prosecuted under its labour trafficking laws while the TIP Report found that the Thai government reported only 83 investigations and 62 prosecutions of suspected cases of forced labour in 2017 despite the prevalence of forced labour in Thailand. Official complicity, corruption,

poor collection of TIP data and weaknesses in victim identification procedures are among the roadblocks to more effective enforcement of TIP laws.

Third, prosecution-centric national TIP legal and policy frameworks offer inadequate victim protection and support. Failure to understand the needs of victims, lack of coordination within and between countries for planning and case management and the conflation of TIP with immigration offences and offences committed under exploitative circumstances means victims of TIP are often unassisted, under-assisted and experience discontinuity of care in source and destination countries.

### **ACTIP's promise in combatting TIP**

The ACTIP is the starting point for a regional approach that fills the gaps of existing national anti-trafficking efforts. The Convention adopts the UN TIP Protocol's definition of TIP without modification, giving ASEAN a singular and uniform definition of TIP. It compels ASEAN states to put in place legislative and other measures to criminalise TIP as defined in the UN TIP Protocol and activities linked to it such as participation in an organised criminal group, laundering proceeds of crime corruption and obstruction of justice. Whilst

amendments to national laws on TIP remain within the remit of national governments, the ACTIP should help align the region's varied legal frameworks and understanding of TIP with that of international standards. More important than the ACTIP's focus on prosecution is that the Convention gives new impetus for much needed multilateral coordination and cooperation in anti-trafficking efforts. It calls for deeper government to government cooperation to improve on a spectrum of anti-trafficking efforts – information and intelligence sharing, victim identification, protection and repatriation, law enforcement, confiscation and seizure of trafficking proceeds - and the establishing of regional coordinating structures to facilitate them. The development of multilateral regulations on mutual recognition of victim identification, interstate referral and victim protection procedures and a regional database to track transnational trafficking cases are some instances of where ASEAN states can and should cooperate.

How ASEAN states respond to the legal obligations under ACTIP and what will be done to translate the Convention's spirit into action remain to be seen. But, if the Convention is borne out of the joint recognition that ASEAN states have a shared responsibility and a common goal to eliminate trafficking, then the ACTIP must be the harbinger of meaningful interstate cooperation to ensure safe migration in the region.



*Signing Ceremony of the ACTIP at the 27th ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur, 2015*

Source: Malaysia Ministry of Foreign Affairs

# The Emergence of Comprehensive Humanitarianism in Southeast Asia?

Alistair D. B. Cook

Over the past year, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance in Disaster Management has for the first time facilitated and delivered humanitarian assistance to those who have fled conflict in their home countries. The AHA Centre provided regional humanitarian assistance to the forced displacement that occurred in Marawi in the Southern Philippines and Northern Rakhine state in Myanmar. Both these situations have illustrated the trust that the AHA Centre has built with ASEAN member states and potentially shows a new direction for regional humanitarian response beyond 'natural' disasters and towards a more systematic and comprehensive humanitarian arrangement.

## A Catalyst for Change

After the Indian Ocean Tsunami killed 230,000 – 280,000 people in 14 countries in the region on 24 December 2004, there was a realization that Southeast Asian states needed to work together to prevent such devastation and loss of life in the future. Nearly fifteen years later, the regional humanitarian architecture has undergone significant developments that affect the ability of states and societies to respond to such disasters.

Five years after the 2004 devastation, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response came into force. The agreement established a legally binding regime for natural and man-made disasters in Southeast Asia. By 2011, the operational face of AADMER was unveiled as the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance in disaster management. By 2013, the AHA Centre staff deployed to Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 but learnt that offering surge capacity in capital cities would not suffice, and a more visible presence in affected communities was needed. The AHA Centre suffered 'visibility damage' because of its operation in the aftermath of the typhoon. Since then, it has made significant progress in building its own capacity.

## Reimagining Regional Response

Alongside the establishment of the AHA Centre and its emergency response function is its capacity-building mandate in member states. The AHA Centre established an AHA certificate of excellence and training for emergency response and assessment teams (ERAT). These two training courses see citizens from member states and those based in the region come together in an effort to



*In Rakhine state in Myanmar many fled violence and sought refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh – the largest humanitarian crisis of 2017.*

Source: Wikimedia Commons /Panoramio/Mohigan

build a regional surge capacity that bolsters national disaster management offices during crises. These courses also provide an important mechanism to build trust between member state officials from national ministries and agencies across the region as well as other key stakeholders. When the AHA Centre activates its alumni network, they come from both within a country's ranks as well as from neighbours'. This offers a new dynamic in how we conceptualise what constitutes an ASEAN crisis response as it draws from within an affected state as well as fellow member states.

Most recently, ASEAN leaders signed the declaration of One ASEAN, One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region in September 2016. This reaffirmed the commitment of the regional grouping to work together to provide a more integrated disaster response. As part of the ASEAN Vision 2025 exercise, many conversations focused on whether the AHA Centre should move beyond a singular focus on natural disasters and utilize the trust it has built as a regional institution working with its teams inside member states as well as those deployed from other member states in times of crisis.

## Principled Engagement

Over the past five years, the AHA Centre has emerged as a pre-eminent component of Southeast Asian state-led relief activity. It has provided an important coordination function between member states and has offered other sectoral officials insights into their operational capacity. In July, health officials visited the AHA Centre to learn



*A building in Marawi is set ablaze by airstrikes carried out by the Philippine Air Force as part of efforts to reclaim the city from insurgents on 15 June 2017.*



Source: Wikimedia Commons/Philippine Information Agency

*The AHA Centre hands over relief items and equipment for the internally displaced persons from Marawi City and other affected localities.*

from their experience and inform the development of the ASEAN Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) Network for regional surveillance and response. In August, the AHA Centre deployed to Marawi in the Southern Philippines illustrating that their experience responding to natural disasters are transferable to other crises. Most recently in October, the AHA Centre deployed to Myanmar to offer humanitarian assistance to displaced people in Rakhine state, once again underlining its pre-eminence. This signals further developments that recognize the trust and value placed in the AHA Centre to coordinate humanitarian assistance by ASEAN member states. It is now becoming clearer that the One ASEAN, One Response is being implemented both across sectors and through providing the political will the AHA Centre needs to frame responses to crises beyond natural disasters.

There is an emerging humanitarian architecture where the AHA Centre performs a dual function firstly in providing insights for those sectors well-placed to develop their own response to humanitarian crises like pandemics; and secondly in responding to those humanitarian settings where there is no alternative sectoral or trusted response to gain access to the population of concern. While the training of sectoral bodies will remain less contested, the operational functions of the AHA Centre in the absence of sectoral competency needs deeper consideration.

## The Cost of Ineffectiveness

Across the world, the global humanitarian architecture responds to both disasters and conflict. In Southeast Asia, the overwhelming focus has been on natural disasters as the Asia-Pacific is the most severely affected by disasters than any other region. The United Nations

reports that 2 million people died between 1970 and 2016 in disasters, which contributed 57 percent of the global death toll. Disasters have also caused large-scale damage with the Asia-Pacific losing \$1.3 trillion in assets since 1970. While these figures show that there is considerable progress needed on mitigating and responding to disasters, it is a much less contested arena for humanitarian assistance than responding to conflict. This is primarily because conflicts involve warring parties and oftentimes the official government of a country where conflict has broken out is involved on one side of it. This makes it difficult to maintain a focus on the needs of those civilians affected by the conflict if they are understood to be on an opposing side. The government may only allow access to those it deems in need rather than need being determined by the principles of humanitarianism – humanity – when everyone is treated equally regardless of their background; impartiality, neutrality and operational independence (see table below).

The developments over the past year have illustrated a more comprehensive implementation of the AHA Centre mandate from one focused solely on natural disasters to one focused on humanitarian crises more broadly albeit on a case-by-case basis at the invitation of the member state. This shift highlights the trust and value that the AHA Centre has earned with the respective governments. This is an important move towards a more systematic relief mechanism in Southeast Asia. It also provides an important homegrown point of convergence at the regional level in a humanitarian system faced with ever

more agencies and interests. However, it is no panacea for the complex political dynamics of conflicts. It is important to measure expectations by remembering it is a state-based regional organization with open communication with NGOs and civil society. As 2017 draws to a close, it is timely to take stock of the significant advancements that ASEAN has made in terms of humanitarian assistance but also reflect on the potential future constraints around the AHA Centre mandate.

Ultimately, without the say-so of a member state government the AHA Centre's ability to pursue its expertise in the field with access to populations of concern will be limited. While the rhetoric around a people-centered ASEAN conjures up images of a more open system and highlights the potential for a needs-based humanitarian response, how centered ASEAN is on its people currently remains the domain of their respective governments. As we move through 2018, it will be important to build more trust and expertise in the complex humanitarian situations this region faces. This will be particularly crucial in designing emergency preparedness activities for the AHA Centre and state-based actors to gain exposure to more complex emergencies from populations affected and landmines displaced by floods in Indochina to the overlapping scenarios of natural hazards and conflicts. At present, while the number of relief organisations continues to rise, the level of trust built with affected countries will determine the effectiveness of the regional humanitarian system.

## Humanitarian Principles

Humanity	Neutrality	Impartiality	Independence
Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.	Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.	Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinions.	Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.

# Ex COORES – A Model for Civil-Military Relations in HADR Efforts?

*Hnin Nu Wai*

Since the founding of ASEAN fifty years ago, countries in the region have been involved in disaster response both at home and abroad. What is particularly noticeable in this region is that there is a significant role for the military even if its response varies from country to country. In the immediate aftermath of large-scale disasters, military assets in security, logistics, transportation and communications are desperately needed. For the militaries in this region, providing relief in foreign lands helps to foster greater cooperation between countries in ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific more broadly. This year Singapore hosted the multinational Exercise Coordinated Response (EX COORES), a simulated drill held in January, which sought to simulate military disaster response in the Asia-Pacific.

The Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) in Singapore, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the United States' Centre for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance organised the exercise. It was the first multinational Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise in Singapore since the launch of the RHCC in September 2014. The exercise involved 18 militaries from the US, China and several ASEAN nations, together with twelve observers from non-military groups including Médecins sans Frontiers, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The purpose of EX COORES was to strengthen co-operation among militaries, to practice their coordination in the area of disaster relief and to build a network of partners from both military and civilian backgrounds. Through the facilitation of a coordination centre greater effectiveness can be achieved in the first 48 to 72 hours of a multinational HADR operation. The simulated

scenario-based training provided the participants with a clear understanding of the benefits of identified contact persons and a platform to exchange information to prepare for future disasters.

The CFE-DM Director Joseph Martin questioned the political tensions across the Asia-Pacific, which threaten to disrupt these partnerships. The consensus is that there is no place for politics during HADR operations. It is more important to render relief to a country, which has declared a state of emergency by providing the necessary relief and contribute to national measures to reduce risk and minimize human casualties over the longer term. However, we cannot ignore that these situations are often highly politicised. Notwithstanding the politicisation, we should also be mindful that some operations are able to carry on under politically challenging circumstances. Since Southeast Asia is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, the exercise was testament to the fact that militaries as well as civilian agencies are working to foster significant cooperation in the field to achieve a faster and collective response to disasters.

It is important to understand the roles of the different players in building the capacity of national, regional and international civilian agencies and military forces. It is equally important to recognise the growing importance of civil-military relations in conflicts and natural disasters.

The EX COORES was a successful example of a joint contingency planning exercise among militaries. The key will be to develop this further to capture the civil-military dynamics in disaster scenarios, beyond civilian players observing exercises. This will help to develop more effective multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, which are vital to handle the challenges posed by disaster relief scenarios in the region.

*Post-Cyclone Marian in 1991, U.S - Bangladesh joint task force to spearhead HADR efforts to the devastated areas.*

Source: Courtesy of Flickr account of III Marine Expeditionary Force/ Marine Corps Installations Pacific and used under a creative commons license.

# Human Trafficking in Times of Crisis

Vishalini Chandara Sagar

Asia is the world's most populous region and accounts for 30.6 percent of victims of trans-regional trafficking. According to the Global Slavery Index 2015, about 35.8 million people are in forced labour as a result of trafficking. This includes numbers in prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation. As a result, governments and international organisations have started to pay serious attention to address the problem of human trafficking in this region.

There are various root causes for human trafficking such as poverty, education, gender discrimination and discrimination against particular groups in societies. After the 2004 Aceh tsunami, natural disasters have been identified as conducive environments where traffickers can easily exploit the state of hopelessness that survivors often experience, especially if they were already vulnerable to begin with.

According to the US State Department, natural disasters can increase the physical and economic insecurities of survivors. Those who are most vulnerable in society, such as the unemployed, migrants, women and poorer families are disproportionately affected. The World Health Organisation has stated that natural disasters result in extreme poverty and desperation, forcing women to adopt coping strategies such as transactional sex to try to meet their basic needs as employment opportunities are limited. This makes them more vulnerable to sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking.

In the aftermath of the 2004 Aceh tsunami, several non-governmental organisations stated that they observed a hike in the number of victims of sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking. However, there

were no specific surveys completed to confirm the exact numbers of these reports. According to government officials in Aceh, many children were taken to orphanages outside of Aceh after the disaster, making it difficult to investigate if any of them were subjected to trafficking.

Governments in the region need to adhere to their commitments to tackle human trafficking. At the regional level, ASEAN has designed the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP), which seeks to eradicate human trafficking in Southeast Asia. The convention entered into force in March this year. However, human trafficking is addressed as an issue on its own and not necessarily extended to disaster scenarios. This makes it challenging to monitor trafficking flow and numbers in the aftermath of a disaster.

As one of the most disaster-affected regions in the world, countries in Southeast Asia need to do much more to combat human trafficking in the aftermath of these extreme weather events. Firstly, it is important to recognise the existence of human trafficking during disasters as the focus tends to be more on response operations in the immediate fallout of a disaster. Initial steps to address this imbalance would be to highlight the vulnerability of the disaster-affected population to human trafficking at the regional level and include counter-trafficking interventions in the emergency phase of a disaster response. It is also most critical to collect empirical and disaggregated data on human trafficking during disasters to assess the magnitude of the issue and to introduce and implement policies that effectively overcome the challenges. Taking these small but significant steps will help combat human trafficking in the region in the long-run.



Cyclone Nargis killed at least 140,000 people and left more than 800,000 people homeless.

Source: AFSC Partner

# Securing the Food Production Base: Youth and Technological Adaptation

*Jose Ma. Luis P. Montesclaros*

In 2017, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UN FAO) published that approximately 50 per cent more food will need to be produced annually by 2050 to meet the demands of a growing population. Yet, arable land is only projected to grow by 5 per cent while crop yields per hectare have plateaued over the past decades. This is projected to worsen with expected changes in temperatures and less reliable precipitation.

While few would contest that climate-smart technological innovations in agriculture such as crop analytics and biotechnology are important for improving yields, a key question is whether there will be sufficient people in agricultural production to implement these innovations. This issue was raised at the World Agricultural Forum held in July this year, which RSIS co-hosted together with the World Agricultural Forum – a non-profit organisation in the United States. One of the problems mentioned at the forum is the declining share of the global workforce in agriculture. The share of agricultural jobs globally accounts for 29 per cent in the most recent World Bank estimates, and people continue to migrate from rural to urban areas; by 2050, rural populations are expected to decline from 54 per cent in 2014



*Dr Rangsit Poosiripinyo, Deputy Secretary General, Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), shares on the ASEAN perspective at the World Agricultural Forum 2017.*



Source: Author

*A young agriculture advocate ("Agvocate") sharing opinions on issues with agriculture's status quo at the Youth Ag Summit, Brussels, 2017.*

to approximately 33 per cent by 2050. The 'aging farmer' is also a concern with an average of 66 years of age in Japan and between 51 and 52 years in Thailand.

## Engaging Youth in Agriculture

In addressing the declining share of agricultural employment, one imperative is to draw more youth into the sector. Speakers at the Youth Engagement Event, held alongside WAF 2017 and attended by over a hundred students from Singapore, shared a few novel avenues by which the youth could be employed in agriculture. These jobs include prototyping of drone products, developing digital applications, and conducting research to minimise food spoilage, all glaringly different from the notion that agricultural jobs are dull, dirty and dangerous. The other option was to increase the adoption of new technologies in farming. This was highlighted at the Youth Ag Summit 2017, a subsequent agricultural event in Brussels in October, which was attended by students and young professionals from 49 countries.

The agriculture sector faces multiple challenges and one of them is the adaptation of new technologies. Some farmers tend to be wary of new technologies, especially the financial risks involved, as well as the perception that new technologies are either too complicated, or not user-friendly. To address this, they proposed to create a targeted educational platform with information on finance sources, educational resources, and related applications accessible without cost to farmers. This aims to encourage a new generation of contributors to the agricultural sector and foster a more secure food production base.

# The Paris Climate Agreement: Optimism despite the U.S. Pullout?

Margareth Sembiring

The last two years have been an eventful period for the historic Paris Climate Agreement signed in December 2015. The Agreement was widely perceived as the beacon for the global fight against the changing climate. This was particularly meaningful as the previous attempts to bring the U.S. to ratify the 1997 Kyoto Protocol failed. The optimism surrounding the signing of the Paris Climate Agreement, however, did not last long as the U.S. presidential election was on the horizon and the then presidential candidate Donald Trump made a pledge to withdraw the U.S. from the Agreement. As the world witnessed his presidential victory in November 2016, uncertainties over the eventual fate of the Paris Climate Agreement began to loom large. True to his word, President Donald Trump publicly announced his plans, and in August 2017 the U.S. formally submitted notice of withdrawal to the United Nations.

The U.S. official declaration of intent to leave the Paris Climate Agreement begs a question as to whether the Agreement will succeed in meeting its targets of keeping temperature increases of this century below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Such worries are not unfounded considering the U.S. is the second biggest carbon emitter

in the world. More importantly, by exiting the Paris Climate Agreement, the U.S. no longer has the obligation to fulfill its pledge to contribute USD3 billion to the Green Climate Fund. The loss of a significant source of funding in the Green Climate Fund may in turn affect climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in developing states.

## Global Pushback Filling the Gap Left by the U.S.?

While much commotion has been surrounding these concerns, the U.S. pullout may not mean doomsday for the global climate agreement as pushbacks by multiple actors have been surprisingly bold and encouraging. To start with, traditional allies of the US were among the first to show discontent. In early June 2017 following President Donald Trump's statement of intent of withdrawal, world leaders from Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Canada, and the European Union, among others, reacted with disappointment and hastily re-affirmed their commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement. Subsequently in the joint communiqué of



*The US citizens protesting against President Trump's stance on climate change. In August 2017, the US eventually submitted to the United Nations a formal notice to pull out of the Paris Climate Agreement.*

Source: Flickr / Peg Hunter

the G20 meeting in July 2017, the leaders expressed their continued determination to fight climate change although the U.S. insisted on a separate paragraph on its position pertaining to climate change and fossil fuels.

Moreover, following the void left by the U.S., China has prominently risen up the ranks and is poised to become the leader in the global fight against climate change. China on its part does not seem to mind the role, and has been showing intentions to fulfill such expectations. In addition to China's ongoing rapid expansion in renewable energy and reduction in carbon intensity, Chinese President Xi Jinping re-affirmed China's intention of taking a "driving seat in international cooperation to climate change" in the recent Communist Party congress in mid-October 2017.

Countries were not the only entities responding to President Trump's eventual decision to pull the U.S. out. The U.S. State of California publicly declared its continuing partnership on combating climate change with Germany and China. This was despite President Trump's order to undo former President Obama's Clean Power Plan which formed the basis for such cooperation between California and Germany and China in the first place.

California is teaming up with China's Tsinghua University to set up a U.S.-China Climate Change Institute. The Institute aims to develop collaborations on research and technology to address climate change. California also joined forces with China's Ministry of Science and



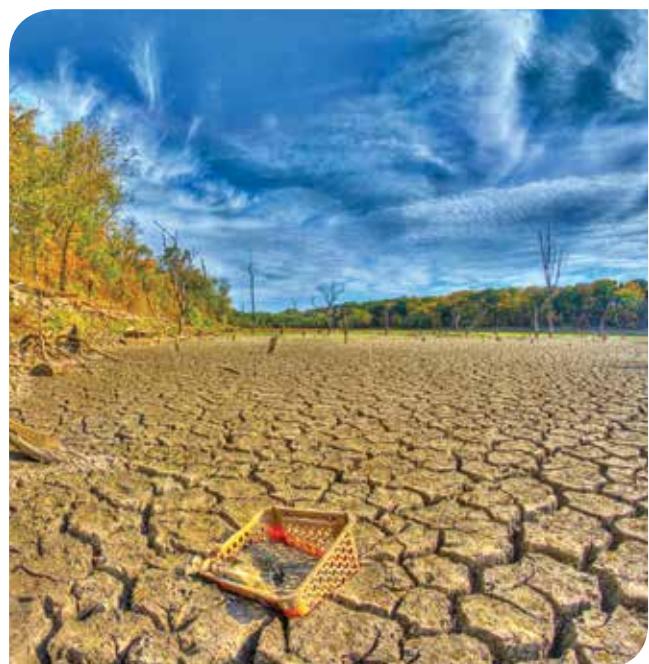
Source: Flickr / Stanley Zimny

*Climate change marches draw huge crowds.*

Technology to work on clean energy, carbon capture and storage, and information technology that will assist in greenhouse gas reduction.

Similarly, in response to President Trump's claim to justify the US withdrawal that he was elected to represent the people of Pittsburgh and not Paris, both mayors of Pittsburgh and Paris affirmed that their cities were part of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and stressed their commitments to combating climate change impacts.

The private sector also weighed in with big companies such as Cargill, Unilever, the Coca-Cola Company and General Electric, together with more than 1,000 companies, protesting against President Trump's move. Such innovative partnerships with U.S. states, educational institutes, and the private sector offer food for thought as countries in this region consider their engagement options with the U.S. on climate change.



Source: Flickr / Patrick Emerson

*Climate change intensifies drought events intensify in some parts of the world.*

## **Non-State Actors Participation in the Global Fight against Climate Change**

A united front formed by many different actors against the U.S. withdrawal with expressions of determination to achieve the Paris Climate Agreement targets are notable. It challenges to the long established emphasis on countries to take the lead, particularly those emitting the most carbon in global environmental governance.

More remarkable are the U.S.' homegrown "America's Pledge" and "We Are Still In" movements that attempt to ensure the U.S. endures in reducing carbon emission and achieves the Paris Climate Agreement targets. Initiated and championed by Former New York Mayor and UN Special Envoy Michael Bloomberg and California Governor Jerry Brown, "America's Pledge" carries substantial weight in galvanising multiple actors from different walks of life to subscribe to the movement. Both Mayors Bloomberg and Brown were present in their capacity as "America's Pledge" co-chairs in the 23rd

annual Conference of the Parties (COP) under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), or COP23, in November 2017 in Bonn.

Its sister initiative “We Are In” that started in June this year has gathered more than 2,500 American leaders to date from business and investors, cities and countries, states and tribes, colleges and universities, and faith organisations to show their collective commitment to fighting climate change.

Indeed, non-state actors including international organisations, global corporations, scientific networks, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have made significant contributions to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. In the realm of agriculture, for example, a number of self-organised international youth groups such as “Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network” and “Oikos International” have been actively promoting the adoption of more environmentally-friendly agriculture practices. Taken together, what non-state actors across borders have done thus far could potentially match what states can offer in tackling climate change. With the U.S. stepping aside, non-state actors seem to find an avenue, whether intentionally or unintentionally, to showcase and prove their important roles in global environmental governance.

## What is Next for the Paris Climate Agreement?

In the recent COP23, Syria became the last country to join the Paris Climate Agreement, leaving only the U.S. outside it. As it stands, global support for the Paris Climate Agreement remains evidently strong and this gives a clear cause for optimism despite the U.S. absence.

Countries party to the Paris Climate Agreement will need to remain committed towards achieving their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) targets and contribute to the reporting and reviewing mechanisms set in the Paris Agreement’s Rule Book that originated in COP22 in Marrakech last year. Moving forward, the year 2018 will mark an important milestone for the Paris Climate Agreement as countries will meet for a facilitative dialogue and share their progress towards reaching their goals. Subsequently, countries will need to update and communicate their next INDCs based on what they have achieved. By 2023 another stocktake will take place and more adjustments to the INDCs will be made. After that countries will review their INDCs every five years in their bid to eventually reach the Paris Climate Agreement goals of keeping temperature increases of this century below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

The unprecedented collective expressions committing to continue the fight against the changing climate further bolsters global solidarity for the cause. As the world’s second largest carbon emitter, the U.S. leaving the Paris Climate Agreement is undoubtedly regrettable. While it remains uncertain whether condemnation and pressure will persuade the U.S. to change its course, the global pushbacks may actually prove that the Paris Climate Agreement may still succeed in achieving what it is meant to do even without the U.S being party to it.

Hope is high indeed, but whether or not it will last long enough remains to be seen. As the facilitative dialogue is coming next year, objective assessments of countries’ commitments will be made. As countries will adjust their INDCs based on their progress, the world may also need to adjust their expectations accordingly then.

*Indonesia's forest fires and attendant transboundary haze are expected to be resolved following Indonesia's ratification of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in 2015. This is also a positive move towards reducing global carbon emissions.*

Source: Flickr / CIFOR

# Building Resilience through Disaster Risk Financing: the ASEAN Experience

*Margareth Sembiring*

Southeast Asia has experienced a multitude of major disaster events that cost huge economic losses to governments, businesses and populations. The 2008 Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar exacted US\$5 billion in losses while the 2011 Thailand's floods and the 2013 Philippine's Typhoon Yolanda incurred US\$45.7 billion and US\$12.9 billion of damages, respectively. On average, as of 2013, ASEAN's annual disaster losses stood at US\$4.4 billion, or about 0.2 percent of regional Gross Domestic Product. The heavy economic burdens that follow natural catastrophes put pressures on affected segments of society and threaten community resilience.

The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 has identified the need for financial risk-sharing mechanisms and public-private partnerships as part of disaster resilience-building efforts. Similarly, priority 3 of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 specifically states that "public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the environment." Ensuring financial resilience is critical in the overall efforts to reduce disaster risks.

In this light, ASEAN, with instrumental assistance from the World Bank, has begun to work on devising disaster risk financing mechanisms in the region. The ASEAN Committee of Disaster Management, the ASEAN Insurance Regulators Meeting, and the ASEAN Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting developed the ASEAN Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI) Roadmap in 2011. Subsequently in 2013, the ASEAN Cross-Sectoral Coordination Committee on DRFI was established as the supporting mechanism. More recently in May 2017, the idea for the setting up of the Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Insurance Facility, a regional catastrophe risk pool for Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar, was endorsed

during the ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting in Japan.

These measures complement existing national processes in coping with economic losses brought about by disaster events in which reserve funds seem to be the most preferred option to date. In the Philippines, for example, budget for disaster-related responses comes from the National and Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Funds. In Indonesia, the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Fund at the central level finances public post-disaster expenditures. In Malaysia, the government, private sector and communities contribute to the National Disaster Relief Fund.

The work by the ASEAN DRFI aims to further strengthen financial resilience of ASEAN member states by assisting countries diversify their disaster financing sources. Engaging the insurance sector is particularly emphasised as insurance coverage for disaster losses in the region hovers at only about 10 to 20 percent. By expanding the financing sources, the National Disaster Management Office tapping into reserve funds is not the only mechanism available to respond to a disaster situation; rather, the finance ministry will also be actively involved in designing possible strategic risk transfer tools. As alluded to by the Hyogo and Sendai Frameworks, public-private partnerships are indeed critical in strengthening the financial capacity needed for emergency response and relief, recovery and reconstruction, and also for disaster risk reduction measures.

Despite the general awareness of the need to strengthen financial resilience, ensuring data availability and sound modeling and analysis needed to craft the most optimum financing options remains an enormous challenge. In this regard, governments need to stay strongly committed in their engagements with the region and the private sector as quality data gathering can only be achieved and sustained through collective efforts.

# Sustaining our Marine Environment

Rini Astuti

This year marked the start of global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal number 14: "Life below Water." Several pivotal meetings were held to discuss ways of addressing marine pollution, to address the declining of fish stock due to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and to improve the sustainability of small scale fishers. This included the UN Ocean Conference held in New York in June, which attracted more than 1,400 voluntary commitments made by both state and non-state actors to protect the health of the ocean.

Sustainable fishing has garnered dozens of these voluntary commitments due to its essential role in SDG 14. The seas provide animal protein for nearly 3.1 billion people and provide more than 300 million jobs for seafood producer countries in the world. Nevertheless, unsustainable commercial fishing has led to marine ecosystem degradation and significant impacts on global food security. International treaties, conventions, as well as regional fishing management organisations, have been established to protect ocean resources. However, the vast nature of seas prevents effective monitoring and transparency in the fishing industry. This has allowed IUU fishing to flourish in the high seas, undermining the health of marine biodiversity.

In Southeast Asia, a ground-breaking initiative to improve transparency in the fishery sector is currently underway by Global Fishing Watch – a multisector partnership platform for sustainable fishing - and the Ministry of Fisheries in Indonesia. In June this year, the two institutions embarked on a partnership to publish Indonesia's Vessel Monitoring Data System (VMS)

in an online public platform. According to Global Fishing Watch, VMS is designed to relay data on the position of vessels, for use by governments. VMS was established to prevent ship collisions and is compulsorily implemented by all nations. By integrating VMS with artificial intelligence systems and Google Earth mapping, Global Fishing Watch evaluates vessels' interactions in the open waters. Due to the vast nature of seas and oceans, VMS provides a better means of monitoring vessel movement providing surveillance and governance remotely. A public call has been made for other countries to join the transparency partnership, with Peru following Indonesia's lead.

This emerging web-based interactive data-mapping platform is transforming marine governance in ways that oppose the existing opaque nature of commercial fishing. It targets the conduct of large fishing fleets to make them more accountable especially in terms of sustainable fishing practices. It is also expected to reduce IUU fishing by prohibiting fishing in protected waters or prohibiting foreign fishing vessels entering the exclusive economic zones of a particular country.

The application of this system in an environmentally degraded water body like the South China Sea will facilitate the development of more informed policymaking to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems from pollution. However, the willingness to open VMS data among the South China Sea countries is required to enable effective trans-border collaboration. Such a partnership will undoubtedly benefit all nations by providing a more comprehensive understanding of vessel movement and traffic.



Source: Photo credit: flickr/thibault bled  
(the marine environmental protection article)

# Promoting a Nuclear Security Culture in ASEAN

*Julius Cesar Trajano*

In April 2017, the Seventh Annual Meeting of ASEAN Nuclear Energy Cooperation Subsector Network (NEC-SSN), which was hosted by the Philippines, kicked off with a Seminar on Security of Radioactive Sources. The Philippines' Department of Energy, the 2017 chair of NEC-SSN, emphasised the potential for civilian nuclear energy and radioactive sources to become security concerns. The meeting reiterated the need for the institutionalisation of nuclear security culture in the region, defined as the assembly of human factors – mindsets, behaviours, and attitudes of individuals and organisations – which supports and enhances nuclear security. Nuclear facilities and materials can be better protected if individuals develop critical thinking, avoid complacency and raise questions.

## Significance of nuclear security and security culture

While Vietnam cancelled its first nuclear power plant (NPP) in 2016, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines are in the process of building up their human resource capacity for harnessing nuclear power in the future. Despite the absence of NPPs in the region, why should Southeast Asian states strengthen nuclear security culture? Radioactive sources are already widely used for non-power applications. For instance, in Indonesia, there are three research reactors, while Vietnam has one. Radioactive sources are also present in 17 hospitals in Thailand and seven hospitals in the Philippines. Without appropriate security measures, these radioactive sources can be stolen and used in making 'dirty bombs' or released indiscriminately by non-state actors, especially terrorist groups.

## Centres of Excellence

In developing nuclear security culture, ASEAN states may learn from their Dialogue-Partners in Northeast

Asia (Japan, China and South Korea), which have vast experience in nuclear power and regularly provide training assistance to the region. They are also potential NPP suppliers for ASEAN.

One notable outcome of the Nuclear Security Summits (2010-16) was the establishment of three centres for excellence for nuclear security in Northeast Asia: Japan's Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security; South Korea's International Nuclear Nonproliferation and Security Academy; and the Chinese State Nuclear Security Technology Center. These centres provide human resource training and education that inculcate respect for security rules, recognition of the rationale behind protocol, and working conditions that can motivate nuclear employees and law enforcers to follow regulations that reduce human failure. For instance, security culture is part of the nuclear capacity building assistance being offered by Japan's Centre of Excellence to government agencies and NPP operators in Asian countries, including Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, as well as the ASEAN Centre for Energy.

In Southeast Asia, only Indonesia has institutionalized the promotion of nuclear security culture, through the establishment of its Centre for Security Culture Assessment in 2014. Since then, it has conducted training among employees in Indonesia's research reactors to inculcate this along with self-assessment exercises to measure the awareness and attitudes of employees on compliance with security protocol.

With the ever-present transboundary risks of nuclear terrorism and stolen radioactive sources, it may be prudent for ASEAN states to learn from Northeast Asia. By establishing Centres of Excellence to embrace nuclear security culture, nuclear institutions can engage with law enforcement bodies, emergency responders, hospitals and industries that possess radioactive sources. There should be no room for complacency.

Source: Photo credit: flickr/IAEA Imagebank (the Nuclear security culture article)

# Natural Disasters and Food Insecurity – Engaging Women For ‘Food Resilience’

Tamara Nair

Southeast Asia has drastically reduced the number of hungry people. From a Prevalence of Undernourishment (or PoU) of 36 percent in 1994-96, the region has moved to a PoU of 9.6 percent in 2012-2014. But more can be done, especially with regard to the role of women in establishing food security. Five Southeast Asian countries - Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Indonesia - still have serious cases of hunger or undernourishment, and one country - Timor Leste, struggles with 'alarming' rates. The World Food Programme (WFP) has outlined factors such as low female literacy rates, gender inequality, and frequent natural disasters, as reasons for chronic and sustained malnutrition.

Burgeoning cities, growing economies and changing dietary preferences, have resulted in both undernourishment and overnutrition plaguing populations of Southeast Asia. The twin problems of malnutrition and malnourishment present Southeast Asian countries with a spectrum of health issues that span from non-communicable or lifestyle diseases on the one hand and diseases due to undernourishment on the other. Women have an integral role to play at both ends of the spectrum.



Female farm labour in rice cultivation in Myanmar. Women contribute long hours on rice farms transplanting seedlings.

In the case of disaster-prone regions, especially in rural and underdeveloped areas where the populations are mostly involved in subsistence economies, this role is significant and exaggerated during a crisis.

Women are responsible for ensuring food security and well-being of their families. But the obstacles that confront them are manifold including reduced access to land, education, income, and credit. In most cases, this is because the heads of households are men and resources are channelled through them, coupled with the fact that women are generally regarded as 'farmers' wives' rather than food producers in their own right. Current disparities are exacerbated with the frequent occurrence of natural disasters, where women suffer disproportionately both during and after such catastrophes. Gender inequality and low female literacy levels are reasons for sustained hunger and malnutrition before catastrophes. With limited knowledge on health and nutrition especially in infant care, due in large part to the lack of or limited schooling, women are not empowered to make proper decisions in food intake and nutrition both for themselves and their families. This is especially so in the rural regions of some Southeast Asian countries. This can result in acute undernourishment post disaster where food insecurities are magnified.

## Women and Food Security in Southeast Asia

It would be incorrect to say that a perceived exclusion of women in food production and distribution has been deliberate – for cultural reasons or otherwise – in agricultural development in Southeast Asia. As a matter of fact, a joint academic article by researchers from the International Rice Research Institute, The National University of Singapore and the Assessment institute for Agricultural Technology in Indonesia points to how the region's female food producers fare much better than their counterparts in other parts of Asia or Africa.

Nevertheless, there are varying degrees of empowerment across the region, with the Philippines and Thailand displaying greater levels of empowerment initiatives for female farmers. In short, regional trends seem to run counter to narratives that paint female food producers as disempowered members of rural communities.

In large part this is due to the rice-based economies of the region. In rice crop cultivation, the bulk of agricultural labour comes from women. Across the region, around 43 percent of the agricultural labour force is female with the numbers hitting a high of 90 per cent in intensive rice cultivation in countries like Thailand. Historically, rice-based economies such as those found in Southeast Asia and Southern India have not had disturbingly high numbers of female infanticide. This is also true in areas that (as it is in the regions mentioned above) practice small animal husbandry. The significant difference in the value of baby girls can be attributed to the high economic value of women's work and contribution. Where women's work is valued, they are valued as individual contributors to the family's income or food supply. Despite these positive revelations, there are some troubling commonalities across the region. These

include underestimating the nature of the work women do, and ignoring their limited access to research and development, such as new innovations in agriculture. "Women's work" remains underrated and not fully, if at all, accurately priced. In rural areas across the region, women are almost exclusively responsible for food and nutrition security for their families. A large proportion of work on farms is done by women. In addition, women are also involved in post-harvest activities such as storage, handling, stocking, processing and marketing. Much of this work is categorised as 'informal' and therein lies the problem.

### Protracted Hunger and Malnutrition during Crisis

Post-crisis situations see the loss of economic security for both men and women. Yet, reinstatement of jobs, assets, land (where applicable) go to those engaged in the formal employment sector. This means although women are active participants in food production, it is not their primary occupation – main responsibilities being domestic work and as carers of children, elderly



*Distribution of rice post typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013. Excessive intake of staple carbohydrates is common in the aftermath of a natural disaster. If not supplemented with other nutrients, this can lead to acute malnutrition if crisis is a protracted one.*

Source: Flickr

and livestock, they are removed from the food production regime and its restoration plans post-disaster. If women's work in agriculture is not considered their primary occupation, they are at a loss in the aftermath of natural disasters. This is because in many cases, they find themselves unable to resume agricultural work because their losses in land and other assets are not so easily recuperated. In some cases, they can never resume their jobs in the light of massive destruction and only limited land is available for redistribution.

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most disaster-prone areas in the world. Struck by tropical storms, earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, landslides and volcanic eruptions, millions of people are affected each year in one or more of these catastrophes. Disasters are apolitical. They are not discerning and they impact all people and all aspects of life. In addition, they accentuate existing deficiencies in state apparatus and magnify inequalities of class and gender. People are uprooted, their livelihoods impacted, there are changes in disease patterns and their water supply is compromised.

When it comes to their food and nutritional needs, they have reduced number of meals per day, the quality of the food consumed is poor and rarely, if even, do they have an opportunity to supplement with other food

items. Although feeding programmes and food rations can provide sustenance and address issues of physical access to and availability of food, the utilisation or how the body processes the intake of food, is not assured, especially if what is being fed is large amounts of staple foods, which tend to be carbohydrates. This can have serious consequences if the disaster is a slow onset one and is protracted. Such a situation can lead to compromised nutrition intake, or 'hidden hunger' which can then lead to a host of other issues in terms of health and well-being. The other scenario is the limited access to and availability of food. The implication of this is extended periods of undernourishment that leads to increased number of victims and higher mortality rates, post-disaster. This especially affects the very young and the old.

### Gender Equality and 'Food Resilience'

Resilience is the ability to cope with change. In individuals, this is related to the assets one possesses, be they physical, financial, social, human and even political. Increased capabilities or capacity in 'peace time' translates to increased resilience in times of crises. So, the key to 'food resilience' is tied to the capacity and empowerment of women simply because



Girls wait their turn to eat in Hmong village in Laos.

Source: Flickr /joaquin uy

women, especially those in rural areas in Southeast Asia are still, for the most part, seen as being responsible for food security and nutritional intake of their families.

One way of building capacity in women vis-à-vis their role in food production is to make them active partners and identified recipients in new agricultural technologies. As mentioned earlier, the exclusion of women is not deliberate but there are also no targeted delivery strategies aimed at female food producers when it comes to agricultural technology. A particular type of technology that can be used to mitigate food insecurity during disasters is the use of short-cycle seed varieties.

Short-cycle rice varieties have allowed farmers in the Philippines to produce two cycles of rain fed rice. This is an important strategy especially in areas prone to floods, droughts and tropical storms. This means production times are shortened and farmers can set aside certain amounts as household emergency stocks. However, these varieties do not ensure higher yields. Nevertheless, this technology in the hands of women, with proper training and education, can even ensure village-level emergency stocks as women are quite savvy at establishing informal networks, creating ways and means for ensuring food for their families in times of need. That sort of 'savvy' should be harnessed by channelling resources and training their way.

Higher female literacy rates are also a key indicator of survival rates, post disaster. Women in the region have been direct beneficiaries of social policies such as the promotion of education for women and girls, within respective countries as well as with international aid. The education of women and girls can ensure nutritional security both during 'peace time' and in the aftermath of a crises. Such programmes have made a positive impact on food security and nutrition, especially that of children. But the sustainability of such outcomes is only guaranteed if complementary initiatives, such as secure employment opportunities and greater public participation are encouraged. Although we see this sporadically, it needs to be entrenched institutionally so all can benefit.

The recognition of women's work in food production, their access to new agricultural technologies and capacity-building through secure employment – tied to compensations or reinstatement of agricultural land lost – and their education and training, are therefore



Source: Flickr / Nadrah Rafiq

*Educating women and girls might be the key to eradicating hunger and malnutrition.*

all crucial to building not only 'food resilience' but overall resilience against the onslaught of natural disasters. A key strategy then should be active and effective involvement of women in disaster response and mitigation planning. The low numbers of women decision-makers and representatives in national and regional disaster management fora is something that is still yet to be resolved.

According to a joint publication by the Asian Development Bank and Routledge in 2014, increasing numbers of people, especially women, are becoming outliers to the vision of a progressive and resilient region mostly because of widening income gaps. This means policymakers will have to address the issue of gender inequality more seriously. This is especially so in issues as fundamental to human survival such as food production. And it is equally important when it comes to policies of disaster response and recovery given the frequency of occurrence in the region. It would bode well for countries to pay particular attention to women's insecurities, and gender inequality. The intimate connection between women's equality and capabilities to food security and 'food resilience' has to be an indelible part of these countries' policies on humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

# Expanding Regional and Global Health Security Threats: New Agendas for Strengthening Health Systems

Mely Caballero-Anthony

Much has changed in Asia's security environment as new security challenges emerge. This can be clearly seen in the health security arena where new drivers of communicable and non-communicable diseases are changing the regional and global health agendas. These health trends highlight the ability of national and regional health systems to confront new health challenges and how best these can be addressed to ensure health security for all.

It was a little over a decade ago when Asia, particularly the East Asian region, had to face one of the most serious health threats in modern times. In 2003, the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), a highly pathogenic infectious influenza virus, caught the region by surprise. What started as an infectious disease outbreak in China's Guangdong province quickly evolved into

a global health crisis. Since then, much attention has focused on preventing the outbreak of highly pathological influenza pandemics and spread of similar virulent viruses like the avian influenza strains of H1-H5N1, and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV).

No sooner had states to deal with novel strains of influenza pandemic than new concerns about climate-related health risks began to catch the attention of the international community. From the increase in number, and greater geographical spread, of water-borne diseases like severe diarrhoeal diseases, typhoid and cholera to vector-borne diseases like Zika and Lyme disease as a result of rapidly changing climate, worries abound about the capacity of national health systems to deal with growing risks to human health. In 2016, Zika emerged as the most recent infectious disease to be declared by the WHO as a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC). For developing countries in the tropics, in particular, health concerns are compounded by trends in the steady rise of endemic communicable diseases like dengue and malaria that now have a longer transmission season due to climate change. Added to these new trends in human health risks are also the changing patterns of infectious diseases like tuberculosis which are drug resistant, as well as the rising threat of Antimicrobial resistance. Juxtaposing these new trends in communicable diseases (CD) with the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCD) like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and strokes make for an expanding health security agenda that seriously impact the state of regional and global health security. To be sure, all these emerging health trends present new challenges to regional and global health security. And within the context of Southeast Asia and the wider Asian region, these trends raise questions on current regional approaches to deal with the speed of change in the burden of diseases in a highly interconnected and integrated community.



Creative approaches towards engaging citizens in building awareness about Zika virus

Source: Flickr / USAID photo taken by Montakan Tanchaisawat, USAID

## Assessing current approaches: how prepared are we?

One of the key lessons drawn from the SARS crisis is the inevitable regionalisation and globalisation of diseases. The health crisis has clearly shown that viruses do not recognise any borders. With advances in technology and greater travel opportunities that are becoming more affordable to a greater number, peoples' mobility is increasing in leaps and bounds. And so too are the rising risks of transmission of CD within and across borders. But the other important lesson from the SARS experience is that greater awareness of trans-border health risks and more vigilance and surveillance of disease outbreaks go a long way in managing these types of threats to health security. Equally important and of great consequence to countries in the region is the enhanced cooperation not only among health officials but also across different sectors and agencies toward a whole-of-society approach collaborating closely to combat the spread of diseases. Closer cooperation in health matters has underscored the importance of national and regional disease preparedness and response at multiple levels.

Since 2005, a number of regional mechanisms have been established within ASEAN's Strategic Framework on Health Development. These include the ASEAN Expert Group on Communicable Diseases and the ASEAN Working Group on Pandemic Preparedness and Response. These mechanisms have carried out important regional health initiatives pertaining to infectious disease monitoring and control, such as the ASEAN Plus Three

Emerging Infectious Disease (EID) Programme, the ASEAN Partnership Laboratories, and the Field Epidemiology Training Network among others.

ASEAN has further stepped up regional health cooperation as reflected in its Post-2015 Health Agenda which aims to promote a more holistic approach to health security in Southeast Asia. The Post-2015 Health Agenda also incorporates the elements highlighted in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) more broadly, and in particular SDG goal 3, which focuses on good health and well-being. The regional health cooperation agenda thus sets out to list a number of health priorities, clustered into four areas namely: 1) promoting healthy lifestyle, 2) responding to all hazards and emerging threats, 3) strengthening health system and access to care, and 4) ensuring food safety which include access to safe food, safe drinking water and sanitation.

With the changing patterns of infectious diseases and the burden of diseases, the cluster approach certainly provides a more comprehensive agenda that would translate into actionable programmes and policies to address multiple threats to health security. Cluster 2 on responding to all hazards and emerging threats is timely given the possibilities of outbreaks of new types of viruses like Zika and re-emergence of highly pathogenic diseases like Ebola. Cluster 3 complements and provides critical support to cluster 2 as it aims to strengthen health systems to combat new health threats like AMR and improve means of implementation through the One Health Approach that engages other sectors beyond



Avian Influenza Surveillance at Bangkok's Klongtoey Market

Source: Flickr / USAID photo by Richard Nyberg, USAID

human health. Similarly, clusters 1 and 4 emphasise the seamless relationships between food security and nutrition, food safety and disaster health management and the importance of promoting healthy lifestyles. ASEAN's clustered approach to the health development agenda for 2016-2020 fits well and contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals on ending hunger (SDG2), good health and well-being (SDG3) and other related SDGs.

## Filling in the Gaps

While the regional health agenda is indeed comprehensive, health experts are calling for more attention to be paid to certain important issues that have significant implications on developing countries. One of these is the need to build resilient health systems to respond to climate change impacts on human health. In a new UN report entitled, Human health and adaptation: understanding climate impacts on health and opportunities for action, released in May 2017, health and climate change experts highlighted how climate change can exacerbate health problems that already pose a major burden to vulnerable populations—children and elderly, pregnant women, the socially marginalised (to include poorest of the poor, indigenous groups, refugees), and those with existing health conditions like HIV. According to the report, the socioeconomic costs of health problems for these vulnerable groups are considerable. The report further noted that heatwaves can severely impact working conditions increasing the risk of cardiovascular, respiratory and renal diseases. Moreover, human displacement caused by climate and weather-related disasters are expected to increase significantly, which in turn results in higher socioeconomic costs and affects mental and physical health. With the visible impacts of climate change already felt in the region, this would make for more compelling reasons for ASEAN countries to re-assess current health frameworks and put more effort in boosting capacity of health systems in line with climate adaptation and mitigation strategies done in other sectors. In fact, the WHO in 2014 had already identified strengthened public health services as one critical component in the building blocks of climate-resilient health systems.

This agenda item particularly challenges most countries in the region that are still struggling with healthcare delivery, access and affordability, especially for the poorer and more vulnerable segments of the population. With these



Source: : Flickr / shehan perama

*Diabetes is a rising concern, given unhealthy diets and lifestyle choices*

realities, it is hard to tell whether existing health systems are in fact ready and robust enough to withstand the potential health fallout of the changing climate.

Another key issue closely related to health systems is the dramatic change in demographics in health, observed in all levels from the national to the global across the world. An important study conducted by Council on Foreign Relations in November 2017 noted that population growth and aging are causing a 'spectacular rise' in NCDs in developing countries. Although greater attention is now paid to obesity and prevention of unhealthy lifestyles, these improvements however are not keeping pace with the aging population and their share in the overall population growth. This demographic change increases demands in health care of NCDs that mostly afflict adults – diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancers which are chronic and costly to treat. This translates into higher costs of health services and medicines, which are most often paid by the patients themselves in poorer countries. The study further shows that in low income countries, the increase in death and disability from NCDs are most significant in people aged over 35 years. As demands for strengthened and robust health systems are deemed critical to addressing an expanding global health security agenda, of equal importance is the need to develop affordable ways to help low income groups to respond to the staggering rise in death and disability from NCDs. This agenda item is particularly relevant to developing ASEAN member states. Thus, as current regional strategies tackle emerging health threats, one should not also lose sight of the importance in addressing vast gaps in access to primary health care and health systems. These interconnected relationships provide the foundations for building resilience and a healthy regional community.

# About The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies** 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.

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



# About The Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies

The **Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies** conducts research and produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. The centre addresses knowledge gaps, facilitates discussions and analyses, engages policymakers and contributes to building institutional capacity in the following areas: Climate Change, Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management; Nuclear Energy; Environmental Security; Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief; Migration; and Peace, Human Security and Development. The NTS Centre brings together myriad NTS stakeholders in regular workshops and roundtable discussions, as well as provides a networking platform for NTS research institutions in the Asia Pacific through the NTS-Asia Consortium.

## Our Research Areas

- Climate Change and Environment
- Nuclear Energy
- Food Security
- Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
- Migration
- Peace, Human Security and Development

## Our Output

### Policy Relevant Publications

The NTS Centre produces a range of output such as research reports, books, monographs, policy briefs and conference proceedings.

### Training

Based in RSIS, which has an excellent record of post-graduate teaching, an international faculty and an extensive network of policy institutes worldwide, the NTS Centre is well-placed to develop robust research capabilities, conduct training courses and facilitate advanced education on NTS. These are aimed at, but not limited to, academics, analysts, policymakers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

### Networking and Outreach

The NTS Centre serves as a networking hub for researchers, policy analysts, policymakers, NGOs and media from across Asia and further afield interested in NTS issues and challenges.

The NTS Centre is the founding member of the Asia Pacific Partnership for Atrocity Prevention, inaugurated 7-8 November 2016. RSIS co-hosted with the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APR2P), School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland St. Lucia, the 'High Level Advisory Panel's (HLAP) Report on Mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia: Pathway Towards a Caring ASEAN Community.' This was to generate comments and inputs from the participants on how the HLAP Report on mainstreaming the Responsibility to Protect and mass atrocities prevention can be promoted in ASEAN, as well as in operationalizing the Report's recommendations in the domestic and regional contexts.

Previously, it served as the Coordinator of the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership (2012-2015) supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada. It also serves as the Secretariat of the initiative.

In 2009, the NTS Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for its three-year Asia Security Initiative (2009-2012), to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific.

It is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia Consortium).

More information on the NTS Centre is available at: <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/research/nts/>.

# About The NTS-Asia Consortium

The NTS-Asia Consortium was launched in January 2007 as a network of non-traditional security research institutes and think tanks. The aims of the consortium are as follows:

- To develop a platform for networking and intellectual exchange between regional NTS scholars and analysts
- To build long-term and sustainable regional capacity for research on NTS issues
- To mainstream and advance the field of non-traditional security studies in Asia
- To collate and manage a regional database of NTS publications and other resources

NTS issues include the challenges to the survival and well-being of peoples and states that arise from nonmilitary sources, such as climate change, resource scarcity, infectious diseases, natural disasters, irregular migration, food shortages, people smuggling, drug trafficking and transnational crime. These dangers are transnational in scope, defying unilateral remedies and requiring comprehensive – political, economic and social – responses, as well as the humanitarian use of military force. Non-traditional security studies also looks at the multi-dimensional civilian angle to security in conjunction with state, military and governmental actors.

## Inaugural Meeting of The Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies

The Inaugural Meeting of the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia) from the 8th to 9th January 2007 was a milestone in the progress of NTS studies. The meeting not only officially launched the Consortium but also brought together its pioneering network members - comprising 14 research institutes and think tanks from across Asia - to discuss current NTS challenges facing the region, and possible policy responses to address these problems.

The pioneering members of NTS-Asia are as follows:

### South Asia

- Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies, Bangladesh (BISS)
- Women In Security, Conflict Management and Peace, India (WISCOMP)
- Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India (CSDS)

- Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, Bangladesh (RMMRU)

- Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka (RCSS)

### Northeast Asia

- Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)
- Ilmin International Relations Institute, Korea University
- Center for International Security and Strategic Studies, Institute of World Economics and Politics (IWEP), Vietnam
- Beijing Foreign Studies University (representing IWEP China)
- Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong

### Southeast Asia

- Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia (CSIS)
- Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines (ISDS)
- The Worldfish Center, Malaysia
- S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore (RSIS)

## NTS-Asia Relaunch 2016

The RSIS reactivated the NTS-Asia Consortium in early 2016 with the aim to re-establish the Consortium's significance and value to NTS research in the region, and to reemphasize the increasingly relevant and urgent need to focus on transnational and multilateral non-traditional security issues. The primary platform for the Consortium communication and outlet of publication is the NTS-Asia Website. The Website is envisioned to be the one-stop centre for NTS issues. See website link below:  
<http://rsis-ntsasia.org/>

## NTS-Asia Secretariat

The RSIS NTS Centre functions as the Secretariat of the NTS-Asia Consortium. Led by Associate Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony and supported by Ms Margaret Sembiring, Associate Research Fellow; and Ms Joey Liang, IT Executive and Webmaster. Mely Caballero-Anthony is Associate Professor and Head of the Centre for Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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Jonatan A. Lassa and Margareth Sembiring, NTS Insight, No. IN17-01, January 2017

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## EVENT REPORTS

*International Humanitarian Law in Asia: Regional Conference on Generating Respect for the Law*  
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*RSIS World Humanitarian Day: Voices from the Field*  
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## POLICY BRIEFS

*NTS Policy Brief - Subsistence Urban Agriculture: Key Externalities and Way Forward*

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## NTS BULLETINS

*Marrakech Climate Conference: Key Outcomes and its Implications to ASEAN*  
NTS Centre, RSIS, January 2017

*Way Forward for Trade Integration in Addressing Poverty in ASEAN*  
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*Empowering Women through Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction*  
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*Migration in ASEAN: Potential Health Security Risks from Migration Flows*  
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*Hunger in Southeast Asia – System-wide Solutions Needed*  
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*Protecting the Seas for Sustainable Ocean-Based Economies*  
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*Illegal Wildlife Trafficking in Southeast Asia*  
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*Protection in Humanitarian Emergencies*  
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*Achieving Water Security in Disaster Situations: The ASEAN Experience*  
NTS Centre, RSIS, September 2017

*Enhancing Nuclear Safety-Security Culture in East Asia*  
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*Refugees and the Rebalancing of State and Human Security in Europe and Southeast Asia*  
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## EVENTS

NTS Centre Seminar by Major General Muniruzzaman, President of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, on "Soldiers as Humanitarians – The Role of the Military in HADR Operations", 17 January 2017, Singapore

NTS Centre Seminar by Major General Muniruzzaman on "The Digital Age of Humanitarian Aid– Harnessing the Power of Technology for HADR Operations", 19 January 2017, Singapore

NTS Centre Workshop on "Assessing the Technological Turn in Humanitarian Action", 15 February 2017, Singapore

Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) Nuclear Energy Experts Group Meeting, 27 - 28 February 2017, Singapore

NTS Centre 'In Conversation' series with Dr Noeleen Heyzer, former UN Under-Seretary-General, on "Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals in the Asia Pacific", 30 March 2017, Singapore

NTS-Asia Consortium Annual Conference on "Climate Change and Sustainable Development Goals in Asia Pacific", 30 - 31 March 2017, Singapore

International Humanitarian Law in Asia: Regional Conference on Generating Respect for the Law, 27 - 28 April 2017, Singapore

Visit to RSIS Research Centres by Dr James To, Senior Adviser (Research), Asia New Zealand Foundation, 30 May 2017, Singapore

NTS Centre seminar for a visiting delegation from University of Southern California and Singapore Management University on "America's Pacific Century: Dialogue between the United States and Asia", 1 June 2017, Singapore

NTS Centre Lecture by Prof Edward Waller on "Nuclear Safety-Security Interface and Emergency Preparedness and Response", 19 June 2017, Singapore

World Agricultural Forum 2017, 6 - 7 July 2017, Singapore

RSIS – Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Workshop on "Disaster Response Regional Architecture: Assessing Future Possibilities", 18 - 20 July 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

RSIS – Embassy of the Philippines Panel Discussion on "Women, Peace and Security in Southeast Asia", 21 July 2017, Singapore

RSIS World Humanitarian Day: Voices From the Field, 17 August 2017, Singapore

RSIS – Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Seminar on "Contemporary Security Challenges: Insights from Asia", 14 September 2017, Nay Pyi Daw, Myanmar

RSIS – Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue Seminar on "The Mindanao Conflict: Challenges and Prospects for Peace", 18 September 2017

RSIS seminar by Ms Janet Lim, former UN Assistant High Commissioner for Refugees (Operations) on "Mass Movement of Refugees and Migrants: How is the World Community Dealing with One of the Biggest Problems of Our Time?", 17 October 2017, Singapore

RSIS Roundtable with Baroness Valerie Amos, CH, Director of SOAS, University of London, "The Future of Humanitarianism", 26 October 2017, Singapore

RSIS Roundtable – Singapore International Energy Week 2017 "Nuclear Safety and Security Culture: Powering Nuclear Governance in East Asia", 27 October 2017, Singapore

HADR Research in Singapore Meeting and Consultation on the Sphere Handbook, 13 November 2017, Singapore

RSIS Roundtable with Said Faisal, former Executive Director of ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management, 14 November 2017, Singapore

RSIS seminar by Dr. Nehginpao Kipgen, Assistant Professor and Executive Director Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Jindal School of International Affairs, O.P. Jindal Global University, National Capital Region of Delhi, India on "Rohingya Resettlement and Rehabilitation: Opportunities and Challenges", 13 December 2017, Singapore

## CENTRE STAFF







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