

## Post 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress of CPC: An Outlook on China's Agenda



*Mdm Yan Junqi with (L-R) Mr Zhu Yongxin, Mr Fang Xinwen, Amb Ong Keng Yong, Mr Liu Hongcai, and Mr Zhu Rui, during the panel discussion*

By **Tan Ming Hui**

The RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on “China and the World: After the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC National Congress” was delivered on 19 December 2017. Held at NTU@one-north, the lecture, which was attended by 240 guests, was delivered by Madam Yan Junqi, Vice Chairwoman of the Standing Committee, National People's Congress of China, and President of the Chinese Association for International Understanding (CAFIU).

This was followed by a panel session chaired by Amb Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS. Mdm Yan was joined by four other panellists, Mr Liu Hongcai, Vice

President, CAFIU, and former Vice Minister, International Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee; Mr Zhu Yongxin, Executive Council Member, CAFIU, and Deputy Secretary-General, Central Committee of China Association for Promoting Democracy; Mr Zhu Rui, Secretary-General, CAFIU; and Mr Fang Xinwen, Charge d'Affaires of the Embassy of China in Singapore.

Mdm Yan provided an update on the outcomes of the recently concluded 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress. She discussed the social, political, ecological, and cultural goals that China will be pursuing to achieve the Chinese dream of national rejuvenation, and the creation of a modern and harmonious society. The major

goals include the attainment of quality and stable economic growth, the alleviation of poverty, greater environmental protection and sustainability, as well as contribution to world peace and development. Mdm Yan highlighted that China will continue to be a responsible power and build friendly relations, and is willing to contribute Chinese knowledge and blueprints to resolve global issues.

While some countries are concerned about China's rise as a regional and global power, Mdm Yan clarified that China firmly believes in the path of peaceful development and mutual understanding. Throughout history, other countries had risen to power through waging of wars or

colonialism, and China has suffered much from such experiences. As a result, China believes in creating a tolerant, cooperative, and mutually prosperous international environment based on justice, good governance, safety, and openness. Furthermore, she opined that the Chinese dream is very much linked to the global dream — good global development will aid Chinese development, and a better China will make a better world.

Mdm Yan went on to praise the strong bilateral ties between China and Singapore since the 90s, emphasising that China values its close relations and multi-level partnerships with the latter. On top of active people-to-people exchanges at different levels, Singapore is also one of the top destinations for Chinese tourists, with Singapore having a reputation for orderliness and good education.

Singapore is a crucial channel for China to develop its relationships with the rest of the world. Mdm Yan highlighted that China is willing to deepen its bilateral relations with Singapore in order to contribute to world development and stability.

During the panel session, Mdm Yan and the other panellists answered questions on various topics; including China's political system and leadership, Chinese efforts in eliminating corruption and alleviating poverty, as well as the importance of traditional Chinese culture and values.

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# Regional Security Cooperation as ASEAN Turns 50



(L-R) Mr Eddie Lim, Dr Daniel Chua and Dr Tang Siew Mun

By **Eddie Lim**

Mr Eddie Lim, Senior Fellow and Head of the Military Studies Programme at the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies at RSIS, and Dr Daniel Chua, Assistant Professor and Deputy Head of Graduate Studies, also at RSIS, launched their book titled *ASEAN 50*:

*Regional Security Cooperation through Selected Documents* on 3 November 2017. Held at The Pod, National Library Building, the event attracted a wide audience comprising academics, diplomats, and members of local and foreign media.

The opening remarks was delivered by Amb Ong Keng

Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS. Amb Ong reiterated the significance of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and discussed the book's contribution to the understanding of ASEAN's evolution. He also highlighted the role ASEAN plays in ensuring Southeast Asia's continued stability and relevance to global affairs.

Mr Eddie Lim shared how the book evolved from a previous project and Dr Daniel Chua walked the audience through the chapters. By charting ASEAN's role in developing regional security cooperation through the Association's documents, the authors sought to demonstrate how ASEAN remains a credible institution for managing regional and international relations.

Dr Tang Siew Mun, Head of the ASEAN Studies Centre at the Institute of South East Asian Studies-Yusof Ishak Institute, was a discussant at the launch. He noted how the book compiles important and foundational documents of ASEAN that chronicle and establish the group as a driving force for regional and international forums on geopolitics, security, economics, and socio-cultural interaction.

After a stimulating question-and-answer session with the audience, the book launch concluded with a book signing session with the authors.

## Science and Technology to the Fore: Navigating Risks and Benefits

By **Nandhakumar Gunasekaran**

On 21 November 2017, the Policy Studies in the Executive Deputy Chairman's Office at RSIS, organised a roundtable on "Science and Technology — Security, Ethics, Society, and Policy". Speaking at the event, Dr Cung Vu, Visiting Senior Fellow at RSIS, and former Associate Director at the Office of Naval Research Global (Singapore) in the United States Department of the Navy, touched on the relationship between Science and Technology (S&T) and variables such as security, decision- and policy-making, and think tanks. The roundtable was attended by RSIS staff and industry professionals.

Dr Vu observed that besides a broad range of benefits, S&T also generates security threats or risks that should be assessed holistically from different standpoints, i.e. military, homeland defence, economy, diplomacy, ethics, and society.

On the role of S&T in decision- and policy-making, Dr Vu stated that decision- and policy-makers must understand the implications of S&T developments in order to make informed and effective decisions. Gaps between the S&T and policy communities' decision-making models must be bridged, an effort that organisations within and outside the government

around the world should undertake.

Dr Vu opined that think tanks such as RSIS have an important role to play in the S&T and security landscape. Other than being a source for policy research, they are forums

for discussion and relationship-building between stakeholders in the government, the industry, and in academia. They are also platforms for public awareness and education. A holistic and collaborative approach is necessary to address the complex security challenges posed by S&T.

The participants engaged in a lively discussion that covered a diverse range of S&T issues relevant to Singapore and the international community.



Dr Cung Vu (left) with Assoc Prof Kumar Ramakrishna, Head of Policy Studies and Coordinator of National Security Studies Programme, at the roundtable

# An Assessment of The Trump Administration in its First Year



(L-R) Prof Michael E. Brown, Amb Ong Keng Yong, Prof Bates Gill and Prof Vali R. Nasr

By **Harry Sa**

A Distinguished Public Dialogue was held on 11 January 2018 at NTU@one-north. Delivered by three distinguished speakers, the dialogue on “The Trump Administration and US Foreign Policy: A First-Year Report Card” was to assess and discuss the impact of President Donald Trump’s first year in office and what to look forward to in the new year. Along with their celebrated professorships, all three speakers also serve as RSIS’ Board of Governors. In the order that they spoke, Prof Michael E. Brown is the Professor of International Affairs and Political Science at the Elliot School of International Affairs, The George Washington University; Prof Bates Gill is the Professor of Asia-Pacific Security Studies at Macquarie University; and Prof Vali R. Nasr is Dean at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. Amb

Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman at RSIS, moderated the discussion.

Prof Brown shared his view of the Trump administration’s actions and policies towards Europe. He first began by summarising Trump’s principal traits: a zero-sum view of the world, aversion to multilateralism, and interest in short-term gains. This was in direct opposition to the multilateralism and mutual gain that drives European politics. Trump also believes Europe has grown wealthy and safe at the expense of the United States. In return, Europe lost faith in the US, and President Trump was criticised at all levels of European society. In 2018, as the Trump administration readies for its second year, Prof Brown frets over one question: What happens when his beliefs collide with American policy? His assessment of the previous year, as well as the next, was not positive.

Prof Gill guided the conversation to the Asia Pacific. He first expressed dismay that advisers were largely unsuccessful in restraining Trump. The president withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership on his first day in office, then criticised a number of other free trade agreements. The Korean Peninsula is reaching a boiling point, and other states in the region doubting American resolve are quietly reassessing their US-China strategy. All the while, Chinese President Xi Jinping is trying to make the most of every inch given up by the US. Prof Gill gave President Trump low marks for his policies towards the Asia Pacific.

The dialogue then shifted focus to the Middle East, where according to Prof Nasr, the administration genuinely affected change. Essentially driven by a desire to be anti-Obama, President Trump pivoted the United States away from the Asia Pacific

and back to the Middle East. Prof Nasr stated that this is where rhetoric, policy, and execution of policies were most inconsistent. While Syria and Iraq desperately needed attention, the central focus of Trump’s Middle East policy had been Iran. However, the United States is failing to deliver on any of its promises, and Russia is filling the void left by the US. The region has always been a geopolitical powder-keg and is only being worsened with the decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Prof Nasr condemned Trump’s first year foreign policy an unequivocal failure.

Trump’s first year has been weighed, measured, and found wanting. Expectations of the coming year were not positive, either. All three guests warned that the changes wrought by the Trump administration would not be so easily undone.

# Strengthening Nuclear Safety and Security Culture in East Asia

By **Julius Cesar Trajano**

RSIS organised a roundtable on “Nuclear Safety and Security Culture: Powering Nuclear Governance in East Asia” at the Singapore International Energy Week on 27 October 2017. This roundtable facilitated policy discussions among nuclear energy experts on national and

regional initiatives to promote nuclear safety and security.

Roundtable speakers included Dr Phiphat Phruksarojanakun, Head of International Cooperation Section, Office of Atoms for Peace, Thailand; Ms Sabariah Bt Kader Ibrahim, Head of International Training Sector, Nuclear Malaysia Training Centre, Malaysia

Nuclear Agency; Dr Alvin Chew, Adjunct Fellow, RSIS; Dr Claude Guet, Programme Director at Energy Research Institute at the Nanyang Technological University, and Senior Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer of French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission; and Dr Su Jin Jung, Manager of Strategy and Performance Department, Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety. The first session focused on the status of safety-security culture in Southeast Asia and was moderated by Amb Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS. The second session covered the best practices from South Korea and France and was moderated by Assoc Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony.

The roundtable discussions highlighted that the majority of nuclear incidents in the past,

such as the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, occurred because of organisational issues rather than technical ones. France and South Korea have learnt from these incidents and put more attention into ensuring a strong safety and security culture through the implementation of strict regulatory inspections and regular workshops.

In Southeast Asia, countries have recognised the need to work together to foster nuclear safety and security given that several countries in the region are interested in adding nuclear power to their future energy mix and many are using radioactive materials for various civilian applications (e.g. hospitals). The ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy is spearheading the regional cooperation; however, multiple challenges remain such as the different levels of technical expertise within member states and their nuclear priorities.



(L-R) Dr Phiphat Phruksarojanakun, Dr Su Jin Jung, Amb Ong Keng Yong, Dr Claude Guet, Ms Sabariah Bt Kader Ibrahim, Assoc Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony and Dr Alvin Chew

# Keeping India Safe: The Dilemma of Internal Security



Mr Vappala Balachandran

By **Sumitha Narayanan Kutty**

The South Asia Programme of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies at RSIS

hosted a seminar with Mr Vappala Balachandran, Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India, on 10 November 2017. The speaker shared his thoughts based on his latest book, *Keeping India Safe: The Dilemma of Internal Security*, which provides an in-depth historical analysis on the evolution of India’s internal security.

Mr Balachandran noted that the country’s internal security is dispersed among a fragmented police force divided between 29 states with no concurrent role by the Central Government except in grave emergencies. This separation of responsibility

extends to terrorism as well, and the Central Police Forces are not empowered to act on their own. This peculiar system does not exist anywhere else in the world today. He observed that such a system came into being when India copied certain internal security provisions from the colonial Government of India Act 1935 during its constitution-making. These provisions were relevant in that era but are detrimental to the nation today.

The speaker, a former member of the two-man High Level Committee appointed to enquire into the police response after the Mumbai terror attacks in 2008, highlighted that the

Central Government (the National Security Council and the Ministry of Home Affairs in particular) did not intervene despite knowing that the state government of Maharashtra had failed to follow up on 16 intelligence alerts since 2006. He also pointed out that the Central Government remained a passive spectator during the 1992 Babri Masjid demolition, 2002 Gujarat riots, and the 2017 Panchkula riots, among other internal security crises.

Mr Balachandran concluded by presenting a few workable solutions including the strengthening of the federal police and the National Investigation Agency, legally empowering the Railway Protection Force to investigate railway-related crimes, and ensuring that the State Police shed all non-police duties (i.e. providing security to municipal functions, private individuals and the like).

# Muhammadiyah's Role in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Indonesia

By Jonathan Chen

Dr Haedar Nashir, the General Chairman of Muhammadiyah Indonesia, delivered an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on "Towards Islam with Progress: Muhammadiyah's Role in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Indonesia" at the Marina Mandarin Singapore on 26 October 2017.

The Muhammadiyah movement in Indonesia shares aspects of Islam that establish it as a progressive religion compatible with modern society. Dr Nashir said that the Quran and Sunnah encourages critical thinking, and the first revelation by the Prophet was not merely about prayer, but also about reading and understanding. Dr Nashir also gave a brief historical

overview of how Islam changed and civilised the Arabian Peninsula during Prophet Muhammad's time.

Since its establishment in 1912, Muhammadiyah in Indonesia had sought to lower illiteracy rates and aid the Muslim society via the building of hospitals and schools. Muhammadiyah was also the first Islamic body in Indonesia to establish a women's wing known as Aisyiyah in 1917 despite strong opposition.

Dr Nashir believes that Islam in Indonesia is dynamic and one that amalgamates with the local culture. In Muhammadiyah, it is important for the Muslim community to contribute to the transformation. It also understands the importance

of upholding the values of Pancasila in a plural society such as Indonesia. At the most recent Muhammadiyah national congress, a document reaffirming the Indonesian Pancasila Democracy was issued, refuting arguments that it should be a caliphate or secular country.

Dr Nashir said the implementation of Muhammadiyah's vision of

progressive Islam should be facilitated *vis-à-vis* the establishment of new social, education, health, and economic institutions. These establishments would help in eradicating violence as those who resort to violence are usually the ones marginalised by society.

In his conclusion, Dr Nashir commended Singapore's continual efforts to strive for progression despite its lack of natural resources. Similarly, Muhammadiyah aspires to continue implementing its vision of Islam in Indonesia.



Dr Haedar Nashir

# Professor Amin Saikal Visits Singapore

By Damien D. Cheong

Prof Amin Saikal, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Public Policy Fellow, and Director of the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies (The Middle East and Central Asia) at the Australian National University, was invited to Singapore from 6 to 10 November 2017 under the National Security Studies

Programme's Distinguished Visitors Programme.

Prof Saikal is the author of numerous publications on the Middle East, Central Asia, political Islam, and Russia. Some of his recent works include *Iran at the Crossroads* (Polity Press, 2016); *Zone of Crisis: Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq* (I.B. Tauris, 2014); *Modern Afghanistan: A History*

*of Struggle and Survival* (I.B. Tauris, 2012); and *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran – from Autocracy to Religious Rule* (Princeton University Press, 2009). He is also a frequent commentator on Australian and international television and radio.

Prof Saikal gave two public lectures during his visit. The first, titled "How Islamic

has 'Islamic State' Been?", discussed the two predominant and controversial views that have characterised the nature and operations of the Islamic State (IS). In his second public lecture, "Preventing Sectarian Conflicts in Multiethnic and Multicultural Societies: Some Personal Reflections", Prof Saikal argued that preventing sectarian conflicts was extremely challenging, if they were fuelled by a combination of internal and external factors. He used case studies from Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya to elucidate his arguments.

Aside from engaging with government agencies, Prof Saikal also met with several organisations such as the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, or Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS), and was interviewed by Channel NewsAsia during its Primetime Asia segment on 7 November.



Prof Amin Saikal (front row seated on right) during his visit to MUIS

# Resolving Social Disharmony in Iraq



Amb Lukman Faily

By Ashleen Neo Wee Na

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research at RSIS

hosted Amb Lukman Faily on 8 December 2017. The former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Iraq to the United States delivered a seminar on “Lack of Social Harmony: Key to Promoting Intolerance and Violence in Iraq”.

Social harmony is key to the development of any state. When states lack social harmony, it is either tolerant and peaceful, or intolerant and violent. For social harmony to exist, there needs to be narratives that allow for people of different cultures to live.

Amb Faily said that Iraq is a rich country with six or

seven civilisations living atop one another, whose people embrace diversity and tolerance. It was the mismanagement by leaders like Saddam Hussein whose dictatorship did not allow society to embrace diversity, leading to social incoherence. Diversity needs democracy – accepting differences and opinions. Without democracy, it becomes difficult to manage.

Time and pride are two important aspects in building a socially harmonious state. Amb Faily stated that leaders need to be culturally aware if the state is moving towards or further away from a harmonious society. He

said that Iraqis prioritise their pride before state prosperity; this impedes the state from accepting new ideas, and therefore unable to improve.

Since the fall of Saddam, Iraq lacks good governance but the country has enough power in terms of human population, capital, culture, and raw resources. The state needs visionary leaders who are able to lead the country back on the right track and build a new social contract with its people.

# Towards Transitional Polycentrism for International Security

By Ng Chew Yee

*International Security in the Asia-Pacific: Transcending ASEAN towards Transitional Polycentrism*, a book edited by Assoc Prof Alan Chong, was launched on 8 November 2017 at the Nanyang Technological University. Guests of Honour at the launch were Amb Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, and Brigadier General Chua Boon Keat, Commandant of SAFTI Military Institute.

In his remarks, Amb Ong highlighted the strength of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a management tool. It has confidence-building measures that bring people together, rules-based order to preserve status quo, and rules for engaging actors outside the Southeast Asian region. Under the context

that the book was a product of the 2014 Goh Keng Swee Command and Staff College Seminar panel discussions, BG Chua emphasised that the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Singapore Armed Forces invests in both technology and human capital. Engaging with academia provides the opportunity to explore what the military should think about moving

forward. BG Chua ended by congratulating the editor and contributing authors of the book.

At the launch, Assoc Prof Alan Chong, along with contributing authors Asst Prof Hoo Tiang Boon, Assoc Prof Bilveer Singh, and Dr Alistair Cook, formed the discussant panel. Assoc Prof Chong spoke about

the book’s genesis and why the term polycentrism was used. Asst Prof Hoo provided a teaser to the first section, which centres on the structure of the region. Assoc Prof Bilveer Singh introduced the second section and stressed the importance of defence diplomacy in ASEAN. Dr Cook provided an overview of non-traditional security threats in Southeast Asia, and the strengths and weaknesses of ASEAN in addressing them.



Amb Ong Keng Yong and BG Chua Boon Keat (third and sixth from left) with Assoc Prof Alan Chong (fourth from left) following the book launch

# Addressing Global Challenges and Opportunities in Humanitarian Aspects



Baroness Valerie Amos

By Foo Yen Ne

Baroness Valerie Amos, Director of SOAS University of London, and former Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator at the United Nations, spoke at a roundtable discussion and a public lecture in October 2017.

The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme at RSIS' Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies hosted Baroness Amos for a roundtable discussion on the future of humanitarianism on 26 October 2017.

During the roundtable, participants shared their observations and insights on the global humanitarian landscape and highlighted the challenges actors faced in upholding humanitarian principles and maintaining a rights-based approach in emergency response. Pointing to current trends in the humanitarian sphere —

the frequency of disasters and conflicts, increasing number of humanitarian actors, incorporation of these actors into military operations, and the mass movement of people — participants stressed the need to assess the humanitarian mechanism's ability to address these challenges.

Participants underscored the need for all stakeholders to have continuous dialogue and build coalitions for effective coordination and collaboration. This would optimise existing aid infrastructure and prevent the misallocation of scarce resources. It was also agreed that a comprehensive approach to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts include educating the public and policy makers on the complexities of humanitarian aid and the nuances of humanitarian emergencies. This would ensure the formulation of more targeted, coherent, and sustainable relief responses.

Baroness Amos delivered the S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture at the Intercontinental Hotel, Singapore, titled "Challenges and Opportunities in a World Turned Upside Down" on 27 October 2017. She addressed the unprecedented set of global challenges afflicting the world now (i.e. conflict, mass migration, globalisation, poverty, climate change, and nuclear proliferation).

In addition, she highlighted a pushback against liberal values such as social justice, equality, and inclusiveness in the US and in Europe. This pushback is evidenced by the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States; the rise of far-right political parties across Europe; and the UK public vote to leave the European Union. This trend, she contended, is symptomatic of a deeper crisis. The loss of confidence in Western democracies stems from the adverse effects of trickle-down economics, structural inefficiencies, and poor governance on individuals.

Baroness Amos questioned whether the UN and other post-1945 multilateral institutions, which had been built and upheld by the West, are still fit for purpose. The UN, she said, was built on the principle of sovereign equality of its members. This has morphed into sovereignty first where individual state interests are put ahead of global challenges, people, and communities.

She pointed out that these multilateral institutions need reform. This opens the door for members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to champion bold but distinct approaches to multilateralism. To do so, ASEAN would need to find the balance between public spending, regulation, and stimulating the private sector. For Baroness Amos, ASEAN needs to see itself as more than a production space for the rest of the world and think about how its policies affect people.

# Competition and Cooperation in the Evolving East Asian Order

By Sarah Teo

On 11 October 2017, the Regional Security Architecture Programme in the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), RSIS, organised a roundtable on “Contesting Visions of Regional Order in East Asia” at M Hotel Singapore. Prof Joseph Liow, Dean of RSIS, and Assoc Prof Bhubhindar Singh, Coordinator of the Regional Security Architecture Programme, addressed some 35 participants from around the region.

The discussion focused on (i) Sino-US competition and cooperation and its role in shaping the regional order; (ii) their rivalry for leadership of this order; and (iii) the responses and contributions of the other regional stakeholders such as Australia, India, Japan and member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The East Asian order is in a period of transition. Currently, the key strands of the regional order include: (i) the US-led hub-and-spoke system of bilateral alliances; (ii) the emergence of a Chinese-led order comprising the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the One Belt, One Road initiative; (iii) the ASEAN-centric multilateral architecture; and (iv) unilateral

mechanisms to address regional challenges.

Points of both divergence and convergence exist across these elements. For instance, all regional stakeholders agree on the need to maintain peace and stability in East Asia, but differ on the extent to which the current order needs to be changed to achieve those goals.

Amidst Sino-US rivalry, to shape the regional order, other middle and smaller powers have attempted to ensure that the strategies of the respective major powers are not inimical to their interests. It would also be crucial for ASEAN, as the premier regional institution, to continue being central and relevant in the East Asian architecture.



*Prof Joseph Liow (right) with Assoc Prof Bhubhindar Singh at the roundtable*

# Rohingya Resettlement and Rehabilitation

By Vishalini Chandara Sagar

The RSIS' Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) organised a seminar on the Rohingya crisis titled “Rohingya Resettlement and Rehabilitation: Opportunities and Challenges” on 13 December 2017. The seminar was delivered by Dr Nehginpao Kipgen, Assistant Professor and Executive Director at the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies in the Jindal School of International Affairs, O.P. Jindal Global University, India. Dr Alistair Cook, Research Fellow at the

NTS Centre and Coordinator of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Programme, moderated the event.

Dr Kipgen provided a well-rounded perspective on the historical background of the Rohingya people and what was perceived as challenges in the Rakhine State by the government and the international community. He also gave interesting insights on the various resolutions for the Rohingya crisis that were debated internationally. Some of these resolutions include the provision of citizenship to the stateless population, ordering

a ceasefire in the state, and depending on the international community to develop Rakhine.

He highlighted the potential challenges that could arise out of these recommendations and stressed that the current situation is extremely complex and requires detailed examination before determining how the situation can be improved. Dr Kipgen opined that the government, the military, and civil society all have a role to play in easing the crisis in Myanmar. All three needed to change their perspectives on the Rohingya people. It is also critical to



*Dr Nehginpao Kipgen*

close refugee camps to prevent further atrocities from occurring, and to make concrete changes to the living conditions of the Rohingya people.

# The Global Role of US in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



*Dr Richard Bush*

By **Amanda Huan**

Dr Richard Bush, S. Rajaratnam Professor of Strategic Studies, RSIS, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, and Chen-Fu and Cecilia Yen Koo Chair in Taiwan Studies, The Brookings Institution, gave an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on “Leader No Longer?: The US Global Role in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” on 9 November 2017 at NTU@one-north.

Dr Bush commented on the shift in thinking regarding the position of the US in global affairs. Many had initially thought that the US would continue to play a leading role, but the advent of the Trump presidency and Trump’s “America First” perspective have put the country’s activist role into question.

To shed light on the role of the US in global politics in the future, Dr Bush pointed to three issues, the first being the Trump factor. President Trump has displayed a radically different approach to foreign policy that threatens to undo the accomplishments of his predecessors. The effect is compounded by a weakened civil service system where senior policy positions remain vacant and the policymaking process remains in disarray.

The second issue is the deeper set of problems within the US society of which Trump is not the cause, but a symptom of. The domestic pillars of US power, including economic growth, fiscal balance, civil service, education system, and state infrastructure, have atrophied. Americans have been left behind amidst rapid technological change; and

the on-going stalemate in US bipartisan politics has led to little to no progress on policy priorities such as the provision of public goods, social welfare, defense spending, as well as taxation issues. The stalemate suggests that the US is quickly becoming a divided society, with lines drawn between people of different races, education levels, and income levels.

The third issue pertains to the impact of the US domestic situation on their involvement in East Asia. Even though both political parties agree on the broad goals and strategies for the region, their opinions differ significantly when it comes to the choice of tactics and the amount of resources to be committed. In the event that the US is unable to address its domestic issues and its capabilities in the East Asia

region decline, great power dynamics in the region will be substantially affected. Thus far, both Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping have spoken about the potential for cooperation in US-China relations, but recent events deem great power competition to be the more likely outcome.

Dr Bush concluded his lecture by asserting that there is a strong intellectual case for the US to play a leading international role. To this end, it would be possible to continue the foreign policy strategy that emerged at the end of the Obama administration, but executing it would require political leaders in the US who are willing to act for the greater good of society and are able to advocate for a more active role for the US in international affairs.

# Building a Culture of Compliance Towards a Stronger Rules-based ASEAN

By **Phidel Vineles**

The “Consultation on a Rules-Based ASEAN: Legal Instruments and their Implementation” conference was held at Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel, Singapore, on 1 and 2 November 2017. It was jointly organised by the Centre for Multilateralism

Studies (CMS) of RSIS, United States Agency for International Development, German Cooperation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat.

Several experts, including those from academia and international organisations,

shared their views on how a rules-based ASEAN can be strengthened. Amb Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, explained that a rules-based approach must be supported by ASEAN member states as it helps to organise our behaviour and allows for greater coordination in identifying the dos and don'ts. ASEAN Deputy Secretary-General Dr AKP Mochtan further stated that the real challenge of a rules-based ASEAN lies in ensuring compliance of the member states when implementing the legal instruments.

The ASEAN Secretariat is currently working on developing a practical reporting system for the implementation of ASEAN instruments. The

proposed system covers the legal instruments and tasks assigned desk officers to monitor the implementation of the instruments.

ASEAN-US Technical Consultant Faith Delos Reyes touched on the need for socialising the rules-based principles by means of diffusion that would take place in academic institutions, judiciary, and civil society. Prof Ralf Emmers, Associate Dean and Head of CMS, further explained that academic institutions must be involved in the diffusion of the principles and rules, and should involve lawyers too when interpreting the ASEAN rules and norms. Assoc Prof Alan Chong, coordinator of the masters programme in international relations at RSIS, also recommended setting up an ASEAN Permanent Committee on ASEAN Economic Community rules to monitor the implementation of a rules-based ASEAN.



*Prof Ralf Emmers (centre) addressing the conference*

# Joint Workshop by RSIS and the Norwegian Embassy

By **Harry Sa**

From 6 to 8 November 2017, RSIS, in conjunction with the Norwegian Embassy in Singapore, hosted delegates from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a three-day workshop on security policy. Held at the PARKROYAL on Pickering Hotel, Singapore, the workshop also welcomed distinguished lecturers and panellists from other institutions such as the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, and the International Institute of Strategic Studies, as well as speakers from China, South Korea, and Norway.

The workshop kicked off with two sessions: “Geopolitics in Asia” and “China’s Emergence as a Major Security Actor and its Relationship with the Established World Order”. Due

to a shaky Trump presidency, America’s commitment is being questioned in the region now more than ever while China is using it as an opportunity to fulfil its own agenda (e.g. the South China Sea, Belt and Road Initiative). There was a full slate of seminars the next day on “The Korean Peninsula”, “Countering Terrorism and Extremism”, “How Asia’s Growth

Affects the Established World Order”, and “Russia’s Security Policy Towards Asia”.

The workshop concluded on 8 November 2017 with a 90-minute discussion exercise on topics covered in the previous two days and how they explicitly affect Norwegian security, followed by a formal panel session on the same

topic. The delegates and hosts gathered for a luncheon with the incumbent Norwegian Ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Mr Morten Høglund. He encouraged developing the cooperation between Norway and ASEAN, and outlined the opportunities and challenges for Norway when engaging this part of the world.



*Dr Michael Raska (right), Assistant Professor of the Military Transformations Programme at RSIS, speaking during the workshop. Beside him is Prof Robert Kelly (centre), Department of Political Science and Diplomacy, Pusan National University; and Director Torleiv Opland, Section for Security Policy and North America, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

# Workshop on Counter-Insurgency and Counter-Terrorism

By Nurul Huda Binte Yussof

The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at RSIS organised a workshop on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism on 21 November 2017. Attended by delegates from the Police Science College in Indonesia, the workshop explored the various counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism approaches, discussed past case studies, and reviewed better strategies to take in dealing with Indonesia's issue with West Papua.

Insightful presentations were given by six keynote speakers, including academics from RSIS, National University of Singapore, the Rabdan Academy, and a former intelligence analyst from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Their presentations



*From left to right: Police Commissioner Pahala Martua Nababan, Police Commissioner Benny Bathara, Prof Rohan Gunaratna, Police Superintendent Herry Heryawan, Police Superintendent Dr Sulastiana, Police Commissioner Malvino Edward Yusticia, Police Commissioner Ahriesonta Nasution, and Police Chief Inspector Rovana Richard Mahenu*

covered both current and past case studies, such as the insurgency in West Papua, Marawi, Afghanistan, and British Malaya. Each presentation provided a framework of analysis in understanding the developments before, during, and after an insurgency. These were key in demonstrating the unintended effects that

can come from an ineffective approach for counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism.

On the best approach to resolving the West Papuan insurgency, the academics believe that coercive actions should be kept to a minimum. Both delegates and presenters agreed that coercive

operational procedures will translate into unfavourable political consequences that can fuel the narratives of extremists and insurgents. In an effort to address the recent developments of ISIS and Al-Qaeda, a discussion on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism at a global level was also included in this workshop.

# Dealing with Mass Movement of Refugees and Migrants

By Vishalini Chandara Sagar

The RSIS' Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies organised a seminar on forced migration titled "Mass Movement of Refugees and Migrants: How is the World Community Dealing with One of the Biggest Problems of Our Time?" on 17 October 2017. The former United Nations Assistant High Commissioner (Operations) for Refugees, Ms Janet Lim, who is currently a Visiting Senior Fellow at RSIS, delivered the seminar. Moderated by Assoc Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of the



*Ms Janet Lim (right) with Assoc Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony during the seminar*

centre, the event was well-received by guests from various institutions and embassies.

Ms Lim discussed the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

and its relevance to the movement of people in Asia, focusing on the current crises in Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. She stressed that the impact of the migration crisis to the region was

increasing as a result of recent events and questioned whether such global agreements could be successful when implemented in this region.

Ms Lim also explored ideas on how the region could be more operationally ready to deal with the refugee crisis and how regional organisations could play a role in overcoming some of the challenges. She opined that a shift in the way governments approach the refugee situation is necessary. One of Ms Lim's key points was that refugees contribute a level of capacity-building to their host countries. The impact of refugee influx on a host country is largely contingent on how each individual government responds to the situation.

# Workshop on China's Neighbourhood Relations

By Li Mingjiang

The China Programme of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies at RSIS, organised a workshop titled "China's Neighbourhood Relations" on 5 January 2018 at the Rendezvous Hotel, Singapore. Eighteen scholars from China, New Zealand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Indonesia presented their papers at the workshop.

The workshop focused on two major themes: China's Asian relations in the Xi Jinping era, and the domestic factors in the South China Sea disputes. Participants shared their research findings on the changes that have taken place in China's relations with

its neighbouring countries in the Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia since 2012 when Xi Jinping became the top leader in China.

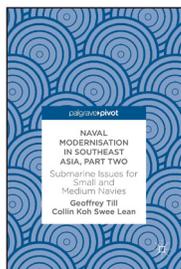
The workshop also systematically explored the various domestic factors in claimant countries that have influences on their policies in the South China Sea disputes.

It was recognised that the domestic political dynamics in China, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Indonesia, as well as institutional set-up, bureaucratic politics, elite political contentions, business actors and local governments, have had significant impacts on these countries' policies and behaviours.



Participants of the workshop

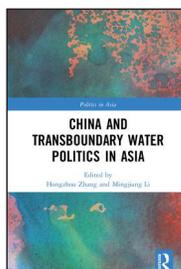
## STAFF PUBLICATIONS



### Naval Modernisation in Southeast Asia, Part Two: Submarine Issues for Small and Medium Navies

*Edited by Geoffrey Till and Koh Swee Lian Collin. Palgrave Macmillan: 2017. ISBN: 978-3-319-58391-4*

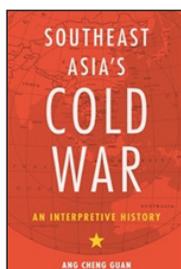
This edited volume starts with an account of the submarine in naval warfare and moves on to review the nature and consequences of naval modernisation in Southeast Asia by considering their acquisition by the small and medium navies of the region. It explores the reasons for these navies taking on this very substantial and demanding challenge, the problems they are facing and the consequences of the deployment of submarines for regional stability. Given the backdrop of growing tensions over the South China Sea and increasing competition between the United States and China in the region, will the arrival of submarines in the area help or hinder the cause of peace? This volume will be of substantial interest not just to those interested in submarines and naval development but also to students and teachers concerned about the very volatile developing situation in and around the South China Sea.



### China and Transboundary Water Politics in Asia

*Edited by Hongzhou Zhang and Mingjiang Li. Routledge: 2017. ISBN: 978-1-806065-4*

This book aims to systematically examine the complex reality of water contestations between China and its neighbouring countries. It provides a discussion on transboundary hydropolitics beyond the state-centric geopolitical perspective to dig into various political, institutional, legal, historical, geographical, and demographic factors that affect China's policies and practices towards transboundary water issues. This book also provides a collection of comparative case studies on China's water resources management on the Mekong River with other five riparian states in the Lower Mekong region: the Salween River with Myanmar, the Brahmaputra River with India, the Amur River with Russia and Mongolia, the Ily and Irtysh Rivers with Kazakhstan, and the Yalu and Tumen Rivers with North Korea. Furthermore, this book sheds light on China's future role in global water governance.



### Southeast Asia's Cold War: An Interpretive History

*Ang Cheng Guan. University of Hawai'i Press: 2017. ISBN: 9780824872571*

The historiography of the Cold War has long been dominated by American motivations and concerns, with Southeast Asian perspectives largely confined to the Indochina wars and Indonesia under Sukarno. Southeast Asia's Cold War corrects this situation by examining the international politics of the region from within rather than without. It provides an up-to-date, coherent narrative of the Cold War as it played out in Southeast Asia against a backdrop of superpower rivalry.

This succinct volume not only demonstrates the complexity of the region, but for the first time provides a narrative that places decolonization and nation-building alongside the usual geopolitical conflicts. It focuses on local actors and marshals a wide range of literature in support of its argument. Most importantly, it tells us how and why the Cold War in Southeast Asia evolved the way it did and offers a deeper understanding of the Southeast Asia we know today.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### 21 FEBRUARY 2018

RSIS SEMINAR BY DR FRANK UMBACH ON "CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD-INITIATIVE AND ITS ENERGY-SECURITY DIMENSIONS"

#### 28 FEBRUARY 2018

WORKSHOP BY MALAYSIA PROGRAMME ON "THE 14<sup>TH</sup> MALAYSIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS"

#### 9 MARCH 2018

RSIS SEMINAR BY PROFESSOR DONALD ROBERT ROTHWELL ON "ISLANDS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW"

#### 21 MARCH 2018

RSIS DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURE BY PROFESSOR LINDA LIM ON "BACK TO THE FUTURE: SINGAPORE, CHINA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA"

#### 3-4 APRIL 2018

TRACK II NETWORK OF ASEAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS (NADI) ANNUAL MEETING

#### 28 APRIL 2018

THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN LEADERSHIP FORUM

#### 6-11 MAY 2018

THE 12<sup>TH</sup> ASIA PACIFIC PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR NATIONAL SECURITY OFFICERS (APPSNO)