

THE 2018 SOUTHEAST ASIA COUNTER-TERRORISM SYMPOSIUM: A COLLECTIVE APPROACH

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Executive Summary

The 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism (CT) Symposium: A Collective Approach Symposium was organised by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, with support from the Ministries of Culture, Community and Youth; Defence; Foreign Affairs; Home Affairs; the National Security Coordination Secretariat; and the Prime Minister's Office. On 4 and 5 October 2018, more than 200 delegates and participants heard presentations from over 20 distinguished speakers on issues relating to countering violent extremism (CVE) at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront Hotel Singapore.

In his opening remarks, RSIS Executive Deputy Chairman (EDC) Ambassador Ong Keng Yong stressed the need for a “multi-year, multi-pronged effort that will be needed not just to defeat not just ISIS, but an intolerant ideology that comes with it”. He highlighted that the Symposium would cover issues such as building societal resilience against terrorism; enhancing the region's ability to tackle the increasingly militarised terror networks; tapping technological advancements for CT; and exploring areas of cooperation to enhance ASEAN's collective CT capacity.

Indonesian Defence Minister GEN (Ret) Ryamizard Ryacudu delivered an overview of emerging threats in ASEAN. Ryacudu discussed how the “threat has decentralised from a

centralised Islamic State (IS) spreading worldwide after the dismantling of IS in Iraq and Syria”. In conclusion, he highlighted the regional partnerships that have led to successes in both “operational and intelligence fronts”.

Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman, Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs was Guest of Honour at the Symposium’s official dinner. He highlighted Singapore’s proposal for the “Resilience, Response, and Recovery” (3R) Framework for counter-terrorism, which ASEAN Member States can apply for their own national initiatives. In closing, Dr Maliki highlighted that “a prepared and alert citizenry can contribute in tangible ways to prevent, deal with and respond to security threats”.

Introduction

The threat of terrorism remains a key challenge in Southeast Asia. Notwithstanding its military defeat in 2017, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has continued to expand its reach to other parts of the world – including Southeast Asia – by establishing links with regional militant groups and through ideological influence. This strategic confluence of ISIS’ propaganda, funds, and returning foreign fighters means that the magnitude and complexity of the terror threat in the region will continue to grow.

As ASEAN Chair this year, Singapore is hosting the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium from October 4 to 5 2018 to foster regional cooperation in tackling this transnational threat. Anchored on the theme “A Collective Approach”, the Symposium brings together senior government officials from the region, practitioners as well as representatives from academia and the private sector to exchange ideas and best practices on CT-related issues.

This report contains the full text of speeches by the Indonesia Minister for Defence General (Retired) Ryamizard Ryacudu, RSIS Executive Deputy Chairman Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, and Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs, Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman.

All other speeches were summarised by RSIS rapporteurs. The two-day Symposium was composed of four thematic panels:

(a) building societal resilience against terrorism; (b) enhancing the region's ability to tackle the increasingly militarised terror networks; (c) tapping technological advancements for CT; and (d) exploring areas of cooperation to enhance ASEAN's collective CT capacity.

Opening Remarks

Delivered at the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: A Collective Approach

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong

Executive Deputy Chairman

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Good morning, Gen (Ret) Ryamizard Ryacudu, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Indonesia and guest of honour at this Symposium, Excellencies, distinguished guests, friends, ladies and gentlemen. Allow me to warmly welcome all of you to the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: A Collective Approach.

The Symposium is organised by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore, with support from the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs, and Culture, Community and Youth, and the National Security Coordination Secretariat.

I should leave the opening address to our Guest of Honour, Gen Ryamizard but allow me to say a few words about this particular event, and how we have arrived at this point.

Over three years ago, in April 2015, RSIS together with the Singapore government organised the East Asia Summit (EAS) Symposium on Religious Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration. That was a landmark symposium – the first time the East Asia Summit countries came together to discuss exchange ideas on terrorism in a dedicated fashion. We saw

speakers from different domains come together to talk with purpose and perspective about extremism, radicalism and how to reintegrate those individuals involved in these activities into our respective societies.

This present symposium, organized as part of Singapore's ASEAN chairmanship, takes stock on what has been achieved since then. Of note, Counter-Terrorism is now a key focus area for ASEAN, and this has translated into closer CT cooperation among ASEAN Member States, such as through platforms like the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMMTC) on Transnational Crime. It has been organised also to examine how violent extremism has changed and to lay out suggestions for the work that needs to be done in this area by governments, law enforcement, militaries, civil society and the private sector.

This discussion and sharing of notes is an urgent priority.

The field has changed. ISIS has suffered serious battlefield reverses in Syria and Iraq, and on the face of it might seem to be a shadow of its former self. But for those of us in the room, we know that this is only part of the story. For one, there is the issue of ISIS returnees. Various countries would have their own mechanisms to deal with returnees. It was important for sharing of best practices when it came to deradicalisation or disengagement from extremism to take place, with countries learning and adapting as the needs of their own local context dictated. This was why Track 1.5 mechanisms like the present Symposium matter.

That is one part of the story. The other part is continued ISIS resilience particularly in the ideological battlefields of the

mind, and especially in fostering its own brand of intolerance and exclusivist thought, even as nations attempt to shore up their own resilience. ISIS operatives, sympathizers and fan boys have benefitted greatly from use of the darker corners of the Internet. It is not by accident therefore that we have in the line-up social media companies represented. This itself is a testament to how necessary and vital their input and indeed their buy-in is when it comes to combating radical thought online and in the echo chambers of the mind.

Over the next two days, the Symposium will discuss four key topics: (a) building societal resilience against terrorism; (b) enhancing the region's ability to tackle the increasingly militarised terror networks; (c) tapping technological advancements for CT; and (d) exploring areas of cooperation to enhance ASEAN's collective CT capacity.

We also have presenters who will give the Singapore approach to these issues. But, as I am sure many of you know, the Singapore approach is to share what we know and what we have learnt. We do not prescribe universal solutions for others. Indeed in Singapore, we are keen to learn from others. Many things have happened in Singapore in recent years since EAS Symposium – for example, more self-radicalised individuals, and younger individuals detained, and these are not the same as those arrested from groups like the Jemaah Islamiyah. They pose different challenges when it comes to deradicalisation. We ourselves in Singapore know that we do not have all the answers and therefore we are keen to learn from the vast expertise gathered in this room – from the panels, and of course from the many fruitful side discussions which I know will take places in the corridors and over meals.

I want to mention also the site visits. Delegates and speakers will be visiting the Singapore Armed Forces' Island Defence Training Institute and the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) Resource and Counselling Centre. They will learn how Singapore's national security agencies cooperate in homeland security and how RRG leaders and counsellors carry out Singapore's religious rehabilitation efforts. Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman will also host the speakers, delegates and invited guests to an official dinner this evening.

In closing, let me draw you back to the EAS Symposium in 2015 – this was subtitled “Building Resilience – Reintegrating Lives”. These key words – resilience and reintegration – are just as resonant today as they were three and a half years ago. These words also speak to the multi-year, multi-pronged effort that will be needed not just to defeat not just ISIS, but an intolerant ideology that comes with it. Indeed, unless we are careful may well be ISIS' by-product and legacy – an ideology that provides the atmospherics for sectarianism and exclusivist thought.

I think I speak for many of us in saying that I look forward to hearing the discussions and recommendations from the various panels that will take place over these two days. I would also like to thank the RSIS colleagues and the interagency team who have been working so hard to make this event possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to thank you all for making time to join us this morning, and I thank you for your kind attention.

Opening Address

Official translation of speech delivered at the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: A Collective Approach

H.E. GEN (Ret) Ryamizard Ryacudu

Minister of Defence

Ministry of Defence, Indonesia

Defence Minister of Singapore His Excellency Dr Ng Eng Hen; Deputy Ministers of Defence; His Excellency Ambassador Ong Keng Yong; and distinguished delegates it is an honour and pleasure for me to address the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: A Collective Approach.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the hospitality and warm reception by the Singapore government and S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies to me and members of my delegation from Indonesia.

Ladies and gentlemen, the unpredictable developments in the strategic environment have caused uncertainty. Today, uncertainty is the only certainty. Distance among countries is no longer a barrier now. Meanwhile, the dependency among the nation-states is growing. This has created unity and cooperation among people in the region. Hence, the future threat will no longer be a conventional one of open war between countries. Rather, it would be a tangible and realistic threat. Among them is the clash of interests in the name of certain ideologies from social or marginalised groups.

This has caused a new form of threat, a tangible threat. This threat is dynamic in nature and multi-dimensional which has

manifested itself in physical and non-physical forms. International and domestic threats can stem from terrorism and radicalism; separatism and armed insurgencies; natural disasters and environmental issues; violation of border area; piracy and robbery at sea; theft of natural and mineral resources; arms smuggling; contagious diseases; misuse of drugs and distribution, as well as cyber and intelligence war. The characteristics of those threats are that they do not recognise state borders; do not recognise religion; do not recognise time; and perpetrate indiscriminate violence.

Ladies and gentlemen, today the threat of terrorism and radicalism has emerged as a serious threat in Southeast Asia. We need concrete and serious joint steps to counter it. The threat is cross-border, widespread and conducted through a network of underground activities. Countering it needs collective action through collaboration in terms of inter-state capability and interactions that are intensive, constructive, and concrete.

It is regrettable that recently Indonesia has suffered terrorist attacks in terms of modus operandi, perpetrated by an entire family. It occurred in a few places in Surabaya. Few other terrorist acts occurred in other areas of Indonesia. There are other families at large who are wanted by the security forces.

They are not following the teachings of Islam, of peace and love. It is very irrational when a mother asks her children to conduct suicide acts. Where is the heart of the mother? A mother should have a natural instinct to protect and maintain her children from threats that would harm her children. We must fight this concept and ideology.

The terrorists are indoctrinated by a deviant ideology, misguided by heavenly promises of martyrdom, that: (a) they will go to heaven; (b) they will meet with God; (c) they will have their sins and mistakes forgiven; (d) 70 of family members will be brought to heaven; (3) those who are men will meet with 72 virgins in heaven.

We cannot permit gaps against terrorist and radical groups to develop and launch attacks in the Southeast Asian region. As state apparatus in defence and security, we must take the initiative to destroy them. Hence, today's meeting becomes very important, amidst our efforts to develop an effective strategy and an operational platform.

In Southeast Asia, the Southern Philippines, especially Sulu Seas that directly border Indonesia and Malaysia have been made into an Islamic State (IS) stronghold. Such a development could be a launching pad to trigger other terrorist attacks in Southeast Asia. The influence of the IS is expanding into Southeast Asia by creating an alliance of groups in the region under the control of IS Central led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi based in Syria and Iraq.

The global terrorism landscape is evolving and experiencing changes. A cooperative effort by all the countries across the globe and region is needed to counter this threat.

With IS ideology and presence spreading to parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, the next phase of the IS threat will be in the creation of multiple provinces. The IS has established a nuclei in the Philippines for Southeast Asia, Afghanistan for South Asia, Xinjiang for Northeast Asia, Chechnya for the

Caucasus, Yemen for the Middle East, Nigeria for West Africa, Somalia for East Africa and Libya for North Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, the current terrorism threat in this region is from the third generation of terrorists. After the creation of Al-Qaeda and the creation of IS in Syria and Iraq, coalition operations in the Middle East led to the birth of the third generation. The formation of the third terrorist generation underwent evolution through 2 phases: the Al-Qaeda-centric phase, where 400 fighters from the region gained training and experience in Afghanistan and Pakistan before returning home. In Thailand, these fighters created Jemaah Salafiya and Kumpulan Militan in Malaysia, Jemaah Islamiyah in Singapore and Indonesia and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in the Philippines. (2) The IS-centric phase created groups such as Kumpulan Gagak Hitam and al Kubro Generation in Malaysia, Jamaah Ansharud Daulah (JAD) in Indonesia and Islamic State Lanao (Maute Group) and IS in the Philippines. Today, 63 groups in Southeast Asia have pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and many are willing to kill and die for the IS cause.

The threat has decentralised from a centralised IS, spreading worldwide after the dismantling of IS in Iraq and Syria. IS then spread to parts of the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Asia especially Southeast Asia. Another specific characteristic of the third generation of terrorism threat is the return of IS foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) from the Middle East. Based on Indonesian Ministry of Defense's intelligence data, there are around 31500 foreign terrorist fighters who join IS in Syria and Iraq; an estimated 800 of them are from Southeast Asia, of which around 700 are from Indonesia.

Recent years have seen the Thamrin attack in Indonesia on January 14, 2016; the Movida club attack in Malaysia on June 28, 2016; and the siege of an entire city in Marawi in the Philippines on May 23, 2017. Timely arrests also disrupted a dozen other plots, including a plan to fly an explosives-laden drone into the police headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, mount a suicide attack against the State Palace in Jakarta and fire a rocket at the Marina Bay Sands (MBS) in Singapore. The situation remains serious today – a terrorist attack can take place anywhere and at any time. Recently uncovered plots have revealed plans by terrorists to make anthrax and botulinum in Malaysia, and ricin and thorium in Indonesia. It is clear that the terrorists are determined to destabilise our region and create a province of the caliphate, also known as a *wilayat*. Unlike Al-Qaeda and JI in the early 2000s that operated discretely, IS, through its use of graphic videos, speeches and attack methods, has opted for open and indiscriminate warfare. With a mandate to govern and protect the people, the question arises what we as government officials, politicians, and responsible citizens have done to mitigate the current and emerging threat.

The terrorist threat in Southeast Asia has shifted dramatically when IS linked Filipino groups besieged Marawi on May 23, 2017. Although IS' plans to establish a wilayat in Southeast Asia have been known since 2014, governments underestimated the extent of the IS threat in our region. Regional authorities have not exercised intelligence exchange procedure proportionately to prevent the fall of Marawi to IS.

Even after the siege of Marawi, the flow of intelligence relatively has not gone effectively and become less accurate. At the Shangri-La Dialogue on June 3 and 4, 2017 I said that IS'

strength in the Philippines numbered between 1000 to 1200, including 40 fighters from Indonesia. When I flew to Manila on June 6, 2017, I was informed that IS' strength in Marawi was only 50 strong and was supported by drug cartel networks of up to 500 personnel.

I provided the Philippines a breakdown of the 16 IS groups and their numerical strength. The most capable groups were identified as IS Sulu and Basilan with between 400-570 fighters; Islamic State Lanao (Maute Group) with 263; Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters with 406; and Ansar Khilafa Mindanao with between 7-37. The intelligence was available but fragmented and despite the signs of an imminent threat, we have not prepared serious and concrete countermeasures.

The siege of Marawi is a warning for all of us to appreciate the value of intelligence gathering and sharing. After the five-month long battle in Marawi ended on October 23, 2017, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said 986 terrorists were killed or captured. In conventional and non-traditional warfare, developing intelligence and ensuring collaboration is key. Had the agencies under the ministries of defence and home affairs shared and exchanged intelligence, this attack could have been prevented or pre-empted. Without accurate and high quality intelligence, we will be wasting our time and resources at the expense of precious lives lost. The siege of Marawi demonstrated that our region was unprepared for the current and emerging wave of terrorism. It also demonstrated the need for a new security architecture for the ASEAN region.

The Need for a New Security Architecture

The first step in an embryonic regional security architecture is the need for a multilateral intelligence-sharing platform to detect foreign fighter travel, the establishment of training camps, dissemination of propaganda, and movement of terrorist funds.

The “Our Eyes Initiative” (OEI) emerged during my visit to Singapore on July 6, 2017 when I met with Singapore’s Minister of Home Affairs and Law K. Shanmugam at RSIS at NTU. The meeting gave me confidence to build a collaborative intelligence platform. Minister Shanmugam supported my proposal for a regional platform to deal with terrorism and radicalisation, and share counter-terrorism intelligence.

In August 2017, I wrote to my counterparts in the region and sought their views on OEI. We agreed on the five main components: creating a common database, exchange of personnel, joint training and operations, and lastly, sharing of expertise, resources and experience. The Ministers of Defence for Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Brunei agreed to establish a joint working group and at a later date, to invite Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to join this group. As regional partners, the United States (US), Australia, New Zealand and Japan have also agreed to join the OEI.

The shooting and beheading of prisoners, burning of churches, taking of hostages and use of female captives including children as sex slaves in Marawi was a signal that IS ideology and methodology has taken root in ASEAN. The defence ministers were concerned that the threat will spread from the

Philippines to Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand. The three most affected countries – Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia developed the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) that disrupted terrorist hijackings and hostage taking in the Sulu Sea.

The first component of TCA was the launching of the Trilateral Maritime Patrol (TMP) by Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines in Tarakan, Indonesia on June 19, 2017. Maritime Command Centres were established in Tarakan, Tawau in Sabah and Bongao in the Philippines. Singapore and Brunei were invited as observers. Singapore offered its Information Fusion Centre to facilitate maritime information sharing for the TMP. The second component of TCA was the launch of the Trilateral Air Patrol by Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines at the Subang Air Base in Malaysia on October 12, 2017. Singapore and Brunei were again invited as observers.

We are planning for the third and fourth components – national and joint land forces training and exercises starting in October 2018, and joint operations in early 2019. Defence ministers from the Philippines and Malaysia had previously laid the foundation for collaboration and now Minister Mohamad bin Sabu from Malaysia has agreed to advance this collaboration further.

Only by working together, we can stem the continuing flow of funds and fighters to our region. If we only think of our national interests, we cannot make progress. The creation of OEI was based on the principle that it takes a network to beat a network. If the terrorists in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore can train together in the Philippines, why should we not train, exercise and operate together? At the ADMM in the

Philippines on October 23, 2017, we reviewed the range of measures taken to prevent the spread of the terrorist threat from Mindanao to the region. As defence ministers, we vowed to not allow IS to take root in the region. We assessed that IS grew in the Middle East due to the weak response of Middle Eastern leaders. We decided to adopt a robust and sustained response. Although the threat diminished after Marawi, the daily reports of incidents in Mindanao demonstrates the continuity of the threat. The suicide bombing in Lamitan in Basilan by a Moroccan foreign terrorist fighter on July 31, 2018 is the most significant recent attack.

Managing the Threat

We are facing a common threat. The way to mitigate this threat is to find a collaboration format that can accommodate the interests of all parties. As members of the ASEAN family, we should work together. However, the shift from counter-terrorism cooperation to collaboration remains a challenge as many countries continue to view regional relations with a geopolitical lens.

In this good opportunity, let me share with you that working together made us stronger and more effective in countering terrorism. The original plan of IS was to create a wilayat in Poso, Central Sulawesi, a former conflict area. IS central supported and funded Mujahidin Indonesia Timur (MIT), a group led by Santoso, one of the first Indonesian terrorist leaders to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. By collaborating with the police, Indonesian army snipers killed the Indonesian IS leader on July 18, 2016. The joint police and military team involved in *Operation Tinombala* had mounted surveillance on the MIT leadership living in a dense jungle for

weeks. As the former commander of Kostrad (Army Strategic Command) of Indonesia, I had raised the raiders for counter-terrorism and counterinsurgency operations, forming 10 Raider Battalions. It was a classic case of the police and army working together and producing results. Only after Indonesia had delivered a crushing blow to MIT, did IS decide to create a wilayat in the Philippines.

In Marawi, cooperation between the police and the military was pivotal. It was the intelligence gathered from a female hostage by the police that enabled an elite army unit to locate both Isnilon Hapilon and Omarkhayyam Maute, the IS leader and deputy leader. Similarly, the bodies of the Malaysian terrorist Amin Baco and his son were positively identified due to international law enforcement and military collaboration. It is important to understand that in a conflict zone, the military is best placed to lead the fight. In Marawi, the terrorists had access to military grade weapons ranging from standoff weapons to sniper rifles and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) to drones. Furthermore, they were ideologically driven by a willingness to die. It is significant that less than a dozen terrorists surrendered to the military in Marawi and shows that the police alone could not have defeated the threat.

The situation in Indonesia was no different. Public confidence in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in May 2018 was restored because of closer collaboration between the police and the military. Although less than one percent of Southeast Asian Muslims are influenced by IS, those indoctrinated are very fanatical. When IS inmates sieged the prison in Kelapa Dua in Jakarta on May 8, 2018, they gained access to weapons in the evidence room and dared the police to attack them. Believing that they will die as martyrs and go to heaven, the

terrorists refused to surrender for two days. Similarly, the multiple suicide attacks involving entire families in Surabaya on May 13 and 14 overwhelmed the police. The deployment of the military in support of the police gave confidence to the public and stabilized the situation.

The Future

Counter-terrorism responses should not be limited to state actors. Governments must have the foresight to engage civil society organisations, the academia and the private sector to both prevent and counter violent extremism. Around the world, these actors have proven to be creative and effective in crafting initiatives to counter the terrorist threat and promote moderation. Governments should lead and coordinate these efforts but civil society actors have a better reach within the respective communities.

Terrorism and insurgency are by-products of exclusivism and extremism. Indonesia is fortunate to have *Pancasila*, a natural antidote against the exclusivism and extremism propagated by terrorists. My own ministry works closely with civil society members to instil an Indonesian identity in vulnerable individuals through Bela Negara program.

Based on experience, most ministers of defence are too focused on building their military forces to go to war with other nation-states. The primary threat today is no longer from inter-states, but terrorist and criminal actors operating in both the physical and cyber space. This threat does not recognize national borders and unless we collaborate, will increasingly endanger our citizens. To deal with the changing threat landscape in Southeast Asia, militaries, law

enforcement and intelligence services should better understand terrorism, extremism and exclusivism. I congratulate the RSIS for taking the lead to formally and informally educate the security services community in the region.

Conclusion

Today, we must be stronger than ever before. Although creating the right counter-terrorism architecture is a work in progress, we have made headway because of the indomitable spirit of our leaders. Working in partnership with countries in the region and beyond on the operational and intelligence fronts has produced huge successes. To enhance early warning, detection and deterrence capabilities, six Southeast Asian nations formally launched the OEI in Bali on January 25, 2018.

With more nations both within and outside the region requesting to join our counter-terrorism alliance, OEI has the potential to grow and surpass Five Eyes, the intelligence alliance comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the US.

We are currently exchanging counter-terrorism intelligence in the region. Our extra-regional partners including the US has provided significant intelligence and operational leadership, the latest being a US-led counter-terrorism operation against Bahrin Naim in Ash Shafa, Syria on June 8, 2018. The operation is classified and I cannot go into details but I want to say that the US airstrike against Bahrin Naim was successful.

Bahrn Naim was the directing figure of over a dozen successful and failed attacks, including a plot to fire a rocket at MBS in Singapore. The operation demonstrated the value of cooperation between our governments. Another long-term terrorist target Abu Ghaida was killed in a US airstrike in Kashma on May 23, 2018. An Indonesian IS propagandist before traveling to Syria, he joined the IS media wing and was the sole producer of Philippines propaganda. To support the IS siege of Marawi, Abu Ghaida effectively promoted IS in the region and helped to build the IS Philippines media unit. The counter-terrorism operations against Bahrn Naim and Abu Ghaida demonstrated that the reach of the US would remain vital as Southeast Asians have recently started to travel to Afghanistan as an alternative theatre to Syria.

Let me conclude by paying a tribute to Singapore for its zero tolerance approach against terrorism. A legacy of its founding father, Lee Kuan Yew, I find this spirit apparent in both the Minister of Defence of Singapore Dr Ng Eng Hen and Senior Minister of State for Defence Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman. Let me take this opportunity to extend Indonesia's hand of friendship and cooperation to all nations represented at this symposium. Thank you.

Keynote Speeches

H.E. Liew Chin Tong

Deputy Defence Minister

Ministry of Defence, Malaysia

- Challenges facing national security today are multi-dimensional. State governments and authorities are no longer dealing with just conventional military warfare or state actors waging war against other states, but with threats that do not recognise state, time or ideological borders. There are also newer tactics used to commit terror, for example suicide bombings.
- ASEAN states should therefore share intelligence and cooperate, to ensure terrorism is “removed politically” and not allowed to fester in the region. Efforts in the name of counter-terrorism should also prevent further grievances that can unexpectedly lead to more terror or radicalisation. Malaysia’s Defence Minister has highlighted how the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar could lead to cases of radicalisation in the state or within the region, stemmed by the lack of basic services and concern for the welfare of refugees or those affected.
- Terrorism can be the result of: (a) majority-minority problems; (b) centre-periphery issues; and (c) economic problems. Issues in Myanmar, Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand are majority-minority problems, where there is a strong centre but a marginalised periphery, and where economic issues abound. A solution to this may involve some

decentralisation, together with a form of federalism, to accommodate the different groups' interests while keeping centre-periphery issues small.

- This also suggests the need for a whole-of-society approach. Governments should be receptive to consulting civil society and the public, to understand issues, and be connected on the ground. This also allows for early detection of unhappiness or disenchantment, where they can be addressed appropriately before developing into potential violent or extremist ideologies or actions.
- At the same time, there is a need to consider democracy when addressing counter-terrorism. Democracy ensures the political participation of all citizens, fundamental rights such as the freedom of speech and expression, and reduces the size of disenfranchised populations. It also reduces the gap between the haves and have-nots, and minimises the perceived hopelessness among the economically disadvantaged. It is therefore important to suitably address local grievances and ensure violence is not the solution the disenfranchised seek. These assure citizens would not be easily radicalised, and is especially important with the return of IS fighters back to the region.
- Another issue, which needs equal attention, is to understand that Islam should not be equated to terrorism. Combating terrorism is about winning the hearts and minds of all communities making up the public.
- Therefore, a whole-of-society approach is needed in the region's counter-terrorism efforts. The Special ADMM on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE),

Radicalisation and Terrorism is reflective of the region's commitment to combating terror and violent extremism amongst ASEAN defence establishments, as well as in civil society and academia.

- In conclusion, there is a need for both hard and soft approaches. Counter-terrorism needs to pay adequate attention to the political nature of extremist ideologies and acts, while a more inclusive solution should be enacted to reduce dissatisfaction and alienation in the region's midst.

H.E. Hoang Anh Tuan

Deputy Secretary-General

ASEAN for ASEAN Political Security Community

- Terrorism and violent extremism are topics of great relevance to the ASEAN. While the region has been rocked with attacks such as the bombings in Jakarta and the Marawi siege, efforts have been consciously taken to counter-terrorism and violent extremism.
- However, more attention should also be given to transnational crimes which may effectually encourage terrorism or violent extremism in the region, such as trafficking-in of persons. Thus, there is also a need to cooperate at stemming these crimes, to ensure the spread of extremist ideologies and terrorist activities are prevented.
- As a regional organisation, ASEAN has observed various initiatives to address terrorism and transnational crime. This includes the adoption and ratification of legally binding instruments. For example, the 2007 ASEAN Convention on Counterterrorism, which is committed to the

prevention of all forms of terrorist acts and had entered into force in 2011.

- Strategic dialogues such as the AMMTC and the ADMM and ADMM Plus, and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) have also led to the development of other initiatives. This include the ASEAN 2017 Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter Terrorism, and the ASEAN 2017 Plan of Action in Combating Transnational Crime.
- To address the issue of returning foreign fighters and illegal border crossing, ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Division of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (DGICM) meet annually to discuss best practices for major checkpoints and immigration in the region.
- There are also efforts to address more current issues that can affect the region. For example, there is an ASEAN Working Group on Cybercrime to focus on the complexities and evolution of this contemporary threat.
- While there have been some commitments to increase cooperation and coordination of counter terror efforts within ASEAN, three challenges still face the organisation. First, there exists capacity and capability gaps amongst law enforcement officers and the state. For example, issues with regard to cybersecurity has increased, but not all states have cybersecurity units of experts. Further, there needs to be a realisation that different problems may require different sets of coordinated responses tailored to addressing the issue most appropriately.
- Second, there is difficulty coordinating responses from the relevant authorities within each state due to

red tape. This would lead to duplication of efforts across the region, and inefficient use of resources. Better communication and sharing can lead to increased participation in overall regional efforts through streamlining activities and cost cutting.

- Third, there is a need to increase public awareness of ASEAN's efforts and commitment to countering terrorism and transnational crime. This enables "populations of awareness" in the region, which can contribute to mitigating and preventing acts of terrorism or crime.
- The way forward for ASEAN is to invest on capacity building, and ensure that knowledge, laws and skills are updated to keep up with emerging threats. This can be achieved via closer cross border cooperation and continued knowledge sharing, to benefit the region as a whole.

H.E. Cardozo Luna

Undersecretary of National Defense

Department of National Defense, Philippines

- Southeast Asia is Al-Qaeda's second front after concentrating in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This has seen several extremist activities in the region, including those committed by JI and the ASG.
- In more recent years, the region has seen the rise of Daesh-influenced or inspired terror activities, which aims to establish a wilayat and pledging allegiance to ISIS and its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Its calls to unity amongst Muslims from Southeast Asia have featured fighters from Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, in the hopes to encourage more individuals to join their cause.
- What is observed currently is the influx of returning foreign fighters who have left Syria and Iraq. This inevitably challenges the security and resilience of the region, as they may potentially radicalise local individuals with extremist ideologies, or organise terror attacks on their own.
- In Southern Philippines, the Maute Group tried capturing and establishing a territorial foothold in the region, to establish the caliphate or the wilayat. While the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) managed to defeat the Maute groups after a protracted fight, the Marawi siege was a revelation to many security officials and governments in Southeast Asia.
- There are new dimensions of terrorism that should be given more attention, and monitoring. This includes: (a) new emerging patterns of radicalisation that may involve the young, educated middle class or families

committing violent acts; (b) new sources of terrorist financing via electronic transfers, cryptocurrency or the *hawala* system in the Philippines; and (c) technological sophistication, where conventional means of committing attacks may have evolved to unconventional methods.

- The key to improving counter-terrorism efforts is to be clearer in the region's outlook. Taking a more responsive but preventive approach requires balancing the twin concerns of openness and security in Southeast Asia.
- Singapore's counter-terrorism strategy has been highlighted for its focus on multiculturalism, social cohesion, rehabilitation and deradicalisation. The Philippines have in turn learnt it needs to engage with Muslim scholars and focus more on rehabilitation.
- There is also a need to cooperate at an inter-state level. Thus far, ASEAN has committed to regional counter-terrorism initiatives, the ADMM, and conducting military trainings with member states. Ultimately, there is still a need to synchronise initiatives and expand cooperation between the state, civil society and individuals, to enhance trust and combat terror.

Panel One – Strengthening Societies against Terrorism

Mr Lim Shung Yar

Director, Community Relations and Engagement Division
Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, Singapore

- Community relations are relevant to a nation's counter-terrorism agenda as engagement initiatives foster social cohesion and ensure people have trust in their government. Preventing extremism is about winning hearts and minds and requires a 'whole-of-society' approach.
- Potential terrorists make up a minute fraction of a given population but the impact that one person can have is comparatively significant. In Singapore, a number of state institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs) work together to promote community resilience and limit the possibility of discord. The city-state is small and religiously diverse, which is considered a strength, but also brings an element of vulnerability in terms of social cohesion.
- Last year, the United States commemorated 25 years since a series of race riots in Los Angeles, which erupted following the release of video footage showing police officers beating an African-American man. Thousands of people were injured, which illustrates the fragility of ethnic and culturally diverse nations. When law enforcement responds to unrest with a heavy hand it will also create resentment and fuel grievances.

- A useful analogy may be to consider long-range missiles. Preventing missiles from being launched is easier than shooting them down mid-flight, but even better is not to have the missile at all. Regarding extremism and exclusivism, frequent engagements and dialogues between different groups are vital for maintaining harmony. In Singapore, this may mean bringing people together to explain what Ramadan means, what halal means, and why Chinese people burn joss paper.
- Sometimes people do not understand their own neighbour's customs or culture because they might feel it is not appropriate to ask. We need to break this type of norm and encourage open conversations. Yet understanding is still not enough; people need to take action, which is not something that governments can simply tell people to do. If your pastor, imam or neighbour asks you to help with a project or a donation drive there is a much higher chance you will participate.
- A very small minority of influencers may be spreading insidious and harmful messages. The government works closely with religious leaders to ensure they regulate the content of their communities of faith to ensure narratives are positive and constructive, and encourages them to interact with curious people online to explain concepts and provide religious guidance.
- When people become lured into accepting an extremist worldview, a purely punitive response will not be conducive to change. Instead, people must be rehabilitated and reintegrated back into society,

which must involve community members and families.

Mr Ahmad el-Muhammady

Advisor to the Royal Malaysian Police on its Rehabilitation Programme

Royal Malaysian Police

- Radicalisation is essentially the process whereby an individual adopts an extremist ideology, which is then translated into violent action. However, it is difficult to identify the turn from opinions to actions. Many people are perhaps radical but not violent; others may have radical ideas but have no intention of committing any kind of attack, or feel intense anger over certain events transpiring in the Middle East.
- Democratic values may well provide protection against intolerant inclinations, but recruiters can also take advantage of the freedoms afforded by democratic institutions to spread dangerous propaganda. Individuals may say it is their democratic right to hold a particular view – even if those convictions are fundamentally anti-democratic.
- One way to perceive the concept of radicalisation is through four levels of analysis: (1) cognitive, where an individual remains at the idea-level and does not turn thoughts into action; (2) a sense of anger or revenge, whereby an individual supports violence but does not personally get involved; (3) faith, or belief in the ultimate goals of an extremist organisation, such as the establishment of a global caliphate, but not supporting violence; and (4) action, which is the most

dangerous. Each of these distinct profiles or processes should be viewed differently under a nation's laws.

- Democratic rights protect the first three, but in some cases, crimes can be committed without committing violence, such as the possession of offensive material, images or video footage. These are best described as ideological offences, which is an important distinction because individuals convicted of such crimes should be dealt with differently from those who have committed violent acts. The right application of punitive and rehabilitative approaches is essential. In Malaysia, there are heavy sentences for terrorism offences; a minimum of seven to nine years and a maximum of thirty years in prison.
- For less serious offenders, a punitive element to the state response can erode the effectiveness of the individual's rehabilitation and even lead to further radicalisation in prisons, which are full of anger and other facilitating environmental factors. Beyond prison, there is also a high chance of relapse following release if an individual's prison experience was one of repression and discontent. Legislation must be designed in such a way that individuals receive an appropriate balance of punishment and rehabilitation depending on the seriousness of their crime and their potential to be reformed through targeted interventions.

Ms Bridget Roberts

Head Psychologist (Operations)

Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore

- Between 2007-2014, eleven self-radicalised Singaporeans were dealt with under the Internal Security Act (ISA). Since 2015, there have been 21 individuals detained under the ISA. Psychologists at the Ministry of Home Affairs sought to learn more about how young people radicalise and what motivated their attraction to extremist narratives.
- Research has suggested that radicalisation is driven by isolation, poor social integration, and religious ideology. One of the team's key findings in Singapore was that religion alone is not a trigger to radicalisation or even the primary reason for sustained involvement.
- Data was collected through face-to-face structured interviews, psychological tests and questionnaires. Participants were male and had an average age of 23. The majority had gone through a period of increased religiosity, which they attributed to a re-evaluation of their lives, seeking meaning or a desire to redeem themselves. Some had relationship or financial issues, or been through a traumatic experience such as a car accident.
- The youth had sought information on a range of topics, among the most common being general Islamic knowledge, the concept of *tawheed* (oneness of God), Islamic law (*Shari'a*), Islamic history and end-times prophecies. When the researchers differentiated the topics between radicalised and at-risk participants (with more limited involvement) they found the former were specifically interested in IS, the

establishment of a caliphate, and the use of violence from a religious perspective, which were absent from the at-risk youth sample.

- Points of agreement across all participants were the legitimacy of armed jihad to defend Islam, the superiority of Islam to other religions, the need to take action to alleviate the suffering of Muslims. Clear differences were apparent between the radicalised and at-risk youth, however. Most prominently was whether jihad should only be defensive or also offensive, with the more radical believing that pre-emption of violence was acceptable in the pursuit of a caliphate. The merely at-risk also did not attach admiration to more extremist organisations such as Al-Qaeda and IS.
- One of the psychological motivations collectively held by both at-risk and radicalised youth was the desire to champion the weak (a 'hero complex'). Among those only demonstrated by the more radicalised were deriving a sense of belonging, building a new sense of identity, thrill seeking and avoiding problems in life.
- Youth radicalisation in Singapore is complex, and goes beyond religious motivation or exposure to online content. Certain attitudes and beliefs distinguished the at-risk from the radicalised. It is possible to identify indicators that suggest an individual is on a pathway to radicalisation, which provides several entry points from intervention. Programmes require a comprehensive and structured assessment of each individual, a rehabilitation framework that incorporates risk management, broad community involvement, and an emphasis on developing the skills and interests of the recipients.

Mr Alvin Tan

Chairman

Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles, Kreta Ayer,
Singapore

Head of Public Policy (Southeast Asia), Facebook

- Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs) are community-level inter-faith platforms in every constituency in Singapore, which have been established to encourage religious and racial harmony throughout the nation. IRCCs aim to both build bridges between different cultures and respond rapidly in the rare emergence of ethnic tension between community members. IRCCs meet to discuss how well Singaporeans are living up to this vision of equality in diversity.
- The Kreta Ayer community in Singapore contains a small stretch of South Bridge Road with a mosque, a temple said to hold one of Buddha's teeth, an ornate Hindu temple and a Methodist church. This religious diversity is reflected throughout the nation and represents a fragile asset that must be maintained. Lee Kuan Yew once said, "This is not a Malay nation; this is not a Chinese nation; this is not an Indian nation. Everyone will have his place: equal language, culture and religion".
- A recent Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) study revealed substantial levels of mistrust between races in Singapore, especially by the majority Chinese community in relation to the minority Malays and Indians. There is a fragility to Singapore's multicultural society and many of the divisions are relatively

engrained. The remedy is to discourage silos by deepening cultural understanding and integration among different communities in Singapore through events, schools, and grassroots organisations.

- Members of local IRCCs find common ground through group activities such as bowling or badminton and eating local food at hawker centres. Differences are celebrated through the annual festivals of the various religions represented in the community. Regular dialogue and training sessions provide opportunities for people to share ideas and learn from one another.
- Specific exercises called ‘tabletop events’ ensure everyone is on the same page regarding what to do in the event of a terrorist attack or a major social disturbance. Technology companies have also assisted with facilitating online interactions and training. People are encouraged to share experiences they have had with other races and religions.
- IRCC members view Singapore’s national identity as the glue that binds each racial group together. Every year, community members participate in an event known as ‘harmony night’, during which people sing Tamil, Malay and Chinese songs. On National Day, Singaporean citizens reaffirm the ideals that has built the city-state’s collective identity.

Q&A

At what point does social distancing between different cultures and religions become problematic?

People will naturally tend towards others they feel are most like themselves, and if social relations were left to develop

naturally, there would likely be more racial separation in Singapore. However, individuals can also quite easily hold different identities concurrently, whether it be a soldier, or husband, brother or an employee. It is important that we do not become too exclusive, and that we can feel comfortable among a range of different people. Mutual respect is key: appreciating our similarities while also respecting our differences. When people do not give others, enough space to be themselves, this is where problems can start.

What are some of the warning behaviours of individuals who may become violent?

According to research into school shootings, there are warning signs but often they only become visible after the fact, when it is too late. Problematic behaviours that may suggest radicalisation include isolation and the breakdown of longstanding relationships. The challenge is to get a composite image of a certain person who may behave differently in diverse settings. There are different pieces of the puzzle that need to come together.

It is difficult for family and friends to know where to go for help when they see a loved one becoming reclusive or displaying signs of radicalisation. Calling the police could result in the situation escalating quickly, and people may be weary of involving the authorities at all. Intervention processes must be framed as offering assistance rather than representing potential punishment.

How can we measure the effectiveness of community engagement and social resilience programmes?

It is difficult to know what people actually think. Surveys that put individuals on the spot may not garner honest responses. It helps to observe specific incidents and especially how people react to them. For example, when a popular sandwich chain decided to become halal-certified it was possible to see what people thought about the move through social media comments. The same is true when a story breaks covering the most recent self-radicalised Singaporean and people post their opinions online. We can gauge sentiment through public responses.

Panel Two – Countering Militarised Terrorism

Mr Andrew Knaggs

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Special Operations and Combating Terrorism)

Department of Defense, United States of America

- The American counter-terrorism strategy is premised on strengthening the country's global network of allies. Rather than acting unilaterally, the US recognises the need to employ bilateral and multilateral strategies to deal with terror threats. The US's National Defense Strategy is built upon three key pillars.
- First, American counter-terrorism efforts in the Middle East are driven by its military resources. In particular, the US perceives the deployment of soldiers, the use of more sophisticated weaponry (e.g. drones), and intelligence gathering to be foundational in combatting terrorism. The American armed forces will continue to remain its most critical foreign policy asset in the counter-terrorism realm. The objective of the military is to transform the combat environment to the advantage of the US. While non-military resources guided towards resilience and nation-building, such as education, political reform, and employment opportunities, are of increasing significance, the immediacy and frequency of terrorist threats in West Asia has rendered hard power the most instrumental resource.

- Second, American counter-terrorism strategy recognises the importance of building resilience among allies and strengthening alliances at all levels. The US believes that adversaries are actively attempting to undermine the confidence of allies and partner states in the US's commitment to a liberal, rules-based international order. Adversaries are also attempting to construct the perception that the US is not committed to its various strategic networks across the globe.
- Third, the US aims to increase the military capabilities and competencies of its allies that are caught up in long-term armed struggles with militants, terrorists, and insurgents. To do this, the US has been teaching counter-terrorism strategies and tactics to its global partners with the objective of enabling them to develop strategies that work for the conditions particular to their operational and psychological environments.
- Relatedly, the US is providing the resources necessary to help rebuild and strengthen the indigenous militaries of its allies. A key example is the Iraqi government. By strengthening the Iraqi military, the Iraqi government's legitimacy to govern and use force when necessary will increase. This will enable allies to defeat adversaries such as the Islamic State. Continued US presence in Iraq, and continued investment in the Iraqi state and military will thus enable Iraq to defeat terrorists and become a stable country.

Major General Restituto F Padilla Jr.

Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans

Armed Forces of the Philippines

- The Philippines' recent perspective on counter-terrorism is primarily informed by its experiences in Marawi, though the implications of the historical legacy of the conflict in the Southern Philippines cannot be understated.
- The Philippines has learnt that the strategies of terrorist actors and groups have become increasingly more complex. The capacity to recruit people remotely through various social media and communications technologies has made it increasingly challenging to track who is being recruited, how they are being recruited, who is entering the country, and how they are entering the country. The Filipino counter-terrorism strategy has six pillars.
- First, the military is central, as it is the institution best resourced to fight terrorists when conflicts escalate. Therefore, significant technological, human, and financial resources are dedicated to strengthening the military's capabilities.
- Second, when there is no conflict akin to urban warfare as seen in Marawi, the military plays a backseat role by supporting law enforcement institutions. More than the military, the police are central actors in ensuring the order is maintained. Even the declaration of martial law does not give the military sweeping powers to take over the civilian government. The independence of the judicial process is also preserved. Rather, the national government's

application of martial law enhances the ability of the military and police forces to arrest terrorist suspects.

- Third, there is a growing effort to improve cooperation between government agencies, as well as with non-government organisations. Since the military's skills and competencies are limited by its traditional focus on kinetic action, inter-agency cooperation between government organisations is necessary to ensure programmes are delivered to target populations in Marawi.
- Fourth, the Philippines acknowledges its borders to be porous because of the country's geographical environment. Movement to and from Sabah, Kalimantan, and the Southern Philippines is difficult to police. This is why Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines are engaged in a trilateral agreement to manage maritime border security cooperatively.
- Fifth, through the OEI, intelligence-sharing efforts within ASEAN have been increasing, and this is key to stopping returnees who went to conflict zones in the Middle East from committing acts of terror in the Philippines.
- Sixth, the Bangsamoro Organic Law is significant in granting Mindanao with greater autonomy in order to address longstanding grievances the region has with the central government in Manila.
- Moving forward, the Philippines needs to strengthen further its military capabilities establish preventive mechanisms, and most of all, improve its integration policies in order to minimise alienation of minority groups.

Major General Muhammad Nakir
Director General for Defense Strategy
Ministry of Defense, Indonesia

- Contemporary manifestations of terrorism are distinct from previous forms in a few ways. Among other things, terrorists do not recognise state borders and the sovereignty of nations and they pledge allegiance to foreign organisations.
- This is the third generation of terrorists. Third generation terrorists are increasingly decentralised, operate as somewhat autonomous cells and even individuals, and are prevalent globally. A significant threat here is the return of foreign fighters to Southeast Asia. The third generation of terrorists in Indonesia are operationally and ideologically different from previous generations. Whereas terrorists of the past sought a change of government, governing system, or state ideology, terrorists today are more interested in employing destructive tactics, releasing prisoners, and causing chaos without a focused objective.
- After the decline of the JI, the terrorist threat was significantly reduced. However, Aman Abdurrahman emerged as a leader of IS in Indonesia, which is known as JAD. JAD has been instrumental in a number of terror attacks since 2016 – including the notorious family suicide bombings in 2018. The defeat of IS in Syria has motivated global IS leaders and sympathisers to conduct attacks in their home states. What is more since IS leaders in Indonesia have been arrested; cells have been agitated and thus more motivated to conduct terror attacks.

- This explains the Surabaya attacks. The emergence of 'family suicide bombings' is both new and marks the emergence of a radical ideology that is able to convince parents to use their children as weapons too.
- Another threat is cyber-terrorism, which targets critical infrastructure, banks, airports, and utilities companies. This form of terror is newer in Indonesia, and the government is learning to address it. Existing terror groups in Indonesia will likely incorporate cyber tactics too.
- All attacks in Indonesia have relied on weaponry commonly used by militant groups. Therefore, the government has categorised these attacks as acts of terror rather than criminal activities. Given the militant tactics adopted by terrorists, it is crucial that the Indonesian military participate heavily in counter-terrorism efforts.
- The transnational nature of terror threats requires greater military cooperation between states given that terrorism poses an existential threat. To this end, Indonesia conducts joint patrols with various partners in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines and Malaysia, in order to uphold regional security.
- Ultimately, the armed forces need to be educated in the legislative and regulative mechanisms of democratic governance in order to ensure that military action is always legal. This will also ensure that the military can be a reliable safeguard of Indonesia's democratic system.

Q&A

What are the steps your governments are taking to cut the financing sources of terrorist activities?

Locally, terrorists receive financing either from people who have been coerced into giving money or from sympathisers. Indonesia has also identified international networks of financial support. For instance, terrorist groups use electronic transfers, the hawala system, and cryptocurrency. To limit the flow of funding, intelligence collection methods need to be sharpened. Information sharing between banks, countries, and financial institutions will be crucial.

What sort of capabilities and mindsets are necessary for the military to work and cooperate effectively with different state and non-state institutions when combatting terrorism?

The military must understand the legalities and norms of operating in environments that are either non-military or not purely military. In Marawi, extensive discussions were held with local executives, traditional leaders, and religious leaders. The military must also respect the customs, norms, and traditions in the community.

In Indonesia, the government has fixed regulations to ensure that the military and the police are able to work with limited disruptions. To address threats adequately, the military and the police will take point on different issues depending on the operational requirements of the task.

There are methods and approaches the US has developed through practice in order to smoothen cooperation. Physical

proximity between members at all levels of government institutions is important to ensure cooperation can move in the desired direction. Additionally, if two institutions perceive a scenario from different perspectives, there needs to be a middle ground established so that effective cooperation becomes possible.

Official Remarks

Delivered at the Official Dinner of the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: A Collective Approach

H.E. Dr Mohamad Maliki Bin Osman,

Senior Minister of State for Defence and Foreign Affairs

Singapore

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good evening. Very happy to join you at the 2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: A Collective Approach. I hope that you found today's panel discussions and site visits useful and, of course, substantive.

Outlook

The global terrorism threat remains high, and continues to evolve. In our region, the most serious threat emanates from ISIS, which has shaped the regional security landscape in recent years. Hundreds of Southeast Asian fighters have joined ISIS' ranks in Iraq and Syria, while others have mounted attacks in the region in support of ISIS and its goal of establishing a caliphate in our region.

As ISIS loses ground in Iraq and Syria, we need to be prepared for an increased flow of returning fighters back into our region. These returning fighters are more skilled in attack tactics, more ideologically motivated, and can gain access to wider terror networks and links formed in Iraq and Syria. The

Marawi experience shows that the same radical ideology and state-like military capabilities can be used to devastating effect.

There is also a social dimension to the threat of terrorism. Globally, we see how differences, be they socio-economic, political or even religious, have divided communities and polarised societies. This in turn can result in religious exclusivism in societies and intolerance towards others, affecting the precious social compacts which have safeguarded racial and religious harmony in many of our societies. Terrorists are exploiting these divisions by using technology and social media to spread their narratives and gain followers. This makes the terrorist threat difficult to detect and respond to. For example, the multiple coordinated bombings in Surabaya in May 2018 involved whole families, including women and children. This is something which we have never heard of before; a new phase of terror attacks.

Regional Efforts

In Singapore, we recognise that only a collective regional approach can effectively counter the threat of terrorism. By bringing together policy makers, counter-terrorism practitioners from both government and private sectors as well as academia, we hope to provide a platform for all of us to exchange experiences and best practices. This is our small contribution, as part of our ASEAN Chairmanship, towards a more resilient ASEAN.

It is important that we find ways at this Symposium to build on ASEAN's existing efforts. The AMMTC is implementing the recently updated ASEAN Comprehensive Plan of Action on

Counter Terrorism, and has created a new platform – the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism – to focus on these two issues.

For our Chairmanship of the ADMM this year, we have also made building regional counter-terrorism capacity a priority. Singapore has proposed the “Resilience, Response, and Recovery” (3R) Framework for counter-terrorism, which will provide a comprehensive overview of counter-terrorism measures that ASEAN Member States can undertake. It is important for ASEAN Member States to continue to step up practical cooperation through joint exercises and training, information sharing, and increased dialogue and sharing of best practices, to strengthen our region’s collective resilience and readiness. Regional Initiatives such as the “Our Eyes” Initiative and Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement are good examples of how we can further strengthen regional cooperation in counter-terrorism.

As a maritime hub, Singapore has also recognised the importance of close regional cooperation in securing our Sea Lines of Communication. This extends to combating maritime terrorism, which is closely intertwined with other maritime crimes such as piracy and sea robbery. For example, the proceeds of illicit maritime activities in the Sulu and Celebes Seas are known to fund terrorism. Singapore is thus committed to enhancing regional cooperation to tackle maritime terrorism, through platforms such as the Malacca Straits Patrol and the Republic of Singapore Navy’s Information Fusion Centre.

Upstream efforts are also critical to counter-terrorism. Terrorist groups are not discriminate in terms of who they target to radicalise. A recent video by founder of the Institute for International Peace Building Mr Noor Huda Ismail, titled “Pengantin”, or “Bride”, sheds light on the story of domestic helpers who fell for extremist ideology under the guise of online companionship.

It is crucial for us to take steps in the social media and cyber space to safeguard our communities. We have seen, not just in Singapore but in many other places, individuals radicalised by propaganda from terrorist groups and radical elements in cyberspace, including ISIS. We must increase the awareness of our people, in particular our young, on the possible influences from what they read or who they meet online. In 2017, the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, MUIS, set up the Asatizah Youth Network (AYN) to offer support and guidance to our youths on social media. The AYN aims to be the first touch point for those in doubt. MUIS will help build up the AYN and train asatizah, or religious teachers, in digital media engagement and counselling techniques to counter youth radicalisation.

Singapore’s Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), which some of you visited this afternoon, also does important work in this area. It has reached out to the broader public through talks and the internet to sensitise religious followers to the erroneous teachings of extremist ideologues. Significantly, in the last few years, RRG launched a helpline and mobile application to provide easy access to its religious counsellors. These are important initiatives which provide members of the public the opportunity to come forward to clarify concerns or discuss issues with a credible religious source.

We should also take steps to strengthen social cohesion and resilience by building bridges between communities. In Singapore, we have established Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs), which promote racial and religious harmony. The IRCCs are made up of leaders from many religious, ethnic and community organisations, who have come together to build friendships and trust in the community.

We recognise that members of community must do their part to ‘speak up’ for cohesion, and ‘speak out’ against divisive messages stoking fear and hate. In Singapore, the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and Facebook held a Workshop on Building Community Resilience to Online Extremism for about 100 community and religious leaders last year. The workshop saw the launch of the #SpeakUpSpeakOut initiative to encourage community groups to carry the hashtag and speak out in one voice against divisive and sinister ideologies online.

Last but not least, a prepared and alert citizenry can contribute in tangible ways to prevent, deal with and respond to security threats. Singapore launched the “SGSecure” movement in 2016 to equip Singaporeans from all walks of life with the know-how to respond to terror attacks. Counter-terrorism seminars have also been conducted to brief our religious and community leaders on the security situation and to help them prepare their crisis response plans. Members of the public are also encouraged to report suspicious persons and activities to the authorities in a timely manner. This includes early reporting of signs of radicalisation in family members and friends. In fact, many of the cases of self-

radicalised individuals that we have detected were the result of family and friends alerting the authorities. By better preparing our communities as well as strengthening social cohesion and resilience, we stand a better chance of combating the threat of terrorism.

Conclusion

I hope that through your active participation in this Symposium and our collective efforts, we can do our part towards countering the threat of terrorism in our region. Thank you very much, and I wish you a pleasant evening and a good discussion for the subsequent parts of your Symposium.

Panel Three – Leveraging Technology for Counter-Terrorism

Ms Vidhya Ramalingam

Founder

Moonshot CVE, United States of America

- Moonshot CVE is a private organisation that seeks to reach out to individuals at risk from violent extremism. Moonshot specialises on using data-driven techniques to respond to violent extremism. Three main areas of work comprise Moonshot's activities. The first involves messaging campaigns to reach vulnerable individuals. Second, online interventions connect counsellors with persons vulnerable to violent extremism. The third and final area of work involves capacity building to enable Moonshot's local partners to carry out sustainable campaigns and interventions.
- It was emphasised that addressing VE does not necessitate 'big data'. Moonshot's approach looks instead at 'small data' in the thousands or just dozens of individuals, to identify 'niche communities'. There is also awareness that social media content is largely 'performative' and may skew analysis of an individual's actual intent and capability to conduct violence. Moonshot also recognises that different tools may need to be used to examine non-public data sets.
- Zooming into Moonshot's research in Southeast Asia, the presentation highlighted what extremists are searching for online. In Indonesia, extremists appear

to be most preoccupied looking for lectures by known jihadist preachers such as Aman Abdurrahman and for *anasheed* tracks. When weighted per region (i.e. adjusted for population), it was observed that the number of search queries for jihadist content are highest in areas such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta and East Kalimantan.

- In Malaysia, Moonshot has uncovered that 28 percent of search queries are for *anasheed*. There is less emphasis for other jihadist content such as IS-produced magazines or media outlets such as Amaq Agency. Another interesting pattern discovered was how half of searches for jihadist content in Malaysia was actually conducted by women.
- Meanwhile in the Philippines, the search for content was less ideological. Searches were focused on acquiring illicit technical skills. Between March to July 2018, Moonshot logged 1,185 searches for bomb-making instructions across the country.
- Given the proliferation of extremist propaganda, Moonshot prioritises targeted advertising as the solution. The severity of the problem is apparent in search engine results with around 80 percent of Google searches using high-risk terms lead to actual illicit content. In response, the 'redirect method' employed by Moonshot presents legitimate religious content to substitute for jihadist propaganda sought after by vulnerable individuals.
- Another solution posited by Moonshot is through psychosocial messaging. Data gathered by Moonshot revealed that jihadist audiences are more likely to click on mental health-related advertising. Instead of taking a combative approach and relying on counter-

narratives, this form of messaging appears to create more engagement.

- Finally, the Moonshot also uses ‘one-to-one messaging’ to deliver personalised communications to at-risk individuals. Private messages to vulnerable individuals offer social and mental health support as well as leading individuals to chat directly with a trained counsellor or social worker.

Dr Muhammad Abdullah Darraz

Director

Maarif Institute, Indonesia

- The presentation was focused on the relationship between media and preventing violent extremism among youth in Indonesia. It was stressed that Indonesian identity remains tied to the indigenous concept of Pancasila. There is also historical adherence to the idea of a diverse Indonesian republic, comprised of citizens from different faiths. Nonetheless, there are reasons for concern given the rising indicators of intolerance in the country.
- A 2017 national survey on radical Islam among schools and universities point to the traction of insidious beliefs. When asked by pollsters from Convey Indonesia, around 33 percent of respondents agreed that intolerance against a minority is justifiable. More troubling is the belief of 34 percent of respondents agreeing that apostates must be killed. Sentiment opposed to the idea of a secular Republic of Indonesia was also gathered with nearly 62 percent of respondents supporting the idea of a *khilafah*.

- The figures mentioned in the presentation occurred within the context of greater reliance of the youth on social media in obtaining or forming their opinions. Social media is referred to by more than 50 percent of respondents as the source of information in shaping their opinions regarding violent extremism.
- What was apparent in Indonesia was the continued ‘information tsunami’ that inundates the population. On any given day, 12 hoaxes emerge and are disseminated across various online fora. Out of 43000 news portals in Indonesia, only around 200 are verified and can be deemed as trustworthy and facts-based. The Indonesian government has tried to stem the tide of bad information. Maarif estimates that Jakarta’s initiatives have taken down more than 800000 websites containing and promoting radicalism.
- It was stressed that to change mindsets, it is not enough to curtail the supply of dubious or violent extremist online content. There must be a deliberate push to promote critical thinking. Youth should be more adept consumers of information to prevent the entrenchment of intolerant and radicalised perspectives.
- Maarif Institute’s 1DONESia is an example of such initiative, which was described as “diversity journalism training to stop radicalism among students”. The training is an effort to change the way students think, using diversity promotion campaigns as a counter to radicalism discourse.

Mr Brian Fishman

Policy Director for Counterterrorism

Facebook, United States of America

- Facebook currently has 2.2 billion monthly users communicating in more than a hundred languages. This poses a challenge to the social media platform's pledge for Facebook having "no place for terrorism". Terrorists' attempts to exploit the online platform is not new nor limited solely to Facebook. To thwart violent extremists attempting to use Facebook, the firm currently employs 200 individuals in a counter-terrorism capacity speaking 35 languages.
- There are four lines in Facebook's counter-terrorism initiatives. First, Facebook engages with law enforcement agencies through liaising arrangements. This allows Facebook to provide timely information to agencies investigating or trying to prevent criminal activities.
- Second, Facebook also supports existing CVE initiatives both on and off the platform. The focus is on identifying NGOs and CSOs who could execute effective programmes against violent extremism.
- Third, Facebook enforces its community standards. Even voicing praise and support to proscribed organisations such as al Qaeda and IS is considered not permissible, to make sure that terrorists cannot use Facebook for propaganda. Finally, Facebook seeks to forge partnerships with other tech firms. Highlighted was the creation of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT) in 2017, which brought together major tech firms aside from Facebook such as Microsoft, Twitter, and YouTube to

share information and best practices in dealing with extremist content.

- The presentation also talked about how adversaries are dynamic and are trying to manoeuvre against CVE initiatives undertaken by social media firms. Technological solutions are thus continually refined to keep abreast of the threat landscape. This includes investments to improve further image and video matching; and using machine learning and AI. For instance, the GIFCT has committed to creating a shared industry database of ‘hashes’ or unique digital fingerprints for violent terrorist imagery or terrorist recruitment videos. By sharing these hashes with one another, GIFCT partners can identify potential terrorist images and videos on their respective hosted consumer platforms.
- Beyond technological solutions, Facebook is also monitoring closely the techniques, tactics, and procedures used by extremists online. This includes efforts by adversary groups to use altered files or splitting messages, in an attempt to avoid content filters. Through the combination of emerging technologies and the refinement of procedures, Facebook hopes to expedite the removal of both extremist content and the takedown of accounts.

Professor Mei Jianming

Professor

Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, China

- The presentation was focused on China’s use of technology against terrorism. For China, violence in Xinjiang was a manifestation of the presence of

jihadist influence. Given the varying ways to conceptualise terrorism, it was stressed that terrorism is fundamentally aimed at targeting innocent civilians. Terrorist acts can range in the form of active operations such as killing persons or providing financial support to terrorist cells.

- There are different types of technology that can be leveraged for counter-terrorism purposes. This includes the collection of biometric data, link analysis, and data mining. The emergence and popularity of 'big data' in public discourse is a natural progression of data science research both within and outside of China.
- Under the current leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has created its own national 'big data strategy'. The strategy is comprised of social, economic, and political components. Beyond government initiatives, it also seeks to engage private firms such as Jack Ma's *Alibaba* that are heavily invested in big data-related technologies. The central government also created the National Counter-terrorism Intelligence Centre, which is involved in using big data for law enforcement purposes.
- There are of course multiple challenges to the full application of technology for counter-terrorism purposes. While the current struggle against jihadists brought these obstacles to the fore, they are also relevant for any large national effort to utilise big data for policymaking.
- One issue is the diversity of the types and sources of data. Meaningful analysis requires restructuring redundant institutions and procedures to create more swiftly actionable intelligence.

- Another issue that emerges are legal obstacles. Ambiguous laws with regard to data handling may pose bottlenecks for collaborative activities. China's international partners also have their own distinct national laws that may be contrary to Beijing's own policies.
- Cultural obstacles are also apparent in China's use of technology against terrorism. Differences in language may limit the effectiveness of automated tools to gather and process information. Different ethnic communities may also hold values that are not fully consistent with the national ideal.
- While China's use of technology for counter-terrorism is continually adapting, Beijing stresses that its policies shall be guided by the principle of adherence to rule of law.

Q&A

What are the criteria used to determine if social media content is considered extremist or permissible acts of free speech?

Social media companies like Facebook build local teams in countries where it operates. These local teams cooperate with relevant law enforcement agencies to share information. Using law enforcers' knowledge of their local contexts is critical to assess whether social media posts should be permitted on platforms. Extremists often use coded language to obfuscate their communication from social media moderators.

Given the scandal surrounding Cambridge Analytica, what are steps taken to ensure that detection of violent extremism does not infringe on people's privacy?

Institutions involved in redirect methods to dissuade individuals from accessing extremist content primarily use publicly available data. Meta-data is also used as practicable. Protocols to collect personally identifiable information adopt pre-existing ethical standards and procedures, such as those used in social work. This ensures that data collection does not transgress legal boundaries in any particular jurisdiction.

What are the indicators used to evaluate the effectiveness of methods used by organisations such as Moonshot CVE and Maarif Institute?

Moonshot tracks how an individual engages with online content, after he or she has encountered a social worker. As for the redirect method, Moonshot takes a more straightforward approach, gathering metrics such as the 'click through' rate, for links provided to individuals looking for jihadist content. Maarif on the other hand, works closely with the Indonesian government to determine if their diversity journalism initiatives are taking root with the youth sector.

Panel 4 — Building a Collective Counter-Terrorism Approach

Dato Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay

Principal Assistant Director

Royal Malaysia Police (RMP)

- A collective approach involving various entities at the domestic, regional and global levels is required to address terror threats. Without such a consolidated strategy, it is impossible to counter existing groups such as IS and terrorist organisations that will emerge in the future. In Malaysia, the RMP is the leading agency in fighting terror threats. Other stakeholders include the National Security Council, the Prison Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Prime Minister’s Department.
- The RMP has adopted comprehensive strategies in addressing terrorism threats. ‘Hard’ and ‘soft’ approaches, such as counter-terrorist action and counter-radicalisation programmes, complement each other. The ultimate objective of these strategies and approaches is to preserve national security and protect human rights.
- Intelligence collection is the source of all counter-terrorism initiatives. Gathering information is a key requirement to detect and disrupt terrorist activities. Malaysia has apprehended 425 suspects under one of its three terrorism-related laws: (a) the Security Offence Special Measures Act (SOSMA), (b) the Prevention of Crime Act (POCA), (c) and the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA). Of those

apprehended, 151 individuals have been convicted and 114 have been released.

- Out of the 23 terror plots that have been foiled since 2013, 14 were in their initial stage. In the nine other cases, the would-be terrorists had already acquired chemical products and ammunition. The targets involved Western interests in Malaysia, entertainment outlets, federal buildings, police stations and military camps.
- As terrorism is a transnational issue, collaboration and cooperation with regional and international partners and allies is crucial. Exchanging with partners and allies is all the more important as members of various terrorist groups such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, Al-Shabaab, Jabhat al-Nusra and IS have been arrested in Malaysia. Efforts to curb terrorism financing activities in relation to ISIS and the Syrian conflict must be enhanced. This is all the more critical as militants have used Malaysia as a platform to transfer funds to other countries. As such, terrorism financing activities should be granted top priority.
- Community engagement is a key approach taken by Malaysia to prevent and counter the rise of violent extremism. Eight hundred explanatory conferences have thus been organised throughout the country. Rehabilitation programmes for terrorism detainees, the success rates of which extend 95 percent, have also been conducted. Once they are released from prison, former militants continue to be monitored by police forces. Their reintegration into society is vital in preventing recidivism.

Colonel Anoudeth Khounkham

Deputy Permanent Secretary and Director-General of Foreign Relations Department

Ministry of Public Security, Laos

- The emergence of IS in 2014 has affected the national security landscapes of many countries. While IS has been physically defeated in Iraq and Syria, its remnants are still active in the Middle East and other regions such as Southeast Asia. One of the most challenging security threats is the return of citizens who have been fighting with IS in Iraq and Syria to their countries of origin. These individuals are likely to spread terrorist propaganda and strategy among local communities.
- Laos opposes and condemns any action that causes damage to the lives and properties of people in society. While there has not been major terrorist attack in Laos, the Laotian government focuses on the prevention and suppression of any possible terrorist incident. Laos has not criminalised terrorism in a comprehensive manner, which explains the lack of specific laws on counter-terrorism. However, the government has paid great attention to other legal measures aimed at suppressing and punishing illegal activities related to terrorism. For example, laws on money laundering and terrorism financing were adopted and enacted in July 2014 and February 2015, respectively.
- Laos considers national and international measures as key components of counter-terrorism policing. The government of Laos supports international cooperation based on the respect for countries'

national sovereignty, their territorial integrity and the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs. The Laotian state works closely with organisations such as Interpol to identify suspects related to terrorist activities. Laos considers the strengthening of information exchange in order to prevent transnational crime and terrorism a crucial element.

- Counter-terrorism in Laos relies on a rich coordination mechanism that incorporates various administrations. These organisations include the ministries of Public Security, National Defence, Foreign Affairs as well as Labour and Social Welfare. The Ministry of Public Security have been assigned as the core agency responsible for the actual work and implementation of international instruments against transnational crime and terrorism. Within the ministry, the General Police Department is tasked with intelligence, investigation and protection work.
- Laos promotes harmony between ethnic minority populations and protects the rights of religious groups. At the same time, the state prohibits any form of action that can lead to social and religious violence. The government considers community involvement as a prominent element of its national security. A system called 'neighbourhood watch' was organised, with local urban communities monitoring the possibility of terrorist activities on behalf of the authorities.

Ms Luejit Tinpanga

Deputy Director, Directorate of Countering Transnational Threats

National Security Agency Office, Thailand

- Thailand is a small country with limited resources, but it is also a transportation hub in Southeast Asia and a popular tourist destination. On the policy level, Thailand launched its national counter-terrorism strategy in 2017. This strategy provides relevant agencies with guidelines to better prevent and respond to terrorist threats. A similar approach CVE is to be developed in the near future.
- Thailand's counter-terrorism strategy is based on the concepts of prevention, response and resilience. Intelligence sharing is a key component of this strategy, with fruitful relations developed between Bangkok and other ASEAN countries as well as friendly countries outside Southeast Asia. On the prevention side, Thailand places a great deal of attention on key factors that lead to violent extremism and terrorism such as ideology, regardless of ethnicity or religion. Focus is also given to suspected individuals, border control as well as the flow of money and weapons that could be used to finance and stage terrorist attacks.
- In addition, the financial intelligence unit of Thailand's anti-money laundering office is responsible for exchanges of information related to terrorism financing. The process of financial intelligence sharing has been particularly useful in investigating and identifying terror networks. The adoption of the counter-terrorism financing act in 2013 also provided

a national legal framework to counter terrorism financing.

- Many people in Thailand use social media, with around 51 million social media users. Around 46 million of these users can access social media through their phones. Several Facebook accounts that were spreading Jihadist propaganda have been put under surveillance. These accounts used to disseminate contents that were translated in Thai from different languages. Once these social media accounts were closed, other accounts quickly emerged to replace them. This responsiveness makes the work of law enforcement challenging. The government also monitors messaging applications such as Telegram that are popular among members and supporters of IS.
- Efforts to promote awareness raising on CVE among governments and populations should be supported. This would be particularly appropriate in Thailand where police officers tend to see CVE as a mere law enforcement issue. ASEAN countries also need to conduct more specific research on CVE. For example, in-depth studies on factors that lead to violent extremism as well as best practices and lessons learned in rehabilitation and reintegration programmes would be extremely useful. Confidence-building measures to enhance collaboration within the ASEAN intelligence community must also be adopted.

Mr Allan Phua

Director, Joint Ops Management, Joint Ops Group

Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore

- As illustrated by the Paris attacks in November 2015, terrorist groups can target different locations in a very short period. Public places with large crowds such as stadiums and shopping centres are prime targets. While terrorist used to take hostages to force the authorities to start negotiations, recent attacks show that the objective of terror groups is to inflict maximum casualties. As for the modus operandi, explosive devices and assault rifles are combined with everyday objects such as kitchen knives, cars and trucks. This makes it difficult for security forces to detect the threats in time and respond quickly.
- IS has shown a clear interest in Southeast Asia through its propaganda. This is apparent through the featuring of a Singaporean in two recruitment videos released in September and December 2017. Several terror attacks have also occurred in Indonesia and Malaysia. In the Philippines, militants have shown their determination during the five-month Marawi siege.
- Singapore has a history of terror threats, with famous episodes such as the hijacking of Singapore Airlines Flight 177 by four Pakistani militants in 1991. Singapore is currently facing its highest level of terror threat since the uncovering of Jemaah Islamiyah's bomb plots in December 2001. Two IS-related terror plots targeting Singapore were recently foiled. The first plot was led by foreign IS militants that considered carrying out an attack in Singapore during the first half of 2016. The Indonesian authorities foiled

the second plot that involved a group of terrorists based in the island of Batam. These individuals planned to launch a rocket attack against the Marina Bay Sands Hotel in Singapore. While the second plot was aspirational in nature, it demonstrated the intent and creativity of terrorists.

- Singapore has adopted a holistic, multi-layered and nation-wide counter-terrorism strategy. The first pillar of this strategy relies on prevention, with international cooperation in the field of intelligence as well as engagement of religious leaders and communities to counter violent extremist ideologies. The second pillar aims at improving protection and preparedness through measures such as the enhancement of surveillance capabilities. The third pillar aims at improving the security response and focuses on issues such as the speed of response and firepower. These three pillars combined aim at maximising Singapore's level of protection and security against terrorist threats.
- Launched in 2016, the "SGSecure" movement illustrates the comprehensive approach adopted by the Singaporean authorities. SGSecure relies on vigilance, cohesion and resilience, with the ultimate objectives for the population to remain alert, united and strong in case terror attacks would happen. The campaign involves reaching out to various segments of society such as local neighbourhoods, schools, community groups, workplaces and the media.

Q&A

Are we witnessing a softening of the legal provisions related to counter-terrorism in Malaysia?

Malaysia's new government is unlikely to repeal the SOSMA Act, although minor amendments could be proposed and adopted. The major difficulty with anti-terrorist legislation is to find the right balance between human rights on the one hand and national security on the other.

How do you assess the success rates of rehabilitation programmes in Malaysia?

The success rate of these programmes is based on the occurrence of recidivism among offenders. Out of the 339 detainees that underwent one Malaysia's rehabilitation programme between 2001 and 2012, several individuals relapsed. For SOSMA detainees, 57 prisoners went through a rehabilitation programme and only two of them were involved in terror activities after their release. Post-release monitoring is crucial in preventing former inmates from returning to their old lives.

What are the main obstacles involved in the field of inter-state cooperation and how can these obstacles be overcome?

As countries that work together have different conceptions of national security, the discrepancies between each country's perceptions of what constitutes a security challenge is a major impediment. For this reason, trust between partners can be difficult to establish. In addition, differences between national legislations make it difficult for countries to be on the same

page. Dialogue at the ASEAN level is particularly helpful in helping to know each other and building personal and professional bonds among members of security agencies.

Are there any indications that terrorist organisations have or would try to recruit Rohingya refugees in Malaysia?

In a limited number of cases, terror groups such as IS have come close to recruiting Rohingya refugees in Malaysia. These recruitment attempts are very likely to continue, with the ultimate objective of carrying out attacks inside or outside Malaysia. Malaysia's Immigration Act can be used to deport migrants to their country of origin if they happen to be found guilty of terrorism-related offences.

About the Centre of Excellence for National Security

The **Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)** is a research unit of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Established on 1 April 2006, CENS raison d'être is to raise the intellectual capital invested in strategising national security. To do so, CENS is devoted to rigorous policy-relevant analysis across a range of national security issues. CENS is multinational in composition, comprising both Singaporeans and foreign analysts who are specialists in various aspects of national and homeland security affairs. Besides fulltime analysts, CENS further boosts its research capacity and keeps abreast of cutting edge global trends in national security research by maintaining and encouraging a steady stream of Visiting Fellows. For more information about CENS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg/research/cens/.

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The **S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** is a professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. RSIS' mission is to develop a community of scholars and policy analysts at the forefront of security studies and international affairs. Its core functions are research, graduate education and networking. It produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-Traditional Security, International Political Economy, and Country and Region Studies. RSIS' activities are aimed at assisting policymakers to develop comprehensive approaches to strategic thinking on issues related to security and stability in the Asia Pacific. For more information about RSIS, please visit www.rsis.edu.sg.

About the National Security Coordination Secretariat

The **National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS)** was formed under the Prime Minister's Office in July 2004 to coordinate security policy, manage national security projects, provide strategic analysis of terrorism and national security related issues, as well as perform Whole-Of-Government research and sense-making in resilience. NSCS comprises three centres: the National Security Coordination Centre (NSCC), the National Security Research Centre (NSRC) and the Resilience Policy and Research Centre (RPRC). Please visit www.nscs.gov.sg for more information.



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