

RSIS Book Launch Seminar

"Rising from the Ashes: UN Peacebuilding in Timor-Leste"

By

Ms Viji Menon

Visiting Senior Fellow,
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

Monday, 18 November 2019, 3.00 – 4.30 pm
RSIS Lecture Theatre

PROGRAMME

- 2.30 pm** **Guests Arrival & Registration**
- 2.45 pm** **Guests to be seated**
- 3.00 pm** **Opening Remarks**
Ambassador Ong Keng Yong
Executive Deputy Chairman,
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
- Book Introduction by Author**
Ms Viji Menon
Visiting Senior Fellow,
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
- Comments by Discussant**
Associate Professor Leonard C. Sebastian
Coordinator of the Indonesia Programme,
Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies,
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies
- Questions and Answers**
- 4.30 pm** **End of RSIS Book Launch Seminar & Refreshments**
- Book Signing and Refreshments**

Dress Code: Office attire

Seminar Abstract

This book provides an in-depth look into the UN's first experiment in governing and building peace in the aftermath of conflict, using East Timor as a case study. In the first part, the book examines the UN's role after it entered East Timor in 1999 as the de facto government. It is based on the author's first-hand experience working in the UN as it restored law and order and built a state in a country without a government, any infrastructure or human resources.

The second part of the book focuses on the current political and economic situation in Timor-Leste in the years after the UN left. The author concludes that the peacebuilding effort is still a work in progress. While Timorese leaders have built on the foundations laid by the UN, the book examines how they are trying to grapple with many remaining challenges, including the legacies of the country's tragic past of colonization and occupation. How they deal with these issues will define the country's future.

The book ends with a set of recommendations for Timor-Leste and for the region, namely members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

About the Author

Viji Menon has been a Visiting Senior Fellow with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore since November 2017.

Ms Menon joined the Singapore Foreign Service in 1972, and has held senior positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in Singapore's diplomatic missions abroad. She has served in Singapore's embassies in Manila, Moscow, Washington and in New York as the Deputy Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations from 1994-1996. After leaving the Foreign Service, she worked for the United Nations in the UN Missions in Kosovo, Timor-Leste and Cyprus as Senior Political Affairs Officer.

Ms Menon graduated from the then University of Singapore with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in Political Science. She was awarded a Fulbright scholarship in 1982 and in 1983 obtained a Masters in International Public Policy from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, U.S.A.

About the Speaker

ONG KENG YONG is Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. He was High Commissioner of Singapore to Malaysia from 2011 to 2014. He was previously Ambassador-At-Large in the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Singapore's Non-Resident Ambassador to Iran. From 2008 to 2011, he served as Director of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. He was Secretary-General of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) from January 2003 to January 2008. Mr Ong started his diplomatic career in 1979 and was posted to the Singapore Embassies in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and the United States of America. He was Singapore's Ambassador to India and Nepal from 1996 to 1998. From September 1998 to December 2002, he was Press Secretary to the then Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Goh Chok Tong. At the same time, Mr Ong held senior appointments in the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, and the People's Association in Singapore. Mr Ong graduated from the then University of Singapore with a LLB (Hons) and the Georgetown University (Washington DC, USA) with a MA in Arab Studies.

Leonard C. Sebastian is Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Indonesia Programme at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). He is author of *Realpolitik Ideology: Indonesia's Use of Military Force* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Cambridge University Press, 2006) and his refereed articles have been published in the *Journal of Strategic Studies*, *Asia Policy*, *Defence & Security Analysis*, *Indonesia*, *the Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *South East Asia Research*, *Soccer & Society*, *Education About Asia*, *Southeast Asian Affairs*, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* and is a contributor to *International Relations in Southeast Asia: The Struggle for Autonomy* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005). With Dr Christopher Roberts and Dr Ahmad Habir, he co-edited *Indonesia's Ascent: Power Leadership and the Regional Order* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). He is a co-author with Jonathan Chen and Adhi Priamarizki of *Indonesia Beyond Reformasi: Necessity and the 'De-Centering' of Democracy*, Maryland Series in Contemporary Asian Studies, no. 3 – 2014 (218), Carey School of Law, University of Maryland. Together with Finn Laursen and Imtiaz Hussain he is Editor of the *Global Political Transition* series – a new flagship series of Palgrave Macmillan – coordinated by Palgrave's offices in New York, London and Shanghai.

Assoc Prof Sebastian joined RSIS or as it was then called the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies as Senior Fellow in October 2000. From February 1995 to September 2000 he was a Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS). He received his PhD from the Australian National University in 1997 where he was affiliated to the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre of the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. In October 2003, Dr Sebastian was awarded a research grant from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) after an open international competition to study militant Islamic movements in Indonesia. Research undertaken resulted in a confidential report titled "Contesting Islam in Indonesia: A Contextual Study of Muslim Militancy". In April 2005 he was a Freeman Fellow with The Asia Foundation. He was awarded the Fulbright Research Award in 2005 and was a Visiting Fulbright Scholar at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University from September to December 2005.

From 13-18 August 2008, Dr Sebastian participated in the inaugural Program of the Presidential Friends of Indonesia hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. From 2008-2010 he served as consultant to Indonesia's Ministry of Defence advising on the establishment of the Indonesian Defence University (UNHAN, Universitas Pertahanan). Assoc Prof Sebastian also serves as Member, Board of International Advisors, SBY Presidential Center, plus Honorary Advisor to the Board of the Ancora Foundation and the Bakrie Center Foundation in Indonesia. Through his association with the latter two institutions he has raised over \$3.7 million worth of donations for RSIS. In January 2011, as consultant to The Asia Foundation, he served as International Policy Advisor to the Timor-Leste Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (Ministério dos Negócios Estrangeiros-Timor-Leste) and assisted the Ministry in organizing its first ASEAN meeting. Between February 2015 and February 2016 he was Consultant to the ASEAN Secretariat undertaking a study assessing Timor-Leste's ASEAN membership application and its implications for the ASEAN Security and Political Community pillar.

From July 2016-July 2018 he was an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of New South Wales, Canberra campus and since 1 September 2018 has been appointed Professor (Adjunct) at the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra. Having served on the Advisory Panel for Programme for the Bachelor of Management and Security Studies (BMSS) and the Bachelor of Management and Security Studies with Honours (BHMSS) at UniSIM from 14 October 2010 to 31 December 2016, since 1 January 2016, he was appointed External Examiner for the Bachelor of Management and Security Studies (BMSS) at the School of Business, Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS). A member of the Advisory Panel to the Government Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Foreign Affairs (GPC-DFA) since 2002, he lectures regularly at various government and security agencies, both in Singapore and abroad.

ABOUT THE S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) is a think tank and professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. An autonomous school, RSIS' mission is to be a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in the Asia Pacific. With the core functions of research, graduate education and networking, it produces cutting-edge research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-traditional Security, Cybersecurity, Maritime Security and Terrorism Studies.

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