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ISSUES, TRENDS, AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMANITARIAN CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Policy Report

August 2023

Lina Gong and
Alistair D. B. Cook

RSiS

S. RAJARATNAM
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Nanyang Technological University, Singapore



**NANYANG
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Executive Summary

Across the Asia-Pacific, countries have periodically reviewed their disaster management systems — from reassessing their institutional structure and capacity for emergency preparedness and disaster response at home to improving international cooperation on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief. However, the COVID-19 outbreak added new dynamics for humanitarian civil-military coordination. The pandemic compounded pre-existing and induced new humanitarian needs in many communities particularly in countries prone to natural hazards. Climate change and geopolitical rivalry have further added to the complexity of disaster response. This policy report investigates these new dynamics and highlights the need for a systematic reappraisal of humanitarian civil-military coordination in the Asia-Pacific.

Introduction

In 2020, the Philippines experienced Typhoon Vongfong during COVID-19 pandemic restrictions that impacted the disaster response effort. In 2022, Pakistan was hit by record-scale floods, which affected 330 million people and killed over 1100. The increased intensity of the floods was highly likely a result of climate change.¹ Competition between China and the United States and allies was felt after the volcanic eruption and tsunami in Tonga in January 2022. Countries such as Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and the United States rushed to provide aid but a lack of coordination between these countries reportedly affected the effectiveness of the relief operation.²

In addition to converging disasters, increasing intensity due to climate change, and competition between countries providing relief, there has been greater use of military assets for humanitarian purposes both at home and overseas since 2020. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries worldwide deployed their militaries at home to support domestic pandemic responses, including European and North American countries. They also sent military assets to assist other countries to respond to COVID-19 and other concurring disasters while upholding the principle of deploying the military as a last resort overseas in disaster relief as outlined in the Oslo Guidelines. The increased use of militaries highlighted the strain on civilian infrastructure brought on by a lack of investment and crisis preparedness.

Over the past two decades, readiness and logistics capacity have defined military involvement in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). In the Asia-Pacific, the Military Assistance in Disaster Response Operations (APC-MADRO) Guidelines recognise the role of militaries as a “first responder” in disaster relief in the region. Military capacity and readiness have garnered greater attention as militaries deploy more often and as part of international HADR efforts. Further, there is a growing number of collective security mechanisms from the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Australia, India, Japan, and the United States) to FRANZ (France, Australia and New Zealand) in addition to a more engaged China in the

¹ World Meteorological Organization. “Climate change likely increased intense rainfall in Pakistan: study.” 16 September 2022. <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/news/climate-change-likely-increased-intense-rainfall-pakistan-study>.

² Wallis, Joanne, Henrietta McNeill, and Anna Powles. “Tongan disaster highlights lack of coordination in regional response.” *The Strategist*, 28 January 2022. www.aspistrategist.org.au/tongan-disaster-highlights-lack-of-coordination-in-regional-response/.

HADR space. This necessitates a review of military involvement for humanitarian purposes and its coordination with civilian and humanitarian agencies.

Faced with the increasing intensity and frequency of natural hazards, converging humanitarian risks, climate change, and a more tense security environment, this policy report investigates how humanitarian civil-military relations can evolve with these new dynamics. It aims to contribute to the improvement of civil-military relations that are better prepared for disaster response. This policy report assesses the state of humanitarian civil-military coordination in the region, examines limitations, issues, and lessons learned during the pandemic and the dynamics emerging from it, and identifies areas for improvement and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

Methodology

This policy report is based on data collected through interviews, desk research, and participant observation at a major regional dialogue. Seventeen in-depth, semi-structured elite interviews with multiple stakeholders were conducted in two fieldwork trips in Thailand from November–December 2022 and in March 2023. The interviewees included representatives of relevant UN agencies, international and local humanitarian organisations, militaries, and civilian agencies. This research is administered under Nanyang Technological University Institutional Review Board project number IRB-2022-583.

Regional Dynamics in the Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific is highly prone to natural hazards and consequently humanitarian civil-military coordination prioritises such scenarios. Given the changing realities in the region, it is timely to investigate how effective such a system is under pressure from more frequent and intense weather events, how it adapts to concurrent challenges like a pandemic and more competition between countries and mechanisms, and a more diverse stakeholder environment.

The Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific was formed in 2014 to provide a regional forum to socialise and review the “living document” APC-MADRO Guidelines and offers an avenue to facilitate exchange of information and ideas and strengthen linkages with relevant mechanisms and platforms. The RCG brings together humanitarian, civilian, and military actors involved in disaster preparedness and planning in the region. The RCG has become the only regional platform for stakeholders to discuss civil-military coordination that feeds into the Global Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination, which convenes at the annual global Humanitarian Partnerships and Network Week.³

Progress catalysed by the RCG has been seen in capacity strengthening and development of national structures in countries identified as most exposed to natural hazards in the region leading to the identification of Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, and the Philippines as priority countries initially. These efforts focused on technical assistance and professional development from UN OCHA and regional partners through sharing best practices, training for military officers, and civil-military joint exercises.⁴ The Civil-Military Coordination Center (CMCC) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines was activated during the relief effort after Typhoon Odette in December 2021 to coordinate with government agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and international humanitarian organisations to deliver relief items.⁵ The establishment of CMCC in 2018 was included in the

³ *Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific: Seventh Abbreviated session – Summary Report*. December 2021.
www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/rcg7th_summary_notes.pdf

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Philippine Information Agency. “President Duterte Lauds AFP’s Disaster Response in Visayas, Mindanao.” 18 January 2022. <https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/2022/01/18/president-duterte-lauds-afps-disaster-response-in-visayas-mindanao>.

sharing of best practices at the RCG.⁶ With the support of the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) in Singapore, the Bangladeshi Armed Forces Division tested its national standard operating procedure on multi-national coordination centre during Exercise Coordinated Response in 2019 in Singapore.⁷

The presence of collective arrangements like FRANZ and the UN-led system, and the emergence of new players like China, India, and Japan have added new dynamics to formalised regional HADR mechanisms. As these new players and mechanisms like the Quad define themselves⁸ alongside more established arrangements in the HADR landscape it is important to engage them in preparedness activities to identify avenues for cooperation in advance of concurrent and converging disasters.

According to one humanitarian practitioner, humanitarian civil-military coordination in disaster response has made more progress in the Asia-Pacific than in other parts of the world.⁹ This progress to date can be explained mainly by two factors. First, many disaster-prone countries in the region have a tradition of deploying their militaries as first responders,¹⁰ which means effective humanitarian civil-military coordination is imperative. Past disaster response operations demonstrated how insufficient coordination impeded relief efforts, such as in the aftermath of super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 in the Philippines and the Gorkha earthquake in Nepal in 2015.¹¹

Second, relative peace in many parts of the region means the operating environment for disaster response has been primarily engaged through national authorities and humanitarian organisations with national militaries providing security. However, these national structures are strained during crises denoted by

⁶ *Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific: Eighth Session - Summary Report*. February 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/regional-consultative-group-rcg-humanitarian-civil-military-coordination-asia-and-pacific-eighth-session-summary-report>

⁷ *Standing Operating Procedure of Bangladesh Multinational Coordination Centre*. Bangladesh: Armed Forces Division of Bangladesh, 2019. <https://afd.gov.bd/sites/default/files/2019-11/Standing%20Operating%20Procedure%20of%20Bangladesh%20Multinational%20Coordination%20Centre.pdf>.

⁸ Chen, Christopher. "The Quad and HADR Operations: Prospects for Cooperation with Southeast Asia." RSIS Commentary No. 119 (November 2022). www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/nts/the-quad-and-hadr-operations-prospects-for-cooperation-with-southeast-asia/

⁹ Interview with an international humanitarian worker in March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand.

¹⁰ Cook, Alistair D. B., and Sangeetha Yogendran. "Conceptualising Humanitarian Civil-Military Partnerships in the Asia-Pacific: (Re-)Ordering Cooperation." *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 74, no. 1 (2020): 35–53.

¹¹ Cook, Alistair, Maxim Shrestha, and Bo Htet Zin. *International Response to 2015 Nepal Earthquake: Lessons and Observations*. Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2016. www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/NTS_Report_5_Nepal_final_revised_Oct.pdf.

requests for external assistance. This environment is increasingly challenged due to more frequent and intense weather events highly likely due to climate change, and the changing geopolitical dynamics with the emergence of new players and collective arrangements and more dynamic local contexts, which are discussed further in the following section.

Trends and Issues

Subregional Dynamics in the Asia-Pacific

Improvement in humanitarian civil-military coordination at the national level is uneven across the subregions of the Asia-Pacific. In the South Pacific, while there are Defence Forces in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Tonga, most Pacific Islands States (PIS) are reliant on the police to achieve national security objectives in addition to domestic law enforcement. As such, national police forces and paramilitary entities like the Vanuatu Mobile Force support the police and are engaged in domestic disaster response in the region as first responder. They play a critical role in the coordination of communication, logistics, maintaining public order, and facilitating community engagement between the affected population and the national disaster management entity.

This regional reality leads to the question as to how best PIS build their own national capacity in humanitarian civil-military coordination to reflect local realities and engage foreign militaries as necessary in disaster response. Currently, PIS rely on international partners to carry out this function. After the twin cyclones hit Vanuatu in March 2023, OCHA coordinated with FRANZ partners to deploy military assets.¹² In view of this gap, there have been attempts to include the police in discussions to improve coordination mechanisms.

At the RCG 5th Session in December 2019, there was a noticeable shift from conceptualising partnerships solely through humanitarian civil-military relations to one viewed through a civilian-military-police lens.¹³ While the police are a civilian government agency, prior to 2019, engagement of civilian agencies was limited to national disaster management authorities in the RCG. The engagement of police has been reflected in regional initiatives such as the Pacific Islands Emergency management Alliance (PIEMA), which aims to integrate police forces in formal disaster management processes. PIEMA was established in 2013 as a mechanism to strengthen the emergency preparedness and response capability

¹² *Vanuatu: Tropical Cyclone Judy and Tropical Cyclone Kevin: Situation Report No.1 (As of 10 March 2023)*. UNOCHA, 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/vanuatu/vanuatu-tropical-cyclones-judy-kevin-situation-report-no1-10-march-2023>.

¹³ *Regional Consultative Group on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia and the Pacific: Fifth Session Report*. 2019.

and capacity of key national response agencies in PIS.¹⁴ The police, alongside the military, was present in the coordination meetings of the Fijian government regarding Tropical Cyclone Cody in 2022.¹⁵

The practice in PIS stands in contrast with Southeast Asia where the role of the police in disaster response varies considerably from country to country. Police forces in Southeast Asia generally have less capacity and legitimacy to assume a prominent role in disaster response operations.¹⁶ When the police are deployed, they assume a supportive role, focused on maintaining law and order. However, the COVID-19 pandemic witnessed police forces in Southeast Asia also taking on more responsibilities. The national police force of Indonesia supported the enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions, for example, dispersing gathering and making arrests over misinformation and disinformation.¹⁷ In Singapore, the police participated in the military-led fast deployment to contain the COVID-19 spread among migrant workers in the dormitories.¹⁸ In Thailand, the Border Patrol Police provided support for humanitarian efforts in border areas during the pandemic, such as the mobile kitchen project of the Thai Red Cross Society.¹⁹ The different practices in the subregions point to the challenge in building a common regional framework and the need for a differentiated approach to enhancing civil-military coordination.

Greater Use of Militaries in Disasters at Home

During the pandemic, there was increased military involvement in disaster and pandemic responses in the world, particularly in the Asia-Pacific.²⁰ The military was heavily involved in a variety of tasks, ranging from maintaining lockdown protocols and controlling the movement of people to supporting the roll-out of vaccinations.

¹⁴ *Strategic Agenda 2020: Excellence in Emergency Management Safer Pacific Communities*. Fiji: Pacific Community, 2016. www.spc.int/sites/default/files/wordpresscontent/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/SA-2020.pdf.

¹⁵ Interview with a disaster management practitioner in December 2022, Hua Hin, Thailand.

¹⁶ Flint, Josephine, Gloria Martinez, and Kate Sutton. *Civil-Military-Police Coordination in Disaster Management: Perspectives from South East Asian Countries*. Australia: Australian Civil-Military Centre, 2015. <https://www.acmc.gov.au/resources/publications/civil-military-police-coordination-disaster-management-perspectives-south>.

¹⁷ Oktavianti, Tri Indah. "National Police detail tightened measures to combat COVID-19, support government policy." *The Jakarta Post*, 8 April 2020. www.thejakartapost.com/news/2020/04/08/national-police-detail-tightened-measures-to-combat-covid-19-support-government-policy.html.

¹⁸ Tham, Thrina. "PIONEER - SAF-Led FAST Deployment to Help Stabilise COVID-19 Dorm Situation." Ministry of Defence of Singapore, 23 April 2020. www.mindef.gov.sg/web/portal/pioneer/article/cover-article-detail/community/2020-Q2/23apr20_news1.

¹⁹ Interview with a local humanitarian worker in December 2022, Bangkok, Thailand.

²⁰ Gibson-Fall, Fawzia. "Military Responses to COVID-19, Emerging Trends in Global Civil-Military Engagements," *Review of International Studies* 47, no. 2 (2021): 155–70.

In some Southeast Asian countries, the military led the national pandemic response, such as in Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines. While the respective militaries were historically employed as mechanisms to maintain internal security, they also played critical roles in the broader political, social, and economic context.²¹ Hence, they are integrated into their respective national disaster management systems and play prominent roles in disaster response efforts. In Thailand, the military has assumed more responsibilities, seeing disaster response as one of its mandates.²² The military's role in Indonesia's pandemic response is shaped by the long tradition of counter-insurgency, which has led to close civil-military cooperation and the military's institutional capacity for military operations other than war.²³

As a result of this trend, there is a need to review humanitarian civil-military coordination and cooperation. Traditionally, such coordination is activated primarily for logistics after natural hazards and to facilitate humanitarian access, and to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to civilians in conflict settings. For example, the Royal Thai Air Force provided airlift for some humanitarian organisations to deliver aid to border areas.²⁴ During the pandemic however, humanitarian organisations coordinated more with militaries in activities such as checkpoint clearances, transportation of goods and personnel between areas, and vaccination campaigns. The tasking of militaries beyond their limited engagement in logistics during “peacetime” into new areas during the pandemic highlights the strain placed on domestic civilian infrastructure to varying degrees. It is therefore timely to reassess crisis preparedness entry points in domestic civilian and military structures, if relevant entities added value during the pandemic response, and where capacity strengthening is needed for a more sustainable civilian architecture.

Increased Frequency and Intensity of Compounding, Converging, and Concurrent Humanitarian Risks

During the pandemic it became clear that humanitarian risks do not occur in a vacuum and that they interact with other crises. This was witnessed in the multiple

²¹ Cook, Alistair D. B., and Christopher Chen. *Converging Humanitarian Risks in the Indo-Pacific*. Singapore: S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2022. www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/PR220518_Converging-Humanitarian-Risks-in-the-Indo-Pacific.pdf.

²² Interview with a local disaster management practitioner in March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand.

²³ Joshua, Norman. “Counterinsurgency, Emergency, and Civil-Military Relations in Indonesia.” *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* 13, no. 1 (2022): 57–78.

²⁴ Interview with a local humanitarian worker in December 2022, Bangkok, Thailand.

natural hazard events that took place during the pandemic response. Climate change is likely to further impact this reality in the region, as natural hazards such as floods and droughts become more frequent and intense. These will interact with pre-existing humanitarian needs in affected countries.²⁵ It is worthwhile for countries with high climate vulnerabilities and pre-existing humanitarian needs to revisit existing civil-military mechanisms with the humanitarian community to assess if adequate mechanisms exist for operations in complex scenarios.

Developing Coordination with the Health Sector

The pandemic highlighted the need to reassess health dynamics relevant to humanitarian civil-military work and the engagement of the health sector. UN OCHA for instance is reshaping its relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), seeking the latter's inputs on health issues for UN Civil-Military Coordination.²⁶ Some practitioners suggest that health should be added to training on disaster management given infectious diseases are an increasingly prevalent and intersecting risk.²⁷ The pandemic exposed a lack of coordination and integration of the health and disaster management sectors, as the established humanitarian systems were not fully utilised in vaccine roll-out, which resulted in the marginalisation of vulnerable communities.²⁸

From a military perspective, health dynamics are often viewed in terms of emergency medical treatment as a conventional avenue to contribute to disaster response, given the high-level mobility and readiness of militaries. For instance, Malaysia sent military medical personnel to Turkey to assist in the disaster relief after the earthquakes in February 2023, in addition to search and rescue teams.

The COVID-19 pandemic response is an example of military deployment during an infectious disease outbreak. Although militaries were involved as health actors during the Zika, influenza, and Ebola outbreaks, the COVID-19 pandemic differs in terms of scale. In broad terms there are three models of military involvement, which includes providing minimal technical support (i.e., logistics and transport), blended civil-military response (i.e., medical air ambulance services, research and laboratory capacity, mobile testing units and military hospitals) and

²⁵ Bollettino, Vincenzo, and Lea Ivy Manzanero. "Climate Change and Civil-Military Coordination in the Philippines: How climate change disasters will impact aid delivery in areas affected by conflict." *Climate, Disaster and Development Journal* 3, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.18783/cddj.v005.i01.a02>

²⁶ Interview with an international humanitarian worker in December 2022, Hua Hin, Thailand.

²⁷ Interview with a local disaster management practitioner in December 2022, Bangkok, Thailand.

²⁸ Interview with an international humanitarian worker in December 2022, Bangkok, Thailand.

military-led responses.²⁹ This model demonstrates the military's capacity to assume health-related responsibilities, explains the rationale of greater use of some military assets in disasters and emergencies, and identifies potential areas of added value where a military can contribute, dependent on the local context, to public health emergencies.

²⁹ Gibson-Fall, Fawzia. "Military Responses to COVID-19, Emerging Trends in Global Civil-Military Engagements." *Review of International Studies* 47, no. 2 (2021): 155–70.

Revisiting Roles and Responsibilities

The expansion of military involvement in disaster response has given rise to several concerns. First, given the coercive nature and war-fighting mission of militaries, their involvement in domestic scenarios may undermine democracy and freedom.³⁰ Moreover, military involvement for humanitarian purposes remains sensitive in complex settings, carrying risks such as threatening the safety and security of affected communities and humanitarian workers, and compromising the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and operational independence. This leads to the question of whether deployment of military is the best option.³¹

Second, it is likely that civilian capacity will decline³² if reliance on militaries continues to increase as militaries are often better resourced than civilian government agencies. Third, while command-and-control is more effective in many cases, the hierarchical and top-down approach can compromise cooperation and coordination with other sectors.³³ Some practitioners suggest that it is necessary to sensitise relevant military officers that they are subordinate to civilian leadership in disaster response, since militaries are used to the command-and-control structure of operations.³⁴ Fourth, international disaster response has become more competitive amid great power rivalry and the emergence of new cooperative arrangements. Since militaries are usually hawkish, coordination and cooperation between competing HADR providers has become more difficult, as seen after the double disasters in Tonga in 2022.³⁵

Considering these trends, a review of military involvement in HADR both at home and overseas is necessary. The Thai National Disaster Risk Management Plan (2015–2020) highlights the importance of civil-military collaboration and offers some potential avenues for consideration. The plan recommended the establishment of civil-military coordination centres at different levels of government within the country. Their National Disaster Risk Management Plan for 2021–2025

³⁰ Interview with a scholar of civil-military relations in March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand.

³¹ Interview with an international humanitarian worker in December 2022, Hua Hin, Thailand.

³² Interview with an international humanitarian worker in March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand.

³³ Kalkman, Jori Pascal. "Military Crisis Responses to COVID-19." *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management* 29, no. 1 (March 2021): 101.

³⁴ Interview with a Pacific disaster management practitioner in December 2022, Hua Hin, Thailand.

³⁵ Wallis, Joanne, Henrietta McNeill, and Anna Powles. "Tongan disaster highlights lack of coordination in regional response." *The Strategist*, 28 January 2022. www.aspistrategist.org.au/tongan-disasterhighlights-lack-of-coordination-in-regional-response/.

specifies that where military involvement is needed, it identifies thresholds for military deployment at different scales.³⁶ Beyond these potential developments, clarity in other related operational and tactical areas like legal frameworks is needed to define roles and responsibilities in these new scenarios. For instance, when a military vehicle is involved in an accident during disaster response, is it civilian law or military law that applies?³⁷ Likewise, for international HADR deployments it is important for militaries to update their situational awareness in the Asia-Pacific.

Civil-Military Lines of Communication

Communication was identified as a major challenge in civil-military coordination because of staff turnover and the rapidly changing information landscape. First, rotation of staff is common in militaries, government agencies, and international humanitarian organisations.³⁸ Despite the existence of formal mechanisms, staff turnover has a negative impact on civil-military coordination, as personal ties and active working relations are crucial for coordination and rapid response during disasters. This highlights the importance of refreshing networks to enable different stakeholders to engage their counterparts, familiarise one another with different sectoral languages, and identify what capabilities and resources are available in advance of disaster scenarios. This is of particular importance in a more dynamic region with new players and collective arrangements.

Second, as COVID-19 responses went beyond conventional disaster management and emergency response in most countries, new sectoral stakeholders were involved. For instance, in countries with a significant number of migrant workers, ministries that manage labour and migration were part of the government taskforce. Information-sharing mechanisms were under-developed for new stakeholders. Further, with the increasing intersection of risks it is important to test whether established lines of communication are fit for purpose.

³⁶ Interview with a local disaster management practitioner in March 2023, Bangkok, Thailand.

³⁷ Interview with a local disaster management practitioner in December 2022, Bangkok, Thailand.

³⁸ Interview with military officers in December 2022, Hua Hin, Thailand.

Recommendations

- ***Assess military contributions at home and overseas to (i) the COVID-19 pandemic response; and (ii) disaster responses during the pandemic.***
Military engagement in humanitarian crises has centred on logistical support. During the COVID-19 pandemic, militaries were tasked with additional responsibilities. These should be assessed to determine levels of crisis preparedness, identify areas for capacity strengthening in civilian infrastructure, and where militaries added value.
- ***Review civil-military guidelines and standard operating procedures.***
The formulation of the Oslo Guidelines and the APD-MADRO Guidelines emerged in response to disasters largely in isolation of converging humanitarian risks. The recent experience of natural hazards during the COVID-19 pandemic and the pre-existing humanitarian needs of conflict settings converging with natural hazards and the COVID-19 pandemic highlight a need to review if current guidelines and standard operating procedures are fit for purpose.
- ***Test humanitarian civil-military lines of communication.***
More cooperative arrangements between different countries now exist. High staff turnover remains a feature of the humanitarian civil-military community. We now recognise more dynamic crises. It is important to test humanitarian civil-military lines of communication during preparedness activities such as simulation exercises. The inclusion of more diverse scenarios is needed to test, review, adapt, and reform lines of communications involving new and established stakeholders.

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About the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre)

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 research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism, Conflict Studies, Non-traditional Security, Cybersecurity, Maritime Security and Terrorism Studies.



NTS Centre conducts research and produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building the capacity to address non-traditional security (NTS) issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre addresses knowledge gaps, facilitates discussions and analyses, engages policymakers, and contributes to building institutional capacity in Sustainable Security and Crises. The NTS Centre brings together myriad NTS stakeholders in regular workshops and roundtable discussions, as well as provides a networking platform for NTS research institutions in the Asia Pacific through the NTS-Asia Consortium.

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