

## RSIS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration



*Staff and students giving a toast to RSIS*

By **Scott Lai**

RSIS celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 29 July 2016. About 200 staff and students of the RSIS family came together as one, celebrating the anniversary with a buffet lunch on the roof deck of The Hive at the Nanyang Technological University.



*Staff having a go at the photo booth*

Established on 30 July 1996 as the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), the school was renamed the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) on 1 July 2007 while IDSS became one of its research centres. RSIS has grown further in size and in areas of expertise to comprise five research centres and two research programmes.

Starting off the celebrations, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, kicked-off with welcome remarks to staff and students, crediting the international stature of RSIS to both the former and current deans, Ambassador Barry Desker and Professor Joseph Liow.

Amb Ong went on to propose a toast for many more good years ahead and invited all to enjoy the sumptuous buffet spread with international, local and Indian cuisines. A photo booth helped all those who were present to commemorate the occasion with mementos of themselves. All too soon, the celebrations came to a close, with staff and students each presented with a special edition of the *Singlish* notebook as a souvenir.

**RSIS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**  
page 1

**U.S. Foreign Policy in a Time of Transition**  
**New Research Programme on National Security**  
page 2

**U.S.' Enduring Commitment to Security and Prosperity in Asia**  
page 3

**The Future of American Statecraft in Asia**  
page 4

**RSIS Conference on Islam in the Contemporary World**  
page 5

**Forming Nations through Soccer in Middle East**  
page 6

**Assoc Prof Wu Fengshi**  
**Awarded Research Grant**  
**Enhancing the Roles of Women in Development and Security**  
page 7

**APPSMO 2016: Hybrid Warfare and the Role of the Military**  
page 8-9

**Indonesia's Foreign Policy in East Asia and the World**  
**RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop 2016**  
page 10

**Timor-Leste and CPLP: Bridging Continents**  
**The Importance of Muslim Communities in the United States' Rebalance to Asia**  
page 11

**CICIR's Annual Visit to RSIS**  
**An Extremist Ideology: Understanding the Religious Appeal of ISIS**  
page 12

**2016 RSIS Annual China Think Tank Exchange**  
page 13

**Malaysia's Ministry of Home Affairs Visit to ICPVTR**  
**Ong Keng Yong at GKS Command and Staff College**  
page 14

**Appreciating Ambassador Suh Chung-ha**  
**Launch of RSIS Alumni Indonesia Chapter**  
page 15

**Staff Publications and Upcoming Events**  
page 16

# U.S. Foreign Policy in a Time of Transition



Professor Michael Brown

By Harry Sa

Professor Michael E. Brown, Professor of International Affairs and Political Science at The George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs, delivered an RSIS

Distinguished Public Lecture on 14 April 2016 at Sheraton Towers Singapore titled "U.S. Foreign Policy in a Time of Transition."

Prof Brown identified three fundamental viewpoints that are broadly supported by the

American public: (i) the United States should engage the world; (ii) the United States should not engage in global policing; and (iii) the United States should tackle the world's problems through partnerships.

Assessing the Obama administration's foreign policy, he found that President Obama is very much in sync with the American public as a committed internationalist and an active proponent of multilateralism. Given President Obama's moves to leave Iraq and Afghanistan and not get pulled into Syria, his administration also demonstrated a reluctance to expend American resources for global police missions. Obama's foreign policy mistakes were largely when action did not quite fulfill his rhetoric. For

example, in both the Syria and Ukrainian crises, the Obama administration drew red lines and failed to act once those lines were crossed. However, the United States saw much progress when it chose to engage the world through multilateralism. Repairing ties with Iran and Cuba, investing \$3 billion into European infrastructure as a response to Russian aggression, and taking a leadership role against terrorism, nuclear nonproliferation, and climate change were some of Obama's successes.

Prof Brown concluded his lecture by outlining the basic positions of the leading presidential candidates and how much each may deviate from current policies.

## New Research Programme on National Security

The National Security Studies Programme (NSSP) was launched in April 2016. Coordinated by Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, Head of Policy Studies, Office of the Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS, the aim of the RSIS research programme is to foster and enhance intellectual capital pertaining to the milestone episodes in Singapore's diplomatic and security history. In particular, the NSSP will seek to promote broad-ranging research into the "Singapore model" for addressing national security challenges and other insights pertinent for small, globalised, multi-ethnic city-states.

The NSSP represents the second major collaboration between RSIS and the

National Security Co-ordination Secretariat (NSCS) in the Prime Minister's Office. This follows from the success of the first such collaboration, namely the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), also started by Associate Professor Ramakrishna a decade ago and headed by Dr Shashi Jayakumar since April 2015.

Apart from producing research for RSIS and other academic audiences, and teaching on the Masters programme in RSIS, NSSP researchers will also be invited to share their insights with public officers in seminars or training courses, with a view to enhancing the academic rigor of such course content. Seminars involving thought-leaders from Singapore and elsewhere on the



The NSSP Team: (L-R) Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, Ms Sandy Leong, Mr Joshua Ng, and Dr Tan Teck Boon

subject of the governance and security challenges facing city-states will also be organised at periodic intervals.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, welcomed the start of NSSP, observing that "NSSP has a small but important role to play in the wide repertoire of research

and educational programmes undertaken by RSIS. It enables RSIS, among other things, to strengthen its strategic role in raising awareness amongst the wider community of the drivers of the success and stability of small multi-cultural states like Singapore in a globalised, complex and challenging international milieu".

# U.S.' Enduring Commitment to Security and Prosperity in Asia



*The Honourable John McCain*

By **Harry Sa**

The Honourable John McCain, United States Senator for Arizona, delivered an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture titled “America’s Enduring Commitment to Security and Prosperity in Asia” before a full house at the Marina Mandarin Singapore on 3 June 2016.

Senator McCain began his lecture by lauding the region for its meteoric rise from the devastation of the Second World War. Millions of people have lifted themselves out of poverty, embraced rule of law, and sought to develop free and open societies. Amid all this progress, the senator remarked that each and every actor in the region is faced with a choice, one that will set the tone and direction for the future.

As each Southeast Asian nation continues to develop

and realise its potential, the region can choose to become a responsible stakeholder of the rules-based order, or it can choose to erode the very principles that have brought unprecedented peace and security to the Asia Pacific. Senator McCain then mentioned the coming ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration over the disputed areas in the South China Seas as the region’s first stiff test.

China is also at a crossroads. Senator McCain acknowledged China’s miraculous growth and attributed its success to the existing regional order. He expressed his concern over China’s recent shift towards a more aggressive and assertive foreign policy and noted that China has an opportunity to choose a better path. The ruling from The Hague will test Beijing’s commitment to international law and regional stability.

Finally, Senator McCain reaffirmed the United States’ commitment to championing and safeguarding the values and stability that underpinned the region. There is a recurring pattern in American foreign

policy that oscillates between engagement and retrenchment; especially with the persistent concerns over the U.S.’ national debt, its slow and uneven economic recovery, a volatile presidential election, a deadlocked Congress, and worries over an American retreat are rampant.

To allay fears, Senator McCain vowed to press for Congressional ratification of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and renewed America’s pledge to uphold freedom of the seas. He also reaffirmed the strengthening of existing alliances and security partnerships and maintenance of forward deployed forces in the region. He concluded by declaring his optimism and confidence in the United States, its talents and resources, and its political system. The United States will make the right choice when the time comes to choose, he declared.



*The Honourable John McCain (left) with RSIS Faculty members (L-R) Ms Jane Chan, Associate Professor Ahmed S. Hashim, and Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna*

# The Future of American Statecraft in Asia

By Harry Sa

Dr Kurt M. Campbell shared his author's insight at the book launch for his newly published title, *The Pivot: The Future of American Statecraft in Asia* on 3 June 2016 at the Marina Mandarin Singapore. He drew on his experiences gathered during a long career that included serving as the Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs at the Department of State. He is currently the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of The Asia Group.

Dr Campbell began his lecture with an observation that there is an alarming lack of strategic cognition in the United States. If one examines American diplomatic, commercial, and military engagements, despite talks of a rebalance, the U.S. has been detouring away from Asia. The book highlights the importance of the region to America's future.

In Dr Campbell's view, the most important contribution by the United States is the



*Dr Kurt M. Campbell (middle) with Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS (left), and Professor Joseph Chinyong Liow, Dean of RSIS*

implementation of an operating system. Elements of this system include preserving peace and stability, freedom of navigation, peaceful resolution, rule of law, and enforcement of contracts. However, in arenas such as the South China Sea, key components of this operating system have been challenged while the United States was prioritising other regions over the Asia Pacific.

Dr Campbell then spoke about pivot terminology. When the policy was announced, one side boasted that the U.S. was now back in Asia, while another responded that the U.S. had never left. Dr Campbell argued that both of these arguments are fundamentally incorrect. It will require a succession of presidents rather than a single administration to make the policy a success. As for

the U.S. never having left the region, the requirements and the region's expectations of American presence have risen so significantly that previous levels of engagement are insufficient.

Dr Campbell lamented the State Department's failure to fully explain the objectives of the pivot to Asia upon its unveiling. It is well-known that the title of the policy—pivot to Asia—stoked intense fears of American abandonment in Europe and the Middle East. Dr Campbell likened the title to a basketball pivot, a move that allows a player to shift easily from one position to the other. The public perceived it as the U.S. permanently turning away from the region.

Dr Campbell concluded his lecture with a final parting message: the United States and China are destined to work together. Both states will acknowledge existing tensions, but will cooperate because the stakes are simply too high to ignore.



*Dr Kurt M. Campbell (left) with Professor Joseph Chinyong Liow, Dean of RSIS*

# RSIS Conference on Islam in the Contemporary World



A panel session in progress

By Iulia Lumina

RSIS organised the *Islam in the Contemporary World* conference at the Nanyang Executive Centre on 28 April 2016. The first event in Singapore to offer a comprehensive appraisal of the intellectual trajectories of Islam, it also gave new perspectives on their contemporary application in the politics and sociology of Muslim communities. Comprised of three panels, the conference addressed the heritage of Islamic intellectualism, political Islam and violence in the Muslim world, as well as the prospects of religiosity and religious pluralism in the modern world.

Minister for Communications and Information, Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, who is also Minister in charge of Muslim Affairs, delivered the opening address, emphasising the current state of social transformation in Muslim societies worldwide and the contested value of Islamic intellectual heritage. He underlined that Singapore's conciliatory approach

established harmonious relationships between the diverse communities of Singapore and ensured partnership between the secular state and society and the thriving of Muslim communities.

Dr Ali Allawi, former Iraqi Minister of Defence and Minister of Finance, expressed disillusionment with modern Islam in his keynote address. Criticising the lack of constructive and creative responses to the dramatic rupture from traditional Islam that took shape in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Dr Allawi linked the reactionary trajectories of modern Islamic intellectualism to the contemporary dominant currents of Salafism and Wahhabism, Shia Islam and Jihadi Islam. Dr Allawi concluded with the need for a Romantic Movement to challenge these new dogmas and re-imagine the Islamic faith by elevating ethics to a central position.

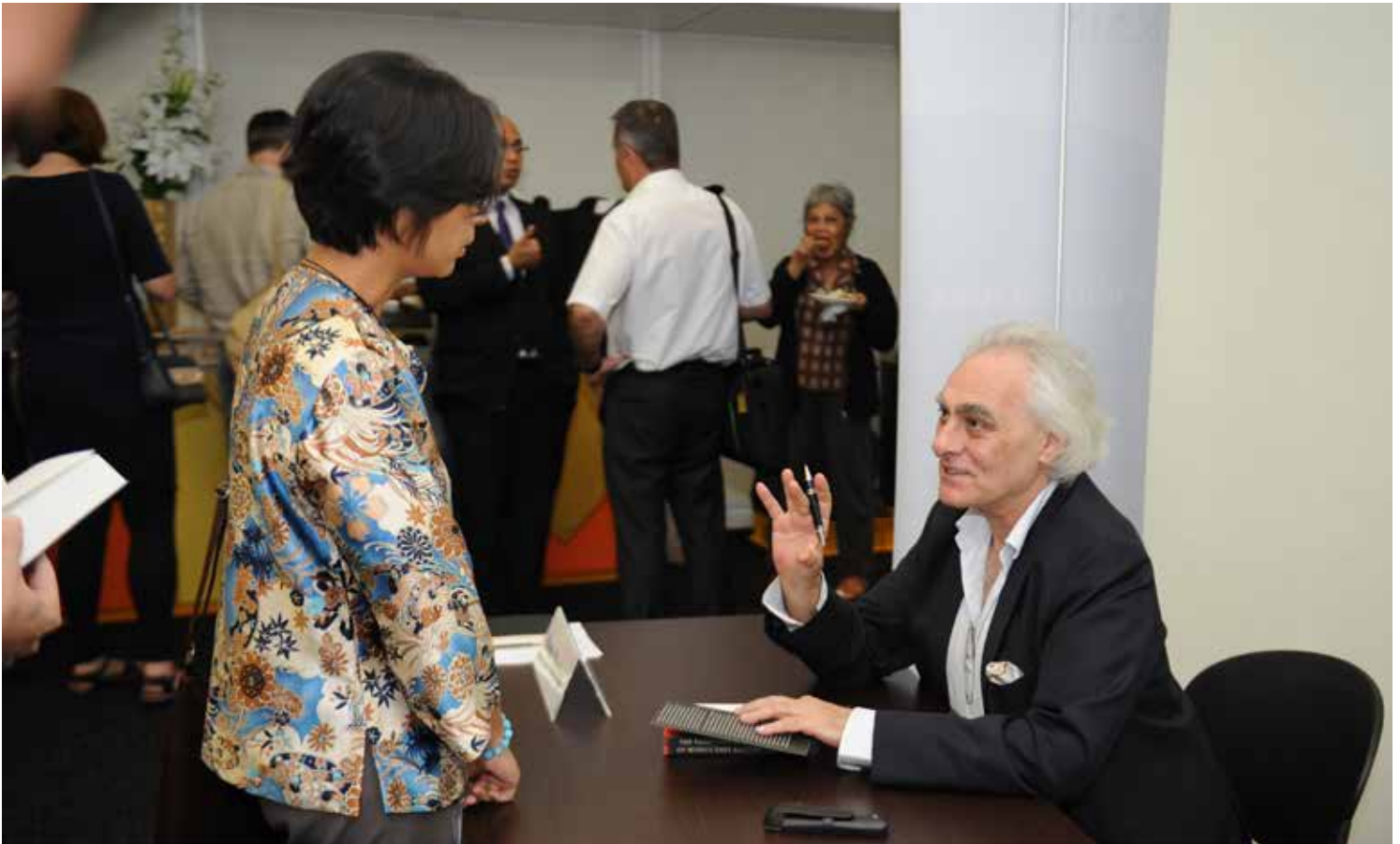
The first panel addressed the topic of "The Evolution of Islamic

Intellectual Tradition". Dr Ali Unsal, Director of Fethullah Gülen Chair at the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, called for a new breed of Islamic intellectuals to bring about a second wave of Islamic Renaissance. The foundations of this movement are dialogue, respect for difference and the synthesis of knowledge from Western and Eastern traditions. Dr Syed Farid Alatas, Associate Professor of Sociology at the National University of Singapore, spoke about the pragmatic value of myths in the collective imagination of Muslims. Exposing the dangers of uncritical acceptance, myths perpetuate animosity, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and hinder efforts at reviving intellectualism. On a more optimistic note, Dr Robert Hefner, Professor of Anthropology at Boston University, noted the effective interaction between Islamic scholars and their plural societies, as well as positive developments in modernising Islamic education.

The second panel examined the dynamics of "Religion, Politics and Violence in the Muslim World". Revisiting the failure of political Islam in the post Arab Spring context, Dr Olivier Roy, Professor of Political Science at the European University Institute, highlighted the need of a new approach to politics in the Muslim world which synthesises Islamic values and democracy and the need to secularise religious values. Mr Said Ferjani drew on his experience as a member of Tunisian Ennahda Party to emphasise that Islamist political strategies should seek the synthesis of Islam and democracy to promote prosperity and security. Dr Ahmad Fauzi, Visiting Senior Fellow at ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, expressed the importance of the state and the religious establishment in containing violence. Muslim intellectuals who disown scholars with rigid interpretations of Islam are already raising the prospects of a new moderate form of political expression.

The last panel discussed the "Future Trajectory of Islam in the Modern World". Dr Ebrahim Moosa, Professor of Islamic Studies at the Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies, emphasised the importance of independent reasoning (ijtihad) and critical traditionalism in balancing tradition and innovation throughout Muslim history. Dr Osman Bakar, Chair Professor at the University of Brunei Darussalam, argued for Islam's capacity to broaden commonalities and reduce differences between Muslim and modern values. Dr Sahar Amer, Professor and Chair of Arabic Languages and Cultures Department at the University of Sydney, pointed out that progressive Muslims who prioritise social justice in their religious interpretations are already challenging the various exegeses that have been imposed on women and minorities.

# Forming Nations through Soccer in Middle East



*Dr James M. Dorsey (right) during the autograph session at the launch of his book*

At an RSIS launch of the book, *The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer*, on 4 May 2016 at the National Library Building, Dr James M. Dorsey, Senior Fellow at RSIS, argued on the basis of numerous examples in countries across the region that soccer had been vital to the formation and building of nations. These included the struggle against colonialism and for independence; the assertion by groups like the Jews, Palestinians, and Kurds of nation- and/or statehood; the survival of autocratic regimes; and the assertion of political, gender and labour rights as well as the popular Arab revolts in 2011.

Dr Dorsey argued in the recently published book that

soccer has played a key role in the development of the modern Middle East and North Africa for more than a century. This was also the thesis that earned Dr Dorsey a doctorate this year from the University of Utrecht.

Singapore was one of a series of global launches that included events at the U.S. State Department, Human Rights Watch; Harvard University's Center for Middle East Studies; the School for Oriental and African Studies; Oxford University's St. Anthony's College; and Tel Aviv University.

Discussion at the Singapore launch ranged from corruption in global and Asian sports governance and the role played by prominent Middle Eastern



*Dr James M. Dorsey (front, right) at the conferment of his doctorate at the University of Utrecht*

sports executives to the role of soccer in disputes like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the inter-Islamist power struggle in Turkey, the 2011 Arab popular

revolts and protests in Egypt, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Yemen to the fate of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

# Assoc Prof Wu Fengshi Awarded Research Grant



*Associate Professor Wu Fengshi*

Associate Professor Wu Fengshi from the China Programme, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, RSIS, received the Academic Research Fund (AcRF) Tier 1 Grant awarded by the Ministry of Education, Singapore. The

NTU Research Council was the judging body of the award. Among the 138 submitted proposals, Assoc Prof Wu emerged with a grant of \$68,000 for a period of 16 months (March

2017), to further research on “Political Transition and the Environment”.

Assoc Prof Wu aims to publish two journal articles based on the outcomes of her research. She will be delivering the first

presentation at the American Political Science Association annual conference this September, one of the largest professional conferences in the field of political science. Besides this, Assoc Prof Wu hopes that the findings of her research can also be showcased in local institutions, as well as in North America and Europe.

This research project intends to examine and theorise the impact of political democratisation on the environment by the following steps: (i) Identify a group of comparable cases that have gone through the dual transition of political regime and

environmental governance; (ii) Examine the selected cases and pin down the most relevant political institutional factors, and clarify whether various environmental problems involve different types of political dynamics and institutions; and (iii) Trace the political processes and search for the causal mechanisms that explain how political reforms for democratisation affect the environment.

Pending her findings of this project, Assoc Prof Wu hopes to further her research with a Tier 2 grant.

## Enhancing the Roles of Women in Development and Security

By **Julius Cesar I. Trajano**

Dr Noeleen Heyzer, RSIS Distinguished Visiting Fellow and former UN Under-Secretary General; and Dr Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, RSIS Distinguished Visiting Senior Fellow and President of



*Dr Chantal de Jonge Oudraat*

Women In International Security; spoke at an RSIS Seminar on the theme “From Development to Security: The Roles of Women” on 22 April 2016.

Dr Heyzer explained the origins and significance of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which together with eight other related resolutions, is known as the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda. She argued that prior to the adoption of the WPS agenda in 2000, sexual violence in conflict settings was not regarded as a war crime and was not addressed at the United Nations. The concept of peace was understood only as ceasefire and achieved through negotiations among warlords; there was no long-term concept of sustainable peace and development which includes

protecting women’s rights especially in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Through the collective efforts of peace advocates from the UN, governments and civil society, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1325, providing overall framework on protecting women’s rights with four pillars: (i) prevention; (ii) protection; (iii) participation; and (iv) recovery. The role of women is crucial in each of these pillars to rebuild the social fabric of a conflict-afflicted community.

Dr de Jonge Oudraat asserted that the WPS agenda should not be subordinate to studies on counter-terrorism. Women should be key actors in the fight against terrorism. There is a need to mainstream WPS in the counter-terror agenda in order to effectively combat violent extremism and terrorism.

Dr Heyzer and Dr de Jonge Oudraat argued that WPS



*Dr Noeleen Heyzer*

is also relevant in complex humanitarian emergencies. Women are among the most vulnerable in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Their active involvement in the relief and recovery phase is important in order to rebuild their communities. A gendered perspective of relief planning and deployment should be inculcated in the first responders, including the military to effectively deal with the plight of disaster victims and vulnerable populations.



# APPSMO 2016: Hybrid Warfare and the Role of the Military

By **Ben Ho**

The 18<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2016) was held at Village Hotel Changi on 5-10 August 2016. Organised by the Military Studies Programme of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), RSIS, APPSMO 2016 was attended by more than 50 military officers

from over 20 countries in Asia, North America and Europe.

The theme of APPSMO 2016, “Hybrid Warfare and the Role of the Military: Challenges and Implications”, addressed a major issue faced by militaries today—states using a blend of unconventional and conventional warfare methods in the context of a highly fluid security environment.

Mr Ong Ye Kung, Acting Minister for Education (Higher Education and Skills) and Senior Minister of State for Defence, gave the Keynote Address, while Singapore’s Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant General Perry Lim, was the guest-of-honour at the event’s opening dinner.

As in previous years, APPSMO provided a valuable platform





for defence diplomacy and discussions, where military professionals, policymakers, practitioners, academics and other experts exchanged views on a broad range of subjects pertaining to defence and security.

The list of distinguished overseas speakers included Lieutenant General H. R. McMaster, Director of the U.S. Army Capabilities Integration Center; Professor Itzik Ben-Israel, Head of Tel Aviv University's Workshop for Science, Technology and Security; as well as Professor Takashi Shiraishi, President of Japan's National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies.

The line-up of local speakers included Professor Kishore Mahbubani, Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy; Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan, Ambassador-at-Large and Policy Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Mr David Koh, Deputy Secretary (Technology) and Deputy Secretary (Special Projects) of the Ministry of Defence, Singapore, and Chief Executive of the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore. Speakers from RSIS comprised Professor Pascal Vennesson, IDSS; Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, Head of Policy Studies in the Office of the Executive Deputy Chairman, and Coordinator of the National Security Studies

Programme at RSIS; and Associate Professor Ahmed Salah Hashim, IDSS.

The Distinguished Dinner Talk entitled "Power Transition in the Asia Pacific" was delivered by Professor Jia Qingguo, Dean of Peking University's School of International Studies. In addition, APPSMO 2016 featured a Luncheon Conversation entitled "Rethinking Warfare and Civilisation in the Asia Pacific", and featuring Professors Shirashi and Mahbubani.

APPSMO participants attended panels dealing with "Dimensions of War and Strategy", "Hybrid Threats and the Future of

Warfare", "Information and Cyber Warfare: The Military Dimension", and "Civilian-Military Relations and a Whole-of-Government Approach towards Security".

In conjunction with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of RSIS and the 18<sup>th</sup> APPSMO, RSIS published a compendium, capturing selected past distinguished lectures, and personal reflections on the APPSMO experience.

As part of APPSMO 2016, participants also visited the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre, various heritage sites in Changi, the Changi Airport, as well as PSA. In addition, they joined Singaporeans celebrating the nation's 51<sup>st</sup> birthday at the National Stadium where they watched the National Day Parade.

# Indonesia's Foreign Policy in East Asia and the World

By Ha Yu Xin

HE Ngurah Swajaya, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Singapore, gave a seminar on “Indonesia's Foreign Policy in East Asia and the World” as part of the Seminar Series on the Practice of Diplomacy and International Affairs on 8 April 2016.

“Trisakti” is the new paradigm of Indonesia's foreign policy, consisting of political sovereignty, economic independence and cultural distinction. Its priorities are to maintain Indonesia's sovereignty, protect Indonesians overseas, and enhance economic diplomacy and

Indonesia's active role in the international fora.

HE Swajaya highlighted that the history of the country, current challenges in the regional and global environment and domestic needs of the country have played important parts in determining the pro-active and independent character of Indonesian foreign policy.

Contemporary global and regional challenges have also prompted Indonesia to take a pro-active approach in its foreign policy. These include (i) increasing global armed conflicts; (ii) volatile regional dynamics; (iii) unresolved territorial disputes;



HE Ngurah Swajaya (left) exchanging gifts with Mr Tan Seng Chye, Senior Fellow at RSIS

(iv) transnational organised crimes; and (v) global climate and economic issues. Amid these issues are Indonesia's domestic needs to protect its citizens and the sovereignty over its sea territories (including sea resources) that the country has to address. Indonesia,

however, is confident that these challenges can be mitigated through peaceful means. HE Swajaya reiterated that Indonesia would continue to work with other countries to contribute actively to the peace and prosperity of the world and the region in the future.

## RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop 2016



Madam Halimah Yacob (middle) accompanied by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS

By Aedan Mordecai

The seventh edition of the RSIS-WTO Parliamentarian Workshop was held from 17-19 May at Marina Mandarin Singapore. Co-organised by the Centre for Multilateralism Studies and the World Trade Organization, the three-day

workshop was co-sponsored by the Temasek Foundation under the auspices of the Temasek Foundation Series on Trade & Negotiations, and the WTO Secretariat.

Parliamentarians from across Asia were invited to build on their knowledge of the multilateral trading system. The

WTO held the 10<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, back in December 2015, providing extra impetus for progress within the global trading system.

Madam Halimah Yacob, Speaker of Parliament, Singapore, in her opening address, spoke of the importance of the multilateral trading system to Singapore and the ASEAN region. She argued that greater levels of world trade can help the region develop and become more competitive in the global economy.

The workshop covered the recent agreements that came from the Nairobi conference including the expansion of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), and what direction the WTO will take in the future to remain relevant in the increasingly decentralised

global trading system with the challenges that come with the so called mega regional trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The workshop gave the parliamentarians opportunities to hear from industry experts as well as representatives from the WTO such as Mr Keith Rockwell, Chief Spokesman, and Mr Said El Hachimi, Counsellor of the Information & External Relations Division. The platform allowed the participants to learn more about how their respective nations could benefit from greater free-trade and how the multilateral trading system can work for them and their constituents. The event concluded with field trips to the ports of PSA Singapore, to discover how Singapore organises its port logistically to facilitate trade, as well as a tour of Singapore's Parliament building.

# Timor-Leste and CPLP: Bridging Continents

By Tiola

HE Hernâni Coelho, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, with some of his staff, visited RSIS for a roundtable discussion on the topic of “Timor-Leste as a platform for business cooperation between the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) and ASEAN.” The discussion, held at The KeyPoint on 13 April 2016, was attended by a number of RSIS faculty members and representatives from various countries, including Portugal, Brazil, Angola, and Indonesia.

The CPLP is a multilateral forum for friendship and cooperation among Portuguese-speaking nations, where Timor-Leste currently holds the rotating presidency. The discussion kicked off with a presentation

from HE Coelho on activities and cooperation carried out under the umbrella of CPLP. The organisation currently cooperates in many sectors, including health, science and technology, defence, agriculture, and the promotion of the Portuguese language.

Responding to a question on the relevance of the Portuguese language, particularly within the Asia Pacific, HE Coelho emphasised his confidence in the progress of CPLP, noting that Portuguese is currently the fourth most spoken language in the world, and a major language in the Southern Hemisphere. Besides questions on Timor-Leste and CPLP, some participants also asked about the progress of Timor-Leste’s application to be an ASEAN member state. The Minister asserted that he is confident



HE Hernâni Coelho (left) with HE Adaljiza Magno, Timor-Leste Ambassador to Singapore

with the progress, as currently Timor-Leste is allowed to join some activities under the aegis of capacity development. Timor-Leste’s historical relations with its Portuguese counterparts have also made the country well-placed to be an intercontinental platform for

greater business cooperation between the CPLP countries and ASEAN.

HE Coelho asserted that in future Timor-Leste’s economy will focus on three sectors: (i) hydrocarbon; (ii) agriculture; and (iii) tourism.

# The Importance of Muslim Communities in the United States’ Rebalance to Asia

By Iulia Lumina

Mr Shaarik H. Zafar, the U.S. State Department’s Special Representative to Muslim Communities, delivered an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on 16 May 2016, addressing “The Importance of Muslim Communities in the United States’ Rebalance to Asia”. He described the rebalance as essentially *good policy* from a strategic and economic point of view.

The geopolitics of Asia Pacific is of particular importance to U.S. strategy in the region, while the Trans-Pacific Partnership solidifies economic ties with regional partners as well as the commitment to development and



Mr Shaarik H. Zafar (left) with Professor Tan See Seng, Deputy Director and Head of Research of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies

human rights. Since the region is home to 1.6 billion Muslims, the relevance of the rebalance to Muslim communities is their engagement in contemporary issues such as security, health, living and climate change. The engagement with Muslim communities is vital in all fields,

from counter-terrorism to the environment.

Mr Zafar underlined Indonesia’s role in promoting tolerance and diversity through the progressive movement of Islam Nusantara, and the inclusive curricula of *pesantren* schools

that offer classes on history and economics, rather than the limited focus on the Quran and the Sunna in madrasahs elsewhere. The persecution of the Rohingyas in Myanmar, ethnic preferences in Malaysia, as well as Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump’s campaign underline the urgency of tackling increasing intolerance and discrimination given the threat of radicalisation. Moving on to climate change, Mr Zafar noted the mobilisation of religious communities in an upcoming Marrakesh conference on green development. In conclusion, Muslim community engagement is reflective of broader foreign policy strategies and plays a vital role in the U.S.’ rebalance to Asia.

This Distinguished Public Lecture was part of the on-going RSIS Seminar Series on Muslim Societies in Asia.

## CICIR's Annual Visit to RSIS

By **Xue Gong**

RSIS' China Programme organised the annual roundtable with the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) on 9 May 2016. Chaired by Mr Kwa Chong Guan, Senior Fellow at RSIS, the roundtable centred on (i) assessing Singapore's views of the One Belt and One Road Initiative (BRI) and other sub-regional cooperation projects; (ii) the perception of ASEAN states towards this initiative; as well as (iii) the proposed infrastructure projects. The CICIR delegation included Mr Hu Shisheng, Senior Research Fellow; Dr Luo Yong Kun, Associate Professor; and Dr Fan Xiaoju, Associate Professor.

Associate Professor Alan Chong, Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS), RSIS, commenced the discussion by introducing Singapore's investment in the Chongqing Connectivity Initiative to

exemplify Singapore's efforts in supporting China's infrastructure development. Assistant Professor Daniel Chua, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, RSIS, explained Singapore's diplomacy as being adaptable, relevant and exceptional. Regarding the on-going South China Sea disputes, he cited the example of Pedra Branca to demonstrate Singapore's preference for resolving territorial disputes via international law. Nevertheless, both emphasised Singapore has to balance its relationships with Beijing and Washington.

Assistant Professor Kaewkamol Pitakdumrongkit of CMS, elaborated on ASEAN's development and concerns regarding BRI and the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB). She pointed out that strategic mistrust could be a contributory cause, as has been evident in various Mekong Cooperation mechanisms. Associate Professor Leonard Sebastian of the Indonesia Programme, IDSS, introduced China's role in complementing Indonesia's desire for infrastructure development. He reminded the CICIR delegates that changes of Indonesian domestic politics could affect China's investment.

Lastly, Dr Wu Shang-Su, IDSS, used the Singapore-Kuala Lumpur Railway example to emphasise the importance of feasibility studies of railway connectivity and also mapped out the challenges for the future high-speed train system.

Mr Kwa concluded the roundtable by highlighting that Singapore's strategic choices are underpinned by its identity as a member of ASEAN. While affirming that the challenges Beijing faces are severe, the CICIR scholars recommended that geopolitical concerns ought to be separated from China's economic support.



(L-R) Mr Hu Shisheng, Dr Luo Yong Kun, Ms Fan Xiaoju, Ms Xue Gong (PhD candidate at RSIS), and Ms Lina Gong (PhD candidate at RSIS)

## An Extremist Ideology: Understanding the Religious Appeal of ISIS

By **Paul Hedges**

At the invitation of the Studies in Inter-religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme, Professor Douglas Pratt of Waikato University, New Zealand, and Bern University, Switzerland, spoke on "An Extremist Ideology: Understanding the Religious Appeal of ISIS" in an RSIS Seminar on 13 April 2016. The talk covered both theoretical issues and a specific case

study—the ISIS publication *Dabiq*.

Prof Pratt began by defining "extremism", which denotes something marginal with tenuous links to the centre ground and mainstream tradition. It can also imply a degree of intensity that sees itself as the exclusive centre of truth, and the absolute manifestation of central tenets, which could be expressed as "ultra-orthodoxy".

Prof Pratt also outlined three types of fundamentalism. The passive type sees its claims as normative but restricts this to internal discussion. The assertive type becomes more hard-line in condemning others, but still directed internally. The impositional type becomes aggressive in imposing its strict norms on everyone.

Prof Pratt related this theory to ISIS' self-presentation in *Dabiq*. It showed itself having a form

of "good news" that should be applied universally, so its version of an "Islamic state" is imposed on others. It also pictures an exclusive binary world where you are either for it or against it. Further, it claimed central religious tenets, for instance, offering some form of salvation and opportunities to do good works in a pure Islamic way. This powerful rhetoric could appeal to the young, marginalised, or oppressed, claiming a centre stance within Islam. Prof Pratt said that such a stance needs to be countered by the Muslim community arguing that ISIS was both marginal and a distortion of the central Islamic tradition.

# 2016 RSIS Annual China Think Tank Exchange



*2016 China-Singapore Think Tank Forum on "Security and Order in Asia-Pacific", organised by the Pangoal Institution and RSIS, 5 July 2016*

By James Char

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, led a delegation to China for the annual exchange with various Chinese think tanks from 1-7 July 2016. The delegation visited Chinese academics in Yunnan, Nanjing and Beijing.

In addition to delivering a lecture to faculty members and

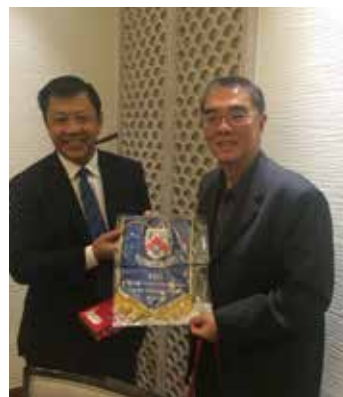
students at Yunnan University, Amb Ong also chaired a number of conferences in Nanjing and Beijing. These included institutions such as the Nanjing University China Centre for Collaborative Studies of the South China Sea, the People's Liberation Army National Defence University (NDU), the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR), as well as the private think tank, Pangoal Institution.



*Major-General Xiao Tianliang, Vice-President of the National Defense University of the People's Liberation Army (right), with Ambassador Ong Keng Yong*



*China-Singapore South China Sea Forum organised by the China Centre for Collaborative Studies of the South China Sea, Nanjing University, and RSIS, 4 July 2016*



*Dr Ji Zhiye, President of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (right), with Ambassador Ong Keng Yong*

During the meetings, Amb Ong and the participants exchanged views on Chinese foreign policy, Beijing's ties with Washington, the East Asian security landscape, ASEAN-China relations and the South China Sea disputes. On the latter issues, while noting that the South China Sea has overshadowed China's relations with its neighbours in the region of late, Amb Ong highlighted that the ASEAN-China relationship extends beyond a single issue and that there remains much scope for continued cooperation. On ASEAN's part, it is crucial that the countries in the regional inter-governmental bloc stay united so as to play a constructive role in the midst of the on-going Sino-U.S. competition. Further, Amb Ong also reminded his audience that Beijing should make attempts to avert its domestic populist constituency from influencing foreign policy.

Ending on a positive note, Amb Ong emphasised that in spite of the potential flashpoints, there have been a number of encouraging developments, and that security dynamics in the region as a whole is manageable. He also alluded to the likelihood of inter-state interactions amongst governments in the region to resolve their differences and postulated that the Asia Pacific security landscape can be expected to remain stable. Concurring with him, there was a consensus that Singapore, and RSIS in particular, can play a prominent role in facilitating meaningful platforms for exchanges between the U.S., China and ASEAN nations.

# Malaysia's Ministry of Home Affairs Visit to ICPVTR



Assistant Commissioner of Police Ong Chin Lan (first row, fifth from left) with Professor Rohan Gunaratna on her right

By **Remy Mahzam**

A Malaysian Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) team visited the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) on 19 April 2016 to learn more about the centre as well as the evolving threat landscape in the region. The team was led by the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Ong Chin Lan

who is the Principal Assistant Director for the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). It also comprised Mr Ahmad Badruddin bin Abdullah, MOHA Deputy Secretary of Human Resource Division, as well as representatives from the Royal Malaysia Police, Prison Department of Malaysia, Victim Care Unit and Immigration.

Dr Jolene Jerard, Manager for Capacity Building, ICPVTR,

briefed on the implications of the 2016 Jakarta attack and why it should be studied from various lenses such as psychology, legislation, immigration as well as the larger police force especially in dealing with emerging issues such as returning foreign fighters and counter-terrorism approaches.

Associate Research Fellow Muhammad Saiful Alam Shah Sudiman shared his experiences

on terrorist rehabilitation and how engagement strategies should change to mitigate the new IS-centric threat landscape. He also cited Dapoer Bistik, a food business chain in Indonesia run by Noor Huda Ismail, founder of the Institute for International Peace Building that offers employment for former inmates and ex-combatants in an effort to rehabilitate terrorists through engagement.

Delineating the current and emerging threat, Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Head of ICPVTR, called for enhanced cooperation and collaboration between Malaysia and Singapore. He added, "Governments should build common databases, exchange personnel, conduct joint training and operations, and share expertise, resources and experience."

## Ong Keng Yong at GKS Command and Staff College

By **Eddie Lim**

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS, was invited by the Goh Keng Swee Command and Staff College (GKS CSC) to share his thoughts at its Distinguished Speakers' Programme on 14 March 2016. The GKS CSC is the premier training institute of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). The 160 strong cohort of the college comprised officers of Major

and Lieutenant-Colonel ranks. Preparing to lead the SAF at the senior management levels, the students are expected to develop professional strategic and leadership skills during their year at the college.

The GKS CSC Distinguished Speakers' Programme, hosts industry captains across the spectrum of defence and security, with perspective and experiences that would contribute to the professional development of the participants



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (left) with the student moderator

of the Command and Staff Course. Amb Ong's vast experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as his experience as Secretary-General of ASEAN, provided perspectives on strategic

leadership and relationships amongst member states of ASEAN. His frank discussion on diplomacy and regional politics was well-received. Further exchanges followed over dinner.

## Appreciating Ambassador Suh Chung-ha

By Eddie Lim

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, hosted Ambassador Suh Chung-ha of the Republic of Korea for lunch on 5 April 2016. The appreciation lunch was for RSIS to express its gratitude to Amb Suh for his kind support of RSIS and



*Ambassador Suh Chung-ha (left) receiving a token of appreciation from Ambassador Ong*

Singapore's activities with South Korea. An example of the close relationship between RSIS and South Korea is the recently concluded Memorandum of Understanding between RSIS and the Korea National Defense University.



*Ambassador Suh Chung-ha (second from right)*

## Launch of RSIS Alumni Indonesia Chapter

By Lieke Bos

About 20 RSIS alumni based in Jakarta attended the meeting of the RSIS Alumni Indonesia Chapter on 27 May 2016, at the Century Park Hotel in Jakarta. The evening was organised by the Executive Committee of the RSIS Alumni Association Indonesia in cooperation with the Executive Committee of the RSIS Alumni Association, and saw alumni from the earliest cohorts to recent graduates gather over an Indonesian style buffet dinner.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, expressed the importance of the roles that the alumni play for RSIS—as representatives of the school's brand—and presented everybody with an RSIS cap. Mr Phillip Ee, President of the RSIS Alumni Association, emphasised how valuable meetings such as



*Ambassador Ong Keng Yong (middle) with the RAA Indonesia Chapter Members*

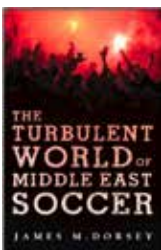
the RSIS Alumni Indonesia Chapter launch are, not only to the alumni themselves for networking purposes but also for the school to get a more personal and deeper

understanding of what its alumni in various parts of the world are engaged in. Mr Ee also informed the alumni about the RSIS Alumni Association's strategic synergies with market

leaders and how this can be further developed in Indonesia.

The RSIS Alumni Indonesia Chapter will soon hold elections for its next President.

## STAFF PUBLICATIONS



### The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer

James M. Dorsey. Hurst Publishers: 2016. ISBN: 9781849043311

James M. Dorsey introduces the reader to the world of Middle Eastern and North African football — an arena where struggles for political control, protest and resistance, self-respect and gender rights are played out. Politics was the midwife of soccer in the region, with many clubs being formed as pro- or anti-colonial platforms and engines of national identity and social justice. This book uncovers the seldom-told story of a game that evokes deep-seated passions.

### Natural Resource Management for Sustainable Growth

Edited by Mely Caballero-Anthony and Richard Barichello. S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies: 2016.

“Natural resource management for sustainable growth” is the second publication under the ASEAN-Canada Research Partnership project. It builds on the Partnership’s first phase, which discussed economic inequality amid growth. Chapters in this volume highlight how unsustainable natural resource management has been a significant factor in growing economic inequality in Southeast Asia. The book’s chapters have four themes—extractive resources, forestry, water and fisheries—and engage with varying methodologies, thus bringing unique perspectives to the existing literature on natural resource management in Southeast Asia.

### Handbook of Terrorism in the Asia-Pacific

Edited by Rohan Gunaratna and Kam Li Yee Stefanie. Imperial College Press, U.K.: 2016. ISBN: 978-1-78326-995-2

The Handbook of Terrorism in the Asia Pacific provides an overview of terrorism in the Asia Pacific, the evolution of threat, and the current and emerging threats faced by countries with the rise of the Islamic State (IS). This is a concise and readable handbook which examines the origins of the current wave of terrorism across countries in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Northeast Asia and the Pacific, and identifies emerging trends and new forms of terror that have altered the landscape and rendered the region increasingly vulnerable to asymmetric attacks. Comprising of more than 20 chapters, this handbook will be useful for practitioners and scholars and as a source of reference for undergraduate and graduate students focused on understanding the causes of terrorism and insurgency in the Asia Pacific.

### State, Society and National Security: Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century

Edited by Shashi Jayakumar. World Scientific Publishing Company: 2016. ISBN: 978-981-3109-98-8

Addressing the complexities of radicalisation, resilience, cyber, and homeland security, State, Society and National Security: Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century aims to shed light on what has changed in recent years security discourse, what has worked (as well as what has not), and what the potential further evolutions within each domain might be.

The release of this book commemorates the 10th anniversary of the creation of the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) — a policy-oriented security think tank within the S Rajaratnam School for International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, as well as the 10th edition of CENS’ annual Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior National Security Officers (APPSNO), which has developed into a premier international security conference in Southeast Asia.

### Civilian Protection in the Twenty-First Century: Governance and Responsibility in a Fragmented World

Edited by Cecilia Jacob and Alistair D. B. Cook. Oxford University Press: 2016. ISBN: 9780199467501

There has been a significant consolidation of international norms to advance human protection objectives in current global politics. Yet, while civilian protection is at the heart of international humanitarian law and the United Nations global security agenda, armed conflicts today are increasingly fragmented. The current global security environment creates significant ethical and political complexities for the actors operating in this field to protect civilians. This volume interrogates the diversity of practices and the politics of civilian protection at the individual and community as well as the state, non-state, and the international community levels to conceptualise civilian protection in this complex environment.

### The APPSMO Advantage: Strategic Opportunities

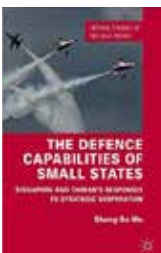
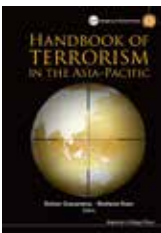
Edited by Ong Keng Yong, Mushahid Ali, and Bernard Chin. World Scientific Publishing Company: 2016. ISBN: 978-891-3147-57-7

The APPSMO Advantage: Strategic Opportunities is a compendium on the Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO), a series of conferences organised by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and its predecessor, the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), for senior military officers of Singapore and other Asia Pacific countries. APPSMO consists of an intensive week-long programme of lectures, forums, and discussion groups where key policymakers and leading scholars share their views on strategic matters, defence and military issues, as well as the impact of change and technological development. In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of RSIS and the 18th year of APPSMO, this book celebrates the programme that has brought together key military people in the region, enabling them to communicate with each other directly and informally, thereby enhancing networking among their defence forces, while benefiting from contacts and exchanges between the scholarly and policy communities.

### The Defence Capabilities of Small States: Singapore and Taiwan’s Responses to Strategic Desperation

Shang-Su Wu. Palgrave Macmillan U.K.: 2016. ISBN: 978-1-137-49715-4

A comparison of Singapore and Taiwan presents an interesting case for those wishing to understand how small states struggle to overcome their strategic disadvantage. This book assesses their progress, from humble beginnings to their distinct development in the post-Cold War era, and includes both military and non-military factors.



## THINK TANK

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### 11 AUGUST 2016

RSIS DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURE BY PROFESSOR JIA QINGGUO, NGENG ANN KONGSI PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, RSIS; AND DEAN, SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, PEKING UNIVERSITY

#### 15 AUGUST 2016

RSIS SEMINAR BY DR MUHAMAD CHATIB BASRI, NTUC PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS, RSIS; AND FORMER MINISTER OF FINANCE, INDONESIA

#### 16 AUGUST 2016

RSIS SEMINAR BY PROFESSOR DAVID COHEN, VISITING SENIOR FELLOW, RSIS; AND DIRECTOR, WSD HANDBA CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY, U.S.

#### 17 AUGUST 2016

JOINT TRAINING PROGRAMME ON ECONOMIC CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT FOR COMPETITIVE AND INCLUSIVE ASIA

#### 18 AUGUST 2016

WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY PUBLIC PANEL AND EXHIBITION

#### 1-2 SEPTEMBER 2016

INDIAN OCEAN CONFERENCE ON “COMITY, COMMERCE AND CULTURE”

#### 26-27 SEPTEMBER 2016

CENS WORKSHOP ON “COUNTERING EXTREMISM: CVE ON THE FRONTLINES”

#### 6-7 OCTOBER 2016

GOH KENG SWEE COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE (GKS CSC) SEMINAR 2016 ON “THE CHANGING CHARACTER OF CONFLICT AND THE CHALLENGES FOR THE CONTEMPORARY ARMED FORCES”

#### 7-11 NOVEMBER 2016

SRP 2ND EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME 2016