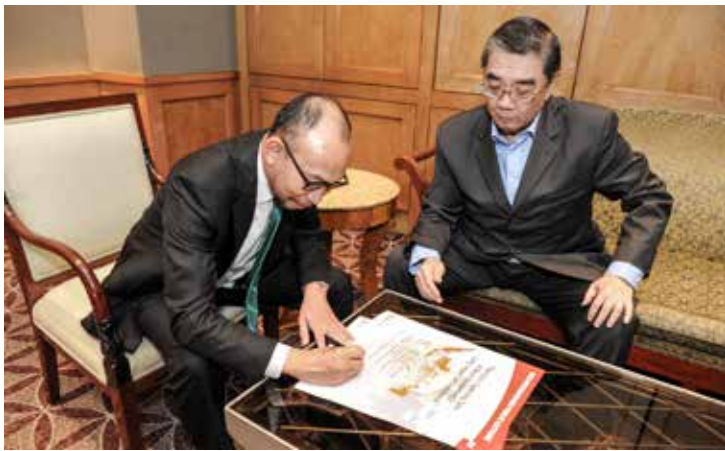


Breaking Out of the “Fragile Five”: How did Indonesia do it?



Dr Muhamad Chatib Basri (left) signing his lecture's poster, which will be displayed in RSIS, with Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS

By **Satrio Dwicahyo Rahadi** and
Santi H. Paramitha

Dr Muhamad Chatib Basri, NTUC Professor of International Economic Relations, RSIS; and former Minister of Finance, Indonesia; delivered an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture titled “The Fed’s Tapering Talk: A Short Statement’s Long Impact on Indonesia” at Sheraton Towers Singapore on 31 August 2016.

Dr Basri presented on how Indonesia, which was recognised as one of the “Fragile Five” economies, pulled through the Taper Tantrum in 2013.

In the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis, the U.S. Federal Reserve implemented a Quantitative Easing (QE) policy, which benefited emerging economies as liquidity flowed into these countries. However, after four years of monetary

easing, the Fed decided to taper, or relax the stimulus programme. When the Fed slowly reduced or tapered the amount of money it injects into the economy, panic can ensue – this was known as the Taper Tantrum, which occurred in 2013. Dr Basri recognised that the U.S. Federal Reserve is not to be blamed, as other emerging economies, such as the Philippines and Thailand, were less impacted by the Taper Tantrum.

In tackling the consequences of the Taper Tantrum, Dr Basri pointed out that suppressing demand would be the best option available to minimise Indonesia’s current account deficit. It was necessary to tighten fiscal and monetary policies. Indonesia cut the fuel subsidy and let the Rupiah depreciate, just nine months before the presidential elections. These policies successfully brought Indonesia out of the “Fragile Five” and improved its trade balance, while maintaining the inflation rate.

As indicated by Dr Basri, applying purely economic

policies can at times be difficult, due to political constraints. It is important to note that the time horizon on implementing economic policies in Indonesia is only five to 10 years. Nonetheless, by paying attention to former Indonesia’s President Yudhoyono’s mandate to calculate the implications of the economic slowdown on the poor and unemployed, Dr Basri found a way to counter these effects. He proposed opening up imports (especially for rice) and implementing cash transfer policies.

Dr Basri realised that there are always problems with reform, especially when technocrats and politicians are on the same table and are expected to work in tandem. First, in any reform, the cost is immediate, yet the benefit may not be recognised immediately. Second, it is difficult to harmonise the interests between different stakeholders (e.g. government, media, civil society, and technocrats). Third, bureaucratic constraints can be a determining factor of whether the policy will work. Dr Basri concluded his lecture by saying that good times make for bad policies and bad times make for good policies. Indonesia’s ability to recover from the Taper Tantrum was valid evidence of this statement.

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Is the Islamic State in Decline?

By **Amanda Huan**

By the invitation of the National Security Studies Programme (NSSP), Dr Gerard Chaliand, a political scientist on warfare, was invited as a NSSP Distinguished Visiting Fellow to speak on the theme “Is the Islamic State in Decline?” on 5 September 2016. Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna, Head of Policy Studies in the Office of the Executive Deputy Chairman; and Coordinator of the National Security Studies Programme, RSIS, chaired the seminar.

Dr Chaliand opened the NSSP Seminar by relating the historical origins of the crisis in Syria and Iraq. The form of extremism that exists today originated from

Wahhabist Saudi Arabia, with the emergence of radical Islamist militants who were willing to fight against the idea of a nation-state, in favour of the *ummah* (community of believers).

Dr Chaliand then spoke about the link between the United States and the Islamic State (IS). The deep Sunni unrest, following the 2003 American intervention in Iraq, created the conditions which ultimately led to the formation of IS. He highlighted that IS is one Islamic movement amongst many others, but is the most well-known, as the group is media-savvy. Their “theaterising” of horror and engagement in shock tactics have enabled the group to draw the attention of the mainstream media, thus overstating the group’s power on the ground.



Dr Gerard Chaliand (right) with Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna

Pertaining to the future of IS, Dr Chaliand remarked that the group is presently facing difficulties, as they have lost territorial presence. He cautioned, however, that the group would not disappear even if it was defeated in Syria, as they are beginning to have a presence in eastern Afghanistan. The war will

continue for some time and any peaceful end to the crisis will require an extended period. One way of dealing with the crisis is to address the economic development of the area and its people. Without economic growth, unrest will develop, thus radical Islam has, and will be seen, as a viable solution for those affected.

ICPVTR Launches Handbook on Terrorism

By **Sara Mahmood**

After the Islamic State’s battlefield losses in Iraq and Syria, it is now focusing on expanding into the Asia Pacific,

where 63 per cent of Muslims live and work. This is detailed in *Handbook of Terrorism in the Asia-Pacific*, which is published by Imperial College Press and edited by Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Head of



Professor Rohan Gunaratna (second from left) together with Ms Stefanie Kam autographing a copy of the Handbook of Terrorism in the Asia-Pacific for Mr Amrin Amin (middle)

the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at RSIS, and Ms Stefanie Kam, Associate Research Fellow of the same outfit. Resident terrorism specialists contributed heavily to the book.

The handbook contains 32 chapters, covering: (i) the current and emerging terrorist landscape; and (ii) an in-depth discussion of the evolving militant landscape across the Asia Pacific; and the rising implications of terrorism and the increase in attacks by the Islamic State.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS, delivered the welcome address at the book launch on 12 July 2016. He described the publication as both invaluable and a timely resource for those dedicated to researching and managing the current and emerging threat.

Mr Amrin Amin, Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), who was the Guest-of-Honour at the launch, referred to the handbook as “an important guide to inform governments and their partners seeking to manage the emerging IS threat across the Asia Pacific region.”

Also present at the launch were Dr Mohamed Fatris Bakaram, Mufti of Singapore; Mr Loh Ngai Seng, MHA Second Permanent Secretary, Singapore’s Religious Rehabilitation Group Co-Chairmen, Mr Ustaz Ali Hj Mohamed and Mr Ustaz Mohamad Hasbi Hassan; Mr Abdul Razak Hassan Maricar, CEO of the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore; Mr Abdullah Tarmugi, former Speaker of Parliament and Minister-in-Charge of Muslim Affairs; and other dignitaries.

RSIS Partners CNA in New Think Tank Series

By Patrick Wong

As part of activities to commemorate its 20th anniversary, RSIS partnered Channel NewsAsia (CNA) to launch a new discussion series titled **Think Tank**. The series offered a platform for experts to share their insights and views on six contemporary issues, namely:

1. Terrorism
2. Food security
3. Maritime law
4. Future of ASEAN
5. Mass migration
6. Cybersecurity

Recorded before a live audience and telecast in August and September 2016, the series featured special rapporteurs, and panellists that included up and

coming staff of RSIS such as Ms Nur Azlin Mohamed Yasin, Dr Tamara Nair, and Assistant Professor Kaewkamol (Karen) Pitakdumrongkit.

Unlike the usual panel discussions featuring only panellists and a moderator, the format for five of the episodes also featured a special rapporteur, who gave a two-minute summary of the discussion, including the key takeaways, at the end of the session.

The RSIS-CNA *Think Tank* series offered viewers fresh perspectives and insights into serious issues that confront the world today. Not just a one-way street, *Think Tank* also provided a chance for the audience to pose questions to the panel



Episode 2 "Do We Have Enough to Eat? Food Security in Asia": (L-R) Panellists, Ms Kavita Prakash-Mani, Ms Kym Blechynden, Dr Tamara Nair, Dr Rajen Manicka, and show host, Mr Teymoor Nabili

experts. Mr Teymoor Nabili, the show's host, skilfully moderated the panel discussions. RSIS' Events and Corporate Communications teams provided logistical and event support behind the scenes.

With half-a-million viewers for the six episodes just in Singapore alone, the new *Think Tank* series was a *resounding success*.

Countering Daesh Extremism in Asia and Europe



(L-R) Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Dr Beatrice Gorawantschy, Dato' Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Dr Günter Krings MdB and Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, launching the publication Countering Daesh Extremism – European and Asian Responses on 1 November 2016

By Sara Mahmood

RSIS and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) convened the Asia-Europe Counter-Terrorism Dialogue on 31 October and 1 November at the Pan Pacific Singapore, discussing the current and emerging threats in Asian and European cities.

The two-day dialogue featured international and regional security experts from both Asia and Europe. In addition to heads of counter-terrorism, the Dialogue was also attended by law enforcement, military and national security personnel.

Dr Beatrice Gorawantschy, Director Regional Programme

Political Dialogue Asia and the Pacific, KAS, Singapore, delivered the welcome remarks while the opening remarks was delivered by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS. Dato' Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia; and Dr Günter Krings MdB, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry of the Interior, Federal Republic of Germany; delivered the keynote addresses, chaired by Professor Rohan Gunaratna, Head, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, RSIS.

Recent attacks and foiled attempts of terrorist attacks in Asian and European cities prompted the theme of the dialogue. Counter-measures and international cooperation were among the topics discussed, with an emphasis on Daesh extremism.

A joint publication entitled *Countering Daesh Extremism – European and Asian Responses* was launched in conjunction with the dialogue. The book analyses recent developments concerning Daesh extremism and their implications on societies in Asia and Europe. The eighteen chapters share and discuss current and possible future threats, identify the target groups vulnerable to extreme militant ideology and examine the various recruitment channels. The counter-measures and de-radicalisation as well as rehabilitation efforts adopted by various governments are also highlighted. Special attention was given to Daesh-linked activities in the respective countries, reactions by the local Muslim communities, and possible future developments as well as responses.

Partnership for Regional Peace: Operationalising ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership in Southeast Asia

By **Lee YingHui**

The Third Conference on “Partnership for Regional Peace: Operationalising ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership in Southeast Asia” was co-chaired by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the National Institute for South China Sea



Mr Kwa Chong Guan, Senior Fellow at RSIS (middle), exchanging views with participants

Studies (NISCSS). It was hosted by RSIS at the Holiday Inn Singapore Atrium from 21-22 July 2016.

The conference brought together scholars and experts from China and ASEAN, to generate ideas and recommendations on how to manage the various maritime challenges in the South China Sea. International observers and senior ASEAN officials were also invited to the conference.

The conference focused on the latest developments and challenges, in light of the growing number of maritime conflicts in the South China Sea, with emphasis on the importance of cooperation in managing the maritime

disputes. Experts discussed several pertinent issues, such as the management of fishery resources, the importance of marine scientific research, and the need for better communication between civilian law enforcement agencies.

This conference is the last in the series to discuss the management and resolution of issues regarding the South China Sea. The First Conference was held in Jakarta, Indonesia in September 2015, while the Second Conference took place in Haikou, China in January 2016. Policy recommendations from the three conferences will be compiled into a report, to be submitted to the ASEAN Summit.

ADB-RSIS Conference on Global Shocks and the New Global Financial Architecture

By **Aedan Mordecai**

From 23-24 August 2016, RSIS held a joint conference with the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) on the subject “Global Shocks and the New Global Financial Architecture”. The conference was attended by speakers and participants from over 10 countries, including the U.S., France, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

The economic climate is currently in a fragile state, facing many potential shocks to the system, such as Brexit, the slowing Chinese economy, and the U.S. presidential

elections. In a globalised and integrated economy, it raises many questions and challenges for governments, businesses and private individuals. The objective of the conference was to discuss these topics, with particular emphasis given to the Asian region.

The ADBI was represented by Dean Naoyuki Yoshino and Senior Consultant Peter Morgan, while RSIS was represented by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman, and Associate Professor Pradumna B. Rana, Coordinator of the International Political Economy Programme. Dr Chatib Basri,



Participants at the ADB-RSIS Conference

RSIS' NTUC Professor of International Economic Relations and former Indonesian Minister of Finance, gave the keynote speech, with papers

presented by experts from RSIS, ADBI, International Monetary Fund, and ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office.

Dissecting China-U.S. Relations



Professor Jia Qingguo

By **Zhang Hongzhou**

Professor Jia Qingguo, Ngee Ann Kongsi Professor of International Relations, RSIS; and Dean, School of International Studies, Peking University; delivered an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on 11 August 2016 at Sheraton Towers Singapore. The lecture was titled “Where to? China-U.S. Relations at a Crossroad”, focusing on relations between China and the United States.

Prof Jia pointed out the growing sentiment that China and the United States are heading for conflict and competition. However, war between the two countries is very unlikely for several reasons. First, although there is disagreement on the implementation, both countries subscribe to values, such as free market, rule of law, human rights, and democracy. Second, China has clearly

rejected territorial expansion as a national ambition. In the case of the South China Sea (SCS) and the East China Sea (ECS) disputes, territorial and maritime interests are what China has always claimed, and this is not something new. Third, changes in international relations has created chances for a peaceful rise. These changes include nuclear weapons, globalisation, trade, investment, and anti-war sentiments since World War II. Hence, he believed that it is very unlikely that China and the U.S. will go to war.

Nevertheless, Prof Jia admitted that China-U.S. relations face serious risks and challenges. Many in both countries still hold views that both countries are destined for confrontation. The leaders of both countries have yet to learn how to help each other cope with domestic pressures for confrontation. While both economies are highly interdependent, the

Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) has not been signed, and it might take a long time for both countries to reach a final agreement. Since Xi Jinping’s visit to the U.S. in 2012 as the Vice President of China, military-to-military relations have improved significantly. However, many problems still exist. On cybersecurity, there is disagreement over the issues of espionage, commercial theft, information pushing and cyberattacks. North Korea is also a big challenge for both. Although both countries consider North Korea a threat, there is a difference in opinion on the method to address this threat.

Looking to the future, Prof Jia felt that although conflicts are on the rise, they do not represent the whole picture. China is becoming more similar to the U.S. as it develops. After many years of interaction, interests are converging. This

is due to reforms and the openness of China during the past decades. Moreover, China is interested in maintaining the current world order. In addition, after many years of interactions, both countries have developed enough channels for effective communication, thus there is little chance of a military confrontation due to a misunderstanding. The governments of both countries have accumulated enough experience in managing relations, and they are unlikely to let conflicts get out of hand.

Prof Jia concluded that both countries are by no means destined to go to war. Instead, they are more likely to cooperate on a variety of issues, with common and converging interests. Over time, they will have enough experience to manage their conflicts and problems.

Future Challenges for the SAF



Dr Thomas X. Hammes addressing the participants

By **Eugene Mark**

The Military Studies Programme (MSP), from the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS), commemorated

Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) Day by organising a panel entitled “Future Challenges for the SAF” on 30 June 2016. The panel was chaired by Mr Eddie Lim, Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the MSP.

The panel comprised Dr Thomas X. Hammes and Dr Paul T. Mitchell, from the U.S. National Defence University and the Canadian Forces College (CFC) respectively.

Dr Hammes started off with an analysis on the impact of technologies, such as 3D printing and drones on future kinetic operations. Dr Mitchell talked about the challenges of educating professional military servicemen and women to operate in today’s dynamic and complex environment. One challenge highlighted by Dr Mitchell was the difficulties in finding experienced educators for countries with small militaries. The lack of professional military servicemen and women who have served in operational kinetic environments, meant that CFC and the SAF should consider a “design-thinking approach” towards course content.

The SAF Day Panel is part of the MSP’ Strategic Studies Series of talks, aimed at engendering discussions on military and strategic affairs.

Economic Corridor Development for Asia

By **Aedan Mordecai**

From 17-19 August 2016, RSIS held a joint training programme with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), and the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) at the Furama Riverfront Hotel, Singapore. Comprising participants from ASEAN, China and South Asia, the workshop touched on “Economic Corridor Development for a Competitive and Inclusive Asia”.

Experts at the programme presented different economic corridors, from transport corridors to a fully-fledged economic corridor with logistical and infrastructure support. The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) was used as a key

example of how a cross border economic corridor development project can be successful, with spill-over opportunities and benefits.

The participants collaborated in groups to apply the theories that they had learnt during the three-day workshop, and began the second module of

the programme in Malaysia, with field trips to get a first-hand view of an economic corridor in action.



Participants during one of the hands-on discussions

The Future of IMO



Mr Koji Sekimizu during the networking reception

By **Rajni Gamage**

Mr Koji Sekimizu, RSIS-MPA Distinguished Visiting Fellow, and former Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), delivered an RSIS-MPA Distinguished

Public Lecture on 23 August 2016 at the MPA Academy, PSA Building, Singapore. His lecture was titled “What I Dreamed about at IMO”.

Mr Sekimizu emphasised that since maritime governance is a global system of shared

responsibility, IMO’s rule-making authority must continue, discouraging unilateral actions by states. He also proposed that a new International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) be drafted by 2024, to replace the existing Convention.

On the impact of future technological innovations on the maritime industry, Mr Sekimizu stated that while this was essential in terms of increasing the quality of the shipping industry, there was also a need to promote the seafaring business as a career. To this end, Mr Sekimizu emphasised career progression in the industry. Member states should also educate the general public on the importance of the shipping industry, such as the IMO Maritime Ambassador Scheme launched in 2015.

Mr Sekimizu expressed appreciation of Singapore’s leadership role in the IMO management council, and its observer status in the Arctic Council, as a clear indication of its support to international shipping.

Japanese Security Policy under Prime Minister Abe: A Revival of Militarism?

By **Henrick Tsjeng**

Professor Glenn D. Hook, Toshiba International Foundation Anniversary Research Professor in the School of East Asian Studies at the University of Sheffield, U.K., gave an RSIS Seminar on 2 August 2016, titled “Japanese Security Policy Under Prime Minister Abe: A Revival of Militarism?”

Prof Hook began with an assessment of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s views towards sovereignty of the Japanese state, and his ambitions to legitimise increasingly proactive military action. Nonetheless, Prof Hook did not consider

the Abe administration to be militaristic, despite the mounting view in Japan that the country’s issues can be resolved using the Japanese Self-Defence Force (JSDF).

Key national issues do not support the outlook of greater militarisation in Japan. Firstly, Mr Abe has been unable to revise Japan’s constitution due to political constraints. Secondly, Mr Abe’s push to transfer the U.S. base in Okinawa from Futenma to Henoko has not succeeded, due to political resistance.

Prof Hook concluded that despite Mr Abe’s ambitions, there is still deep-seated



Professor Glenn D. Hook (middle) speaking to Mr Henrick Tsjeng, Associate Research Fellow with the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies at RSIS (right)

objection towards greater militarisation in Japan. Ultimately, Japan will not be able

to push for militarism, even if its ruling administration wants to.

Indian Ocean Conference 2016

By **Nazia Hussain**

The Indian Ocean Conference was held from 1-2 September 2016 at the Shangri La Hotel, Singapore. It was co-organised by RSIS and India Foundation,

in association with Bangladesh Institute of International & Strategic Studies, and Institute of Policy Studies (Sri Lanka). This two-day conference covered the topics of Comity, Commerce and Culture in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).



Dr Vivian Balakrishnan (left) speaking with Dr Shashi Tharoor, former Minister of State for External Affairs, India, at the conference

Dr S. Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary of India, discussed the challenges of reviving the IOR in his keynote address. One of the key problems was that Asian nations have created and joined different, overlapping regional groupings, and South Asia is also one of the least integrated regions in the world. Thus, there is a need for less disaggregation, better connectivity and a sharper Indian Ocean identity.

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Singapore, and Mr Shri M J Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs, India, gave the welcome address. Mrs Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs, India, also gave a special address through

Skype, on the importance that the Modi government places on deepening security cooperation, addressing piracy and terrorism, as well as engaging countries.

In his inaugural address, Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, proposed a programme for cooperation, education, and human capital development, which will contribute towards the rapid development of the IOR.

The event concluded with a valedictory address by H.H. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Founder of the Art of Living Foundation. According to him, the IOR can serve as a good example of how a multicultural and multi-religious community can enjoy peace and prosperity.

Brexit and its Aftermath

By **Aedan Mordecai**

On 27 July 2016, the Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS) organised the first seminar in its new RSIS Seminar Series on Multilateralism Studies. A distinguished panel of experts presented their views on Britain's recent decision to leave the European Union and the potential consequences. The panel discussion was chaired by Ambassador Barry Desker, Distinguished Fellow at RSIS. He explained how Brexit is an example of a "Black Swan" event, with potential significant repercussions for the global economy.

The panel also included Mr Joergen Oerstroem Moeller, former Danish Ambassador and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS). He

commented on the future of the EU without Britain and that ultimately, the relationship between EU and Britain will remain close, though the initial period of uncertainty will be difficult.

Mr Adrian Chiu, Economist at Singapore's GIC, explained some of the market implications of Brexit for the world economy. Mr Chiu outlined that economic fundamentals were already poor in the U.K., so the uncertainty that comes with Brexit is not very welcome. Mr Chiu also commented on the relative good performance of stocks since the decision to leave the EU.

Dr Pascal Vennesson, Professor of Political Science at RSIS, identified some of the possible political implications of Brexit. Dr Vennesson predicted that the EU as a whole, would become



(L-R) Ambassador Barry Desker, Distinguished Fellow at RSIS, Mr Joergen Oerstroem Moeller from ISEAS and Associate Professor Pradumna B. Rana, Coordinator of the International Political Economy Programme, CMS

more of a social democratic union without the U.K. Thus, it might be more coherent as a block. Elsewhere, there are questions as to whether the U.S. will put more focus on Europe at the expense of Asia.

Dr Yeo Lay Hwee, Director of the European Union Centre in Singapore, and Adjunct Fellow at RSIS, outlined the potential

implications for Asia. Dr Yeo pointed out that members of the Singapore Business Federation were split over whether this would have a significant impact on their future businesses, with the U.K. still an attractive market to many. If Brexit is a sign of retreat from globalisation, Dr Yeo predicted this would be an unwelcome trend for Asia.

Seminar by CENS' Distinguished Visitor, Dr Linton Wells II

By **Dymples Leong**

Dr Linton Wells II, former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence (Networks and Information Integration) at the Office of the Secretary of Defence (OSD) from 1991 to 2007, was the Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) at RSIS. He presented "Cyberspace as the Fifth Dimension in Warfare" on 31 August 2016 at the Marina Mandarin Singapore, as part of a series of three seminars conducted during the course of his visit to CENS. The seminar was chaired by Ms Caitriona H. Heintz, Research Fellow at CENS.

In his seminar, Dr Wells introduced the various dimensions of warfare comprising land, sea, air, space



Dr Linton Wells II (left) with Ms Caitriona H. Heintz

and cyber. He elaborated on the various frameworks for understanding and analysing cyber-warfare, including the OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide, and Act) loop. He also shared on the five main building blocks of the U.S. Department

of Defence 3rd Offset Strategy (3OS), namely learning machines, human-machine collaboration, advanced human-machine combating teams, associated human operations, and autonomous weapons.

Dr Wells also illustrated future trends in security for cyber research, and highlighted how it can bring about new opportunities.

Perspectives on India's China Strategy



Roundtable discussants deliberating on the bilateral relations between India and China

By **Sumitha Narayanan Kutty**

At the invitation of the South Asia Programme, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies,

RSIS, Lieutenant-General (Ret.) S. L. Narasimhan and Brigadier (Ret.) Rumel Dahiya, Deputy Director General of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), spoke at

a roundtable titled "Perspectives on India's China Strategy" on 13 September 2016. Lt. Gen. Narasimhan discussed the current ties between the two countries, while BG Dahiya

provided the audience with his assessment of the border dispute and India's policies toward China.

Lt. Gen. Narsimhan, who was formerly stationed as the Defence Attaché in Beijing, gave an overview of the policy convergences and divergences between the two countries. He noted that the bilateral relationship was complex and should not be viewed purely through the prism of competition. BG Dahiya used maps to detail the nature and area of the border dispute, and noted that India's boundary dispute with China was of a cartographic nature, and was not political.

Countering Extremism on the Frontlines

By **Joseph Franco**

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS), led by its Radicalisation Studies Programme, held a workshop on “Countering Extremism: Islamic State and CVE on the Frontlines” from 26-27 September 2016. During the two-day workshop, speakers and participants discussed how various governments and stakeholders are countering violent extremism.

The workshop consisted of six panels. The first panel set the tone for the event, giving an overview of the Islamic State (IS) and its narratives, from the

factors sustaining its appeal to the disillusionment that triggered defections. The next panel covered Denmark’s multi-level approach to countering violent extremism (CVE), with emphasis on localised initiatives. The third panel looked at the involvement of civil society and law enforcers in CVE initiatives in Southeast Asia. The fourth panel dealt with the U.K. experience, specifically taking stock of the “Prevent Strategy”. For the fifth panel, the North American approach to CVE, utilising strategic communications and community relations, was discussed. The final panel examined the relationship between integration policies and radicalisation in Belgium.



Panel 1 on “The Islamic state and its Narratives”. (L-R) Mr Martin Chulov, Ms Anne Speckhard, Mr Shiraz Maher and Dr Shashi Jayakumar, Head of CENS

Nineteen speakers from Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the U.K., and the U.S. shared their research and

experiences on dealing with the challenges of CVE. Workshop participants included members of the Singapore Civil Service, the private sector and academia.

Nuclear Energy Experts Group Meeting in Singapore



Participants of the CSCAP NEEG Roundtable Meeting during a discussion

By **Julius Cesar Trajano**

Pacific Forum CSIS and RSIS co-organised the fifth meeting of the Nuclear Energy Experts Group (NEEG) of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) at Hotel Jen Tanglin in Singapore from 19-20 September 2016. Forty participants and nuclear experts from sixteen Asia Pacific countries, including Singapore, deliberated on the

post-Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process, nuclear security governance in Asia, the nuclear safety regime, radioactive waste management, and nuclear accident responses. Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, Associate Research Fellow, Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre), RSIS, presented on nuclear safety cooperation in ASEAN, while Dr Alistair D. B. Cook, Research Fellow, NTS Centre, presented on nuclear

emergency preparedness and response cooperation in ASEAN.

NEEG participants claimed that the NSS process has made progress in urging countries to move forward on issues, such as the adoption of relevant treaties on nuclear security. However, the NSS has failed to outline a clear post-summit strategy, leaving the future of nuclear security governance uncertain.

Global governance on nuclear security appears to be in a deadlock, with the absence of a comprehensive international legal architecture. The meeting thus highlighted the critical importance of regional cooperation to strengthen nuclear energy governance in Southeast Asia. Also, according to participants, the twin issues of nuclear security and nuclear safety are becoming more relevant in Southeast Asia, with the announcement of national

plans by several ASEAN member states to build nuclear power plants.

The ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) provides an official framework to facilitate cooperation among the nuclear regulatory bodies of ASEAN member states, to promote nuclear safety, security, and safeguards. One shortcoming of the existing cooperation, as highlighted at the meeting, is the lack of participation by non-governmental stakeholders, such as the academia, scientists, civil society and the private sector. Participants also agreed that there is a lack of public education and communication on the importance of nuclear safety and security. Hence, communication strategies should be adopted to educate the public on the threats and risks associated with nuclear energy.

RSIS World Humanitarian Day: Voices from the Field



One of the exhibitors sharing information on the HADR efforts

By **Zin Bo Htet**

The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Programme at RSIS marked World Humanitarian Day with an exhibition and panel discussion on 18 August 2016. The evening networking session at the Park Royal Hotel on Beach

road brought together more than 70 practitioners, policy professionals, members of the research community and the wider public to celebrate those who have dedicated their lives to humanitarian work.

The panel discussion was moderated by Dr Alistair D. B. Cook, Coordinator of

the HADR Programme at RSIS. Ms Janet Lim, former UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations; Mr Xavier Castellanos, Asia Pacific Regional Director of International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); and Mr Egan Hwan, Communications and Media Manager, Asia, Save the Children; formed the panel.

Ms Lim drew on her experience in UNHCR and how the security environment in humanitarian operations has changed dramatically in the recent past with greater security risks and political uncertainties. Mr Castellanos highlighted that it is important to ensure the voices of the needy and the communities are heard. Mr Hwan shared his experiences in responding to various natural disasters and

the important role the media plays in the humanitarian arena. The panel discussion was then followed by a lively question and answer session. The closing remarks were delivered by Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS.

Various organisations, including the HADR Programme, presented their research and field activities, and shared their experiences to an inquisitive crowd during the exhibition.

This annual event aims to raise awareness on humanitarian work in the region by providing a venue for the exchange of ideas, to hear insights and experiences from the panellists as well as humanitarian organisations based in Singapore and the region.

Reaching Out to Yogyakarta

By **Geanina Bujoreanu**

The Graduate Programmes Office (GPO) organised a visit to Yogyakarta, Indonesia, from 20-22 September 2016, to

meet university students and promote RSIS and its graduate programmes. Yogyakarta is home to a vibrant student community and some of the leading universities in Indonesia. These include Universitas

Gadjah Mada (UGM), currently ranked as the country's top university in the latest Webometrics Rankings, and Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (UIN).

The talks were held at the two universities, conducted by Associate Professor Farish Noor and Ms Geanina Bujoreanu, both from the

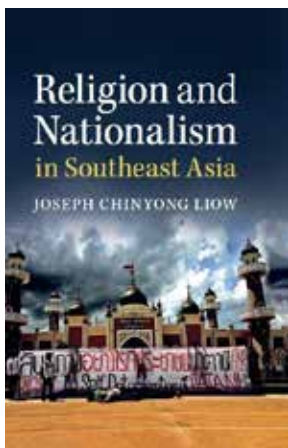
GPO, and were attended by more than 250 students. The response to both talks was very positive, with many students making enquiries about the courses offered at RSIS.

GPO would like to extend special thanks to the ASEAN Studies Centre at UGM and Prof Nur Ichwan of UIN for assisting to organise the visit.



Students waiting for the start of the talks

STAFF PUBLICATIONS



Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia

Joseph Chinyong Liow. Cambridge University Press: 2016. ISBN: 9781316618097

Religion and nationalism are two of the most potent and enduring forces that have shaped the modern world. Yet, there has been little systematic study of how these two forces have interacted to provide powerful impetus for mobilisation in Southeast Asia, a region where religious identities are as strong as nationalist impulses. At the heart of many religious conflicts in Southeast Asia lies competing conceptions of nation and nationhood, identity and belonging, and loyalty and legitimacy. In this accessible and timely study, Joseph Liow examines the ways in which religious identity nourishes collective consciousness of a people who see themselves as a nation, perhaps even as a constituent part of a nation, but anchored in shared faith. Drawing on case studies from across the region, Liow argues that this serves both as a vital element of identity and a means through which issues of rights and legitimacy are understood.

Comparative Political Transitions between Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa: Lost in Transition

Teresita Cruz-del Rosario and James M. Dorsey. Palgrave Macmillan, U.S.: 2016. ISBN: 978-1-137-54348-6

This book investigates the theme of global transitions with a cross-regional comparative study of two areas experiencing change over the past three decades: Southeast Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Political transitions in Asia have been the subject of interest in academic and policy-making communities recently as there are encouraging signs of democratization in countries that exhibit elements of authoritarianism. In those countries with relatively open political systems, transitions to democracy have been complete – albeit messy, flawed, and highly contested. In contrast, countries of the MENA region that have been gripped by revolts in recent years find themselves in the midst of chaotic and uncontrollable transitions. Why are there such differences between these regions? What, if anything, can be learned and applied from the transitions in Southeast Asia? These questions are answered here as Asia's experience is contrasted with the Arab revolts and the struggle of the different countries in the MENA region to fashion a new social contract between states and citizens.

Towards Better Disagreement: Religion and Atheism in Dialogue

Paul Hedges. Jessica Kingsley Publishers: 2016. ISBN: 9781785920578

Are atheists immoral? Does religion cause conflict? Is religion always opposed to science?

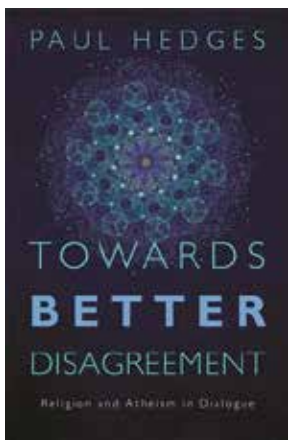
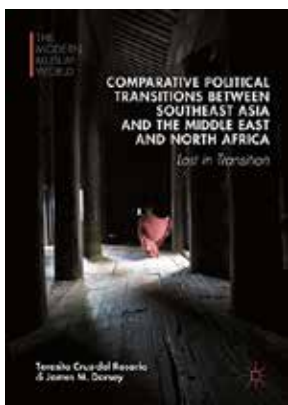
Boldly paving the way for constructive dialogue between atheists and religious believers, Paul Hedges tackles issues such as the treatment of women, the idea of a pure and empirical realm of 'science', and the association of religion with violence and warfare, debunking the myths and exposing the futility of the battle between 'reason' and 'belief'.

Threading deftly between atheism, the major world religions of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, and smaller groups such as Paganism, Hedges demonstrates a vast scope for agreement and interaction between them which will call to every open minded reader.

The Discursive Construction of Southeast Asia in 19th Century Colonial-Capitalist Discourse

Farish A. Noor. Amsterdam University Press: 2016. ISBN: 9789089648846

The nations of Southeast Asia today are rapidly integrating economically and politically, but that integration is also counterbalanced by forces ranging from hyper-nationalism to disputes over cultural ownership throughout the region. Those forces, Farish A. Noor argues in this book, have their roots in the region's failure to come to a critical understanding of how current national and cultural identities in the region came about. To remedy that, Noor offers a close account of the construction of Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century by the forces of capitalism and imperialism, and shows how that construct remains a potent aspect of political, economic, and cultural disputes today.



THINK TANK

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UPCOMING EVENTS

16 NOVEMBER 2016

RSIS-NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES (IFS) WORKSHOP ON "NAVIES, COASTGUARDS, THE MARITIME COMMUNITY AND INTERNATIONAL STABILITY"

18 NOVEMBER 2016

WORKSHOP BY MILITARY TRANSFORMATIONS PROGRAMME AND MARITIME SECURITY PROGRAMME ON "ARMS RACING IN ASIA"

22 NOVEMBER 2016

RSIS-ROK EMBASSY CONFERENCE

23-24 NOVEMBER 2016

NTS CENTRE WORKSHOP ON "TOWARDS RESILIENT CITIES, GREEN URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS: DYNAMICS OF THE JUST CITY, THE RIGHT TO THE CITY, AND FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY"

28 NOVEMBER 2016

WORKSHOP BY CHINA PROGRAMME ON "SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE MANAGEMENT"

1 DECEMBER 2016

ROUNDTABLE BY REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMME ON "THE TRAJECTORY OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA TERRITORIAL DISPUTES: A MULTILATERAL PERSPECTIVE"

14 DECEMBER 2016

RSIS LUNCHEON SEMINAR BY MR EMIRZA ADI SYAILENDRA ON "MODERNISING WITHIN CONSTRAINT: THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC CULTURE IN SHAPING THE INDONESIAN ARMY'S PARTIAL ADOPTION OF MILITARY INNOVATION"