



Image by Nhac Nguyen/AFP

## WHAT'S NEW

The year 2024 saw a series of significant events that highlighted the continuing importance of stronger policy responses to the various non-traditional security challenges facing the world.

It witnessed the global temperatures hitting a record high, with average variations exceeding 1.5°C above pre-industrial level for the first time. In early September, Super Typhoon Yagi, the strongest typhoon in Southeast Asia in decades, hit the Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar, triggering humanitarian emergency situations from resulting massive flooding, landslides, and heavy infrastructural damages. Similarly, earlier in July, Typhoon Gaemi hit Taiwan and the Philippines, affecting more than 6 million people in the Philippines alone. On the health front, in August, the World Health Organization declared mpox a public health emergency of global significance, underscoring the lingering threats of disease spread at an international scale, witnessed most pronouncedly during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, last year marked the first year of Gaza conflict, the second year of Russia war in Ukraine, and the third year of civil war in Myanmar. Despite numerous attempts to end them, none of these conflicts showed any signs of abatement. Millions of people have been affected, causing not only physical sufferings, but also emotional distress and trauma that will take years, if ever, to heal from. Last year also took the world by surprise, with unexpected transitions of power happening in Bangladesh, Syria, and South Korea, accompanied by periods of escalating tension and instability, and human tragedy most notably in Bangladesh and Syria.

This brief review serves as a reminder that the work to address non-traditional security issues is far from over. It is thus imperative for countries to continue pursuing solutions collectively, keeping in focus the common goals of achieving sustained peace and prosperity, regardless of the multiple pressures that individual countries are grappling with.

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### NEWSLETTER TEAM

Mely Caballero-Anthony and Margareth Sembiring

Designed by Joey Liang

# MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT



Photo Credit: The Quint

We are delighted to see yet another productive time in year 2024. From publications to events and activities, we at the NTS-Asia Consortium continued to voice our thoughts and perspectives within the broader conversations, and strived to influence the policy directions in our respective fields.

This edition's NTS-Asia Newsletter brings our attention to the recent political transformation in Bangladesh, which witnessed the resignation of then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who had ruled the country for fifteen years, in early August 2024. We feature insights from Mohosina Mostofa and Saraf Wasima of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace And Security Studies (BIPSS) as they dived into the different aspects of this significant event. Mohosina Mostofa's *Forging Future*

*Alliances: Bangladesh's Interim Government and the Next Era of Regional Cooperation* zooms in on the pivotal role of the newly installed interim government in recalibrating Bangladesh's foreign policy and domestic stability. Mostofa argued that this transition presents an opportunity to foster trust, transparency and inclusivity at home, which in turn will strengthen the country's relations with neighbours like India, China, and ASEAN members, global players such as the United States, and emerging allies in the Middle East.

While Mostofa focuses on the societal dimension, Saraf Wasima's *Youth-Led Movements: The Impact of Student Protests in Political Change in Bangladesh* explores the enduring power of student activism in driving political reform and democratisation in the country, with

historical roots beginning as early as in the 1950s. It highlights the significance of decentralised youth-led protests in driving changes despite state repression, which had resulted in the downfall of Sheikh Hasina and the establishment of the interim government in Bangladesh.

Together, these essays paint a multifaceted view of a nation in flux and invite us to reflect on the dynamic interplay of forces that shape governance, underscoring the country's potential to emerge stronger, more inclusive, and globally influential after the period of turmoil that preceded the transition.

Warmest regards,  
Mely Caballero-Anthony  
Secretary-General

## Researcher Profile

### Mohosina Mostofa

Mohosina Mostofa is a Research Assistant at the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS). She holds a Bachelor of Social Science (BSS) and a Master of Social Science (MSS) degree in International Relations from Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP). Several commentaries authored by her have been published on the BIPSS website, addressing a wide range of contemporary issues, including geopolitics, security challenges, climate security, and the impact of artificial intelligence on global politics. In addition to her expertise in international security and policy, she has a focused research interest

in gender studies. Her academic work has produced notable research on gender-based issues; her BSS and MSS thesis projects addressed significant challenges women face, specifically sexual harassment on public transportation and verbal abuse in corporate settings. Both projects involved the collection of primary data as she prefers evidence-based research. She is open to collaborative research opportunities with member organisations of the NTS-Asia Consortium, particularly those that align with her expertise and research interests in traditional and non-traditional security issues and also gender studies.



**Mohosina Mostofa**  
Research Assistant  
Bangladesh Institute of Peace and  
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# REFLECTIONS

## Forging Future Alliances: Bangladesh's Interim Government and the Next Era of Regional Cooperation

by Mohosina Mostofa

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS)



Photo Credit: Inkstick Media

As Bangladesh's interim government takes charge following Sheikh Hasina's resignation, the country finds itself in a significant transitional phase with new opportunities to redefine its regional and global relationships. With a strategic position between South and Southeast Asia, Bangladesh now has a moment to recalibrate its foreign policy, focusing on a balanced approach that engages neighbors like India, China, and Myanmar, as well as ASEAN members and other global powers. This moment allows Bangladesh to not only strengthen its alliances but also shape its role as a bridge in the region. The interim government's careful diplomacy will be essential for crafting a legacy of influence and stability for the next generation, ensuring the nation's standing amid a complex global environment of economic competition, security issues, and climate challenges.

Internally, Bangladesh must prioritise stability to successfully project itself externally. The new government should first build domestic trust, emphasising transparency and inclusive governance to reassure citizens that it serves all, not just select groups. Stability at home will foster stronger international engagement, allowing the interim government to introduce a "New Bangladesh" to the global stage, one that highlights inclusive economic growth, cooperation in security, and climate resilience. Such an approach will help Bangladesh balance ties with both regional and global powers, demonstrating

its commitment to sustainable partnerships that genuinely benefit the broader population.

Regarding specific relationships, the interim government must carefully manage ties with India. Although Bangladesh's previous administration was aligned closely with India, issues such as the Teesta water dispute and border killings remain unresolved. Given India's prior support for Sheikh Hasina, the interim government may need to navigate tensions, ensuring that its approach aligns with national interests while reassuring India of continued collaboration. Similarly, Bangladesh's relationship with China, a key investor under the Belt and Road Initiative, will require tact. China is committed to its projects in Bangladesh, so the interim government should prioritise transparent cooperation and explore further collaborations in education and technology to ensure a balanced relationship that upholds both countries' interests.

With the U.S., Bangladesh's economic and trade partnership remains vital. The U.S. has raised concerns over labor rights and democratic practices, which the interim government can address through open dialogue to preserve the \$9 billion trade relationship. Balancing relationships with India, China, and the U.S. will require a neutral stance and active diplomacy, which the interim government can achieve by positioning Bangladesh as an open, collaborative partner. Additionally,

Bangladesh can strengthen alliances beyond its traditional partners, notably with Middle Eastern countries, where the Bangladeshi workforce plays a crucial economic role.

And last but not the least, the Rohingya refugee crisis remains an important issue for Bangladesh's foreign policy. Hosting over a million refugees presents a considerable challenge, and the interim government must push for sustainable solutions, including safe repatriation. Maintaining international support and strengthening border security will help manage the regional impact of the ongoing Myanmar conflict.

In conclusion, Bangladesh's interim government stands at a critical juncture, with a unique opportunity to reshape its diplomatic stance and enhance its influence in both regional and global spheres. By prioritising a balanced foreign policy that carefully navigates ties with key allies and new partners while addressing pressing domestic challenges, the government can create a foundation of stability and progress. This strategic approach can solidify Bangladesh's reputation as a reliable and autonomous actor on the world stage. The steps taken during this transitional period will likely determine Bangladesh's trajectory for years to come, setting the tone for sustainable development and regional cooperation that benefits its citizens and contributes to regional harmony.

# Researcher Profile

## Saraf Wasima

Saraf Wasima is a Research Assistant at the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), where she manages projects involving international collaborations on critical topics like climate change and security, security studies, and contemporary global challenges. She holds both a master's and bachelor's degree in International Relations from Bangladesh University of Professionals. Her research spans diverse areas including gender studies, climate change, migration, security issues, and regional matters in Bangladesh, particularly those related to the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Rohingya Crisis.

She has a strong record of academic publications, having contributed three articles to internationally peer-reviewed journals, with her most recent publication appearing in a Scopus-indexed Q1 journal by Taylor and Francis. Her earlier work was also published in Scopus Q2 journals

by the Taylor and Francis. Additionally, she has contributed several insightful commentaries to BIPSS, covering topics such as disinformation, cyber warfare, and issues affecting both Bangladesh and global security landscapes.

Her master's thesis on gender-related issues in non-traditional security reflects her commitment to exploring security from a gendered lens, adding a critical dimension to her research portfolio. Her work not only broadens the scope of traditional security studies but also emphasises the human and social factors integral to comprehensive security analysis.

For research collaborations, her expertise aligns well with other NTS-Asia members, particularly in areas such as climate change adaptation, gender and security, migration studies, and disinformation in the digital age. Her focus on interdisciplinary and



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globally relevant topics makes her a valuable collaborator for addressing shared challenges and advancing innovative approaches within the NTS-Asia research community. She is open to collaborative research opportunities with other NTS-Asia members, embracing various aspects of non-traditional security and contemporary international issues.

## REFLECTIONS

### Youth-Led Movements: The Impact of Student Protests in Political Change in Bangladesh

by Saraf Wasima

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS)

The political landscape of Bangladesh has long been influenced by youth-led movements, with student activism playing a crucial role in bringing about significant change. From the Language Movement in 1952, which successfully advocated for Bengali as a state language, to the Liberation War of 1971, where students were at the forefront, youth activism has consistently proven its power. Recent protests, such as the 2018 Road Safety and Quota Reform Movements, and most notably, the 2024 Quota Reform Movement, highlights how student voices continue to drive political reform and challenge the systems.

The historical role of student activism in Bangladesh highlights a unique legacy of youth-led movements shaping policy and holding leaders accountable. In 1952, students mobilised for linguistic recognition, a movement that is still observed as



Photo Credit: Reuters

International Mother Language Day. The 1971 Liberation War further exemplified the role of students in mobilising support for independence and taking active roles in guerrilla warfare. In 2013, the Shahbagh Movement saw thousands rally to demand harsher penalties for war criminals, emphasising the power of public support for student-led initiatives. The movement's success in achieving its goals, including the sentencing of war criminal Abdul Quader Mollah to death, marked a milestone. The 2018 Road Safety Movement followed, sparked by the tragic deaths of two students in a road accident. This movement led to significant policy changes, including

the enactment of the Road Safety Act of 2018. Similarly, the 2018 Quota Reform Movement advocated for reducing the existing 56% job quota to a more merit-based system, leading to reforms announced by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The 2024 Quota Reform Movement marked a pivotal moment in Bangladesh's political history. Students organised in a decentralised manner, focusing on widespread issues like fairness in employment. The government's repressive measures, including internet shutdowns and violent crackdowns, were widely criticised both nationally and internationally. Despite these challenges, the movement culminated

in the resignation of the government on August 5, highlighting the strength of decentralised organisation and broad public support. The movement's victory led to the establishment of an interim government that pledged to address the quota system and transition toward a merit-based system.

A combination of public discontent, media influence, and resilient leadership contributed to the success of these protests. Public backing has been essential, with support from NGOs, civil society, and the general public reinforcing the legitimacy of the students' demands. Media and social media played a vital role in the 2024 Quota Reform Movement, despite government-imposed internet restrictions. Offline communication apps allowed students to organise protests, while real-time media coverage highlighted government repression and amplified the movement's reach.

The role of decentralised leadership cannot be overstated. The 2024 movement, like earlier ones, benefited from an

adaptable, leaderless structure that made coordination across the country possible. Informal networks and social media enabled students to mobilise quickly and respond flexibly to challenges, allowing the movement to persist despite intense opposition. The Bangladesh General Students' Rights Protection Council was instrumental in organizing protests without central leadership, giving the movement resilience and widespread appeal.

However, student movements in Bangladesh face significant challenges. State repression, including police violence, arrests, and internet censorship, poses risks to student activists. Internal divisions, often arising from differing views on movement goals or negotiation strategies, can also weaken collective action. Additionally, political parties occasionally try to coopt student protests to further their agendas, which can dilute the movement's purpose and alienate supporters. Despite these challenges, student protests have demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt and sustain momentum over time. Beyond immediate political changes,

student movements in Bangladesh have long-term impacts on the democratic process. By challenging authoritarian practices and advocating for transparency, these protests contribute to the country's broader democratisation efforts. The 2024 Quota Reform Movement, for instance, led to a shift in leadership, with an interim government now focused on political reform. Student activism serves as a training ground for future leaders and promotes civic participation, empowering citizens to demand accountability from their government.

The legacy of student activism in Bangladesh points to an enduring influence on the country's political trajectory. As Bangladesh navigates its democratic journey under a new interim government, there is a strong case for fostering youth participation in policy-making and promoting civic education. The resilience, adaptability, and determination of youth-led movements highlight the vital role that young people play in shaping a fairer, more inclusive future for the nation.

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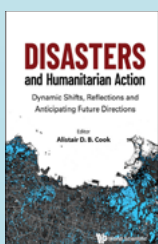
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## PAST EVENT SUMMARIES

### Bangladesh Institute of Peace & Security Studies (BIPSS)

#### **Turbulent Water: Navigating Maritime Security in a Divided Indo-Pacific**

At the Bay of Bengal Conversation, organised by the Centre for Governance Studies, Major General A N M Muniruzzaman (retd), President of BIPSS, joined a distinguished panel of experts in a session titled “Turbulent Water: Navigating Maritime Security in a Divided Indo-Pacific.”

He analysed the evolving dynamics of regional alliances like QUAD (US, India, Australia, Japan), suggesting the possibility of an expanded ‘QUAD+’ or ‘QUAD++’ strategy to counter China’s rise. He also highlighted the strategic importance of AUKUS (Australia, UK, US) in addressing Indo-Pacific security challenges.

He also touched upon the role of other countries in the region such as China, India and the various strategic priorities for countries like Bangladesh. He also elaborated on the strategic significance of the Bay of Bengal.



#### **Climate Change and Security: Addressing Potential Instabilities in Bangladesh – 27 Nov 2024**

The Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS), with funding from the European Union, hosted an impactful

workshop on Climate Change and Security: Addressing Potential Instabilities in Bangladesh. The event brought together policymakers, researchers, journalists, NGO officials, students, and senior security officials from key agencies, including the Environment Ministry, Bangladesh Police, Ansar and Village Defence Forces, Fire Service, Army, Directorate General of Forces Intelligence, and Border Guards Bangladesh.

The main speakers for the event were Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS and Dr. Kawser Ahmed, Adjunct Professor, University of Manitoba, and additional video presentations were delivered by Dr. Chad Briggs, Professor, Department of Development Studies, Asian Institute of Management, Manila and

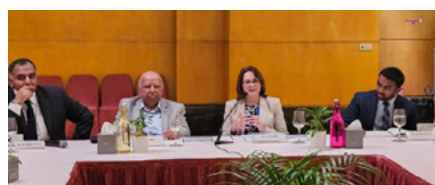
Major General (Retd.) Joseph G. Singh, MSS, MSc, FCMI, FRGS. Special Assistant to the President of Guyana and Former Chief of Defence Staff of the Guyana Defence Force. The workshop explored how climate change acts as a “threat multiplier,” exacerbating vulnerabilities like resource scarcity, displacement, and socio-economic instability. Discussions emphasised the proactive roles of civil and military security sectors in disaster preparedness, resilience-building, and fostering global cooperation to address these pressing challenges.

The workshop highlighted innovative strategies such as integrating climate policies into security frameworks, leveraging tools like the Climate Security Mechanism, adopting renewable energy, and promoting localised interventions. Participants also discussed the importance of bridging gaps in policy making, improving disaster readiness, and fostering collaboration across sectors.

This timely initiative underscored the need for informed, coordinated action to protect vulnerable nations like Bangladesh and build sustainable resilience against climate-induced threats.



### South Asia's Democratic Trajectory and Regional Geopolitical Challenges



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) and the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) co-hosted a dynamic closed-door roundtable focusing on South Asia's democratic trajectory and regional geopolitical challenges. The discussion brought together distinguished experts, policymakers, and academics to address key themes such as governance reforms, regional stability, and the shifting dynamics of the Indo-Pacific. The session opened with a deep dive into the evolving democratic trends in South Asia and the impact of strategic power

shifts involving the US, China, and India.

Participants explored critical issues including electoral and judicial reforms, combating disinformation, and ensuring accountability in governance. The conversation also touched on the importance of fostering inclusive political processes, countering extremist narratives, and addressing misinformation campaigns affecting regional relations. Discussions emphasised the need for robust foreign policy frameworks, transparency in governance, and the role of democratic values in fostering stability and growth.

### Post-Monsoon Revolution: Navigating a New World Order



On 23 November 2024, BIPSS Lecture Club hosted a thought-provoking session on “Post-Monsoon Revolution: Navigating a New World Order”, featuring Dr. Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury as the chief speaker. The event brought together a distinguished audience, including ambassadors, journalists, academics, and policy experts, to discuss how the global landscape is shifting and what it means for countries like Bangladesh.

The session delved into fundamental changes in the international system driven by the rise of China, the evolution of multilateralism, technological advancements, and climate change. Dr. Chowdhury drew parallels between Bangladesh's recent revolution and historical movements, presenting a vision of “Bangladesh 2.0” and emphasising the country's potential in this new era. He highlighted three possible foreign policy approaches for Bangladesh: following larger powers, becoming strategically resilient, or isolating itself—an option deemed impractical due to global interdependence.

The discussion also addressed US-China relations as the defining feature of current geopolitics and how smaller states like Bangladesh can navigate these dynamics while leveraging their strengths in multilateral platforms and soft power. With questions from the audience, the session explored the challenges of formulating

people-centric foreign policies and engaging with neighboring countries like India amidst regional tensions.

The event concluded with a call for Bangladesh to rise above challenges and harness its unique capabilities to carve out a significant role on the global stage.

### Restoring People's Voting Rights: The Role of the Electoral System Reform Commission



The Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) convened a pivotal Policy Café titled “Restoring People's Voting Rights: The Role of the Electoral System Reform Commission” at The Westin Dhaka. This significant event brought together a diverse group of esteemed policymakers, leading academics, and dedicated civil society representatives to engage in critical discussions about the urgent need for comprehensive electoral reforms in our nation.

In his opening remarks, Major General ANM Muniruzzaman (Retd), President of BIPSS, underscored the essential role that free and fair elections play as the bedrock of a thriving democracy. He powerfully stated, “Without credible elections, governance loses legitimacy.” This sentiment resonated throughout the gathering, highlighting the collective recognition that the integrity of our electoral process is fundamental to the sovereignty and rights of every citizen.

In this opening remarks, Mr. Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS underscored the fact that the Bangladeshi electorate have not been able to vote properly in 3 consecutive elections. He also underscored the need for restoring people's voting rights and ensuring that the next election will be free, fair, transparent and genuine reflecting the will of the people of the country.

Prof. Badiul Alam Majumder, Head of the Electoral System Reform Commission, shared an in-depth analysis of the commission's objectives and ongoing efforts. He articulated actionable strategies to ensure transparent and

inclusive elections, stressing that the integrity of the Election Commission and its ability to function independently is critical to regaining public confidence. Prof. Majumder also highlighted the need for technological integration and the significance of engaging marginalised communities, thereby ensuring that our electoral process reflects the rich diversity of our nation.

The discussions at the Policy Café also delved into the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach to electoral reform. Participants explored how collaboration among government bodies, political parties, civil society organisations, and the international community is vital for creating a robust framework for electoral integrity. It was clear that restoring public trust in our electoral system requires concerted efforts from all sectors of society.

General Muniruzzaman concluded with a call to action stating, "Restoring voting rights is not merely about procedural reform; it is about rebuilding trust in the democratic process. The Policy Café was attended by Ambassadors, senior officials, diplomats from various missions, academics, editors, members of the civil society, representatives of major political parties and student coordinators, among others.

### Small Group Socialisation on Climate Change and Security 03 Oct 2024



The Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) recently organised a second "small group socialisation" at Hotel Renaissance Dhaka as part of the EU-funded project "Climate Change and Security: Addressing Potential Instabilities in Bangladesh." Moderated by Major General ANM Muniruzzaman (retd), President at BIPSS, the event highlighted climate change as a critical security issue, with participants from the EU, International Partners, security institutions, civil society, and researchers.

Key discussions centered on the securitisation of climate change, emphasising its destabilising effects,

including displacement and conflict. Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS, noted Bangladesh's focus on ecological rather than security aspects of climate change. The military's role in managing climate-induced threats was recognised, but the report advised against militarising responses, advocating for a collaborative approach involving the government, NGOs, and the private sector.

The interactive session raised critical geopolitical challenges, particularly the reluctance of countries like India to engage in multilateral water management frameworks, which hampers basin-wide solutions for shared rivers. The session concluded by urging Bangladesh to integrate climate change into its national security strategies and promote civil-military cooperation to address climate-related security risks.

### Bangladesh 2.0: A New Security Agenda for the Interim Government



The Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) organised a roundtable on "Bangladesh 2.0: A New Security Agenda for the Interim Government" at The Westin, Dhaka.

The event featured prominent speakers, including Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan, ndc, psc (Retd), Former Associate Editor and Editor of Defense & Strategic Affairs at The Daily Star; Major General Md Shahidul Haque, psc (Retd), Former Defense Attaché to Myanmar and Former Ambassador to Libya; and Mr. Shafqat Munir, Head of BCTR and Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS. Each shared their expert insights on the challenges facing Bangladesh.

BIPSS President Maj Gen (retd) ANM Muniruzzaman opened the discussion by stating the importance of a comprehensive and forward-thinking security agenda to ensure a smooth transition to democracy and addressing emerging threats like cyber and climate security. He also paid tribute to the Armed forces for their pivotal role in upholding the Constitution and ensuring the security of the nation during this critical transitional period.

Lt Gen Abdul Hafiz (Retd), special assistant

to the Chief Advisor of the interim government of Bangladesh for Defence and National Solidarity was present at the roundtable and shared his valuable thoughts on the subject.

Brig Gen Shahedul Anam Khan emphasised the importance of identifying security threats, both internal and external, before developing a security agenda and stressed the need for depoliticising the security forces and intelligence services.

Maj Gen Md Shahidul Haque highlighted the necessity for Bangladesh to engage with non-state actors like the Arakan Army and advocated for a geo-strategic approach to the Myanmar crisis while prioritising national sovereignty.

Mr Shafqat Munir emphasised the need for a full-time National Security Advisor, a fully empowered national security coordination secretariat, and the need for greater politico-military coordination especially at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in view of Bangladesh's widespread overseas operations especially peacekeeping operations.

The roundtable also delved into critical issues such as border security, the Rohingya crisis, and managing the nation's debt. Former Chief of the Army Staff, ambassadors, senior diplomats, representatives of various ministries and government agencies, members of civil society, media personnel and academics as well as several coordinators of the Student against Discrimination movement among others were present.

BIPSS will organise a series of discussions in the coming weeks and months focused on the Monsoon Revolution, with a particular emphasis on shaping the future of Bangladesh.

### Small Group Socialisation on Climate Change and Security



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) recently organised a "small group socialisation" at the Hotel Renaissance Dhaka. It was one of the first activities of the European Union (EU) funded project on "Climate Change and



Security: Addressing Potential Instabilities in Bangladesh". The discussion was under the moderation of Major General ANM Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc, (retd), President, BIPSS, who commenced the discussion by implying the potentiality of climate change issue on a wider prospect. Representatives from EU, IFES, security institutions, civil society, community group members and researchers were also present in the program.

In the opening remarks, the concept of securitisation due to the vastness of impacts of climate change were firmly articulated, which later rolled onto the nuanced understanding of the issue. Climate change is not a traditional security concern, but rather an issue that may reach the point of securitisation, with the specific dynamics varying across different countries. The impact of climate change is immense and pervasive because it is not limited to a single sector, but rather encompasses multifaceted stresses that permeate various aspects of human life. Mr. Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow at BIPSS, addressed the non-linearity of the impacts posed by climate change.

During the interactive session, a wide range of insights were brought forward. Geopolitical implication, national instabilities at the time of climate crisis, grassroot methodologies in fighting with climate-induced disasters, water scarcity for embankment projects on the main rivers as well as pollution, were highly focused in the discussion. Moreover, the linkage between climate change and vulnerable groups was introduced.

Severe human activity, change in the monsoon period, sea-level rise, salinity intrusion, hydro conflict on regional rivers, corruption, all result in rattling the stability of the country. It was recommended to put an uninterrupted focus to these issues otherwise the consequences will be unpredictable and overwhelming.

### Sri Lankan Economic Crisis: Lessons for the region



Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) has recently organised a lecture on "Sri Lankan Economic Crisis:

Lessons for the region" at Hotel Lake Castle. The honorable guest speaker, Rehana Thowfeek, is a distinguished economist and Director of Civic Education at Arutha which is an economic policy think tank in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She presented insightful findings from the crisis, what led to the crisis, what were the implications and what can be learnt from the crisis. The moderator of the discussion was Major General ANM Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc, (retd), President, BIPSS. Former ambassadors, representatives from different organizations have attended the program.

The speaker assured the recovering of Sri Lanka from the crisis with a gradual pace. She introduced the key factors that led to the crisis. Easter Bombing, Covid-19, structural difficulties struck the tourism-oriented country with a devious blow to its economy. Increasing prices, bulging external debt, faulty policies, corruption resulted altogether in revolt against the government. Despite all the discrepancies, with the help of IMF's bailout package, Sri Lanka's economy started keeping up the pace. She also recommended some insightful learnings for other regional countries in case of such an economic crisis. It was an all-round discussion that ended in fruitful learnings and perceptions.

During the interactive session, more nuanced discussion took place regarding the role of media, think tanks, civil societies, how the bridge between think tanks and policy makers can be made, and how civic education on economic policies can deter such crises. Moreover, focus on governance was placed accordingly to come out of any crises.

### 37th Asia Pacific Roundtable (APR) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



President BIPSS Major General A N M Muniruzzaman, ndc, psc (Retd) and Mr Shafqat Munir, Senior Research Fellow BIPSS & Head of BCTR, attended the 37th Asia Pacific Roundtable (APR) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. General Muniruzzaman also spoke on the panel titled "Reframing the global climate discourse". In his deliberation, he particularly stressed on the wide-ranging security implications

of climate change and the urgent need to build international response mechanisms to cope with the threat.

The APR is one of the oldest and largest security conferences in Asia. This year, the conference was addressed by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, the Foreign Minister of Malaysia, the Secretary General of ASEAN, and many other international dignitaries. Delegates to the conference included diplomats, academics, editors, think tank policy community, senior government officials and others.

### Is Myanmar Unraveling? Implications for Bangladesh and the Region



The Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS) hosted a compelling Policy Circle discussion titled "Is Myanmar Unraveling? Implications for Bangladesh and the Region" at The Westin Dhaka on February 22nd. The distinguished panelists, Md. Touhid Hossain, Former Foreign Secretary; Major General Md Shahidul Haque, Former Defence Attaché to Myanmar & Former Ambassador to Libya, and Mr Sudeep Chakravarti, Director of the Center for South Asian Studies (C-SAS) at ULAB and author of 'The Eastern Gate', brought their unique perspectives to the fore.

In his welcome remarks, Mr. Shafqat Munir, BIPSS Senior Research Fellow, set the tone for the event, highlighting the urgency of understanding the dynamics in Myanmar. The moderator of the event Major General A N M Muniruzzaman, President, BIPSS, provided a sobering introduction, contextualising Myanmar's pivotal role within the region and its ongoing internal strife marked by the emergence of the Brotherhood Alliance.

Md. Touhid Hossain characterised the situation as a nascent civil war, with the Tatmadaw facing both armed insurgencies and civilian opposition. Major General Md Shahidul Haque provided a comprehensive analysis of the current situation in Myanmar, addressing the distinct dynamics at play along its borders and the contrasting nature of conflicts in the eastern and western regions.

Click [here](#) to read more.

## Shaping a Peaceful and Resilient Future: A Discussion on Gender Equality, Masculinity, Social Protection and Peacebuilding in Conflict-affected Areas

26 September 2024

The Research to Policy Forum titled “Shaping a Peaceful and Resilient Future: A Conversation on Gender Equality, Masculinity, and Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Areas” aims to shed light on pressing issues related to masculinity and gender equality in the context of conflict and peacebuilding in Aceh.

The theme explores the findings and recommendations presented in the policy brief “Gender Equality, Masculinity, and Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Areas”.

The discussion will focus on the connection between perceptions of gendered division of labor and social, political, and educational status with post-conflict peacebuilding. Additionally, it will seek input, ideas, and suggestions for the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, aiming to incorporate more equitable perspectives from diverse experiences and cases.

## Just Energy Transition in Indonesia: Enhancing the Role of Local Governments

June 26, 2024

The Indonesian government has set a target of reducing emissions by

31.89% independently and 43.20% with international support, which is expected to be in line with the vision of Net Zero Emissions by 2050. The role of local governments has become crucial following the enactment of Presidential Regulation No. 11 of 2023, which provides local governments with additional authority in managing new and renewable energy.

Thus, local governments have the space to participate in the energy transition agenda, and their ability to fill this role is key to a just energy transition. How can the role of local governments be maximised in driving the energy transition? How can local governments strengthen their capacity to facilitate a just energy transition?

## Improving Community Welfare in Marine Protected Areas

June 20, 2024

Coastal communities continue to face numerous socio-economic challenges, with many still living below the poverty line. This situation is quite alarming considering that Indonesia is one of the countries with the longest coastline and the largest producer of wild-caught fisheries in the world.

Therefore, the question arises as to how conservation areas should be managed to improve the well-being of coastal communities and ensure environmental sustainability.

## Capacity Building for Education Stakeholders: Knowledge Sharing and Workshop to Support Quality and Inclusive Education

21 February 2024



Collaboration among diverse stakeholders is crucial for enhancing education access and quality in Indonesia. To advance this agenda, SMERU, a research institute that has conducted multiple studies on education, held a knowledge exchange and workshop aimed at fostering a holistic approach to understanding the education landscape. Attendees, representing various facets of the education sector, included policymakers, researchers, and practitioners from both the Local Education Group (LEG) and other relevant institutions. [Click here to download speakers' presentations.](#)

## Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)

### Virtual Workshop Series on Unarmed Civilian Protection with Nonviolent Peaceforce | October-November 2024

In partnership with Geneva-based NGO, Nonviolent Peaceforce, WISCOMP kickstarted a one-of-its-kind virtual workshop series on Unarmed Civilian Protection, a community-based and civilian-led approach practiced in different conflict zones across the world. These sessions bring together distinguished peace practitioners, young students and scholars from South Asia to deliberate on different practices to nurture trust and coexistence using nonviolent methods and strategies.

### Our Voice: Performance on Women, War and Peace



WISCOMP's 25th-anniversary celebration was marked by a unique multilogue performance on women, war and peace, *Our Voice*, curated by renowned Indian classical dancer, Geeta Chandran. *Our Voice* was a celebration of resilience and hope in the midst of the challenges of conflict and disruption so prevalent in today's embattled world and images of

which are seen every day on our screens. Using the metaphor of water as a leitmotif for recovery and resurgence, *Our Voice* wove women's resistance to violence into the tapestry of peace and a poetic symphony emerged from the everyday rhythms of reclaiming voice and space.

### The Mediative Approach: The Road Ahead for Manipur



Celebrating the International Day of Peace, WISCOMP organised a collaborative

dialogue with Mr. G.K. Pillai, former Home Secretary of India and Ambassador Shyam Saran, former Foreign Secretary of India outlining possible roadmaps on mediation and restoration of community ties in Manipur. Through a very engaged interaction with the audience, the Dialogue explored the role of a “mediative approach” in building bridges across ethnic and communal fault lines by citizen bodies.

## Celebrating 25 years of WISCOMP



On July 19th, 2024, Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), an initiative of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama marked the beginning of 25 years of an exhilarating journey of amplifying the voices of South Asian women on Peace and Security.

## Beyond 1325: Women and Mediation



The second dialogue in the series of ‘Conversations on Mediation’ featured a roundtable with scholars, peacebuilders and students. The roundtable featured presentations by eminent speakers as Kapil Kak, Air Vice Marshall (Retd), Sushobha Barve, Executive Secretary, Centre for Dialogue & Reconciliation, Dr. Pallavi Raghavan, Assistant Professor, Ashoka University, Dr. Soumita Basu, Associate Professor, South Asian University, Prof. Nimmi Kurian, Professor, Centre for Policy Research, Dr. Arvinder Singh, Director, Ashoka Centre for Well Being, Aastha Singh, Vice Chair of Peace Action Network, YPO on issues related to conflict and its mediation through a gender lens followed by discussions and a question and answer session.

Some of the questions raised at the roundtable are- How do we understand women’s agency during periods of armed conflict? What are some of the roles women play as participants within an armed movement or armed conflict? What factors complicate the participation of women

in peace building before, during and after conflict? What difference do women make in dialogue processes across difficult faultlines? What are some of the best examples of successful mediation in South Asia and how might such lessons feed into the larger body of useful mediation practices? Where are the community women in such mediation processes?

Envisioned as a series of curated public lectures, roundtables, panel discussions, interactive dialogues, film discussions and performances, WISCOMP Dialogues: Conversations on Mediation attempt to demystify the theory and practice of mediation as applied to the arena of peace building.

These dialogues will highlight several innovative mediation formats and practices used across the world demonstrating the efficacy and relevance of mediations in situations of violence. This series attempts to bring together established practitioners across the world to share insights and innovations in the field of peace mediation and the critical importance of integrating gender into all such initiatives.

## Women Building Peace: From the Local to the International



The world continues to grapple with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and other major upheavals, including climate change and increased geopolitical volatility – the war in Palestine, Ukraine and continuing instability in Afghanistan, among others. In the midst of increasing legitimacy for muscular politics and militarization and the waning power of the UN to quell humanitarian crises, it is important to reflect on women’s role vis a vis global, national and local levels. How if at all do they respond to the pressing need to ‘build peace’?

EU-WISCOMP dialogue, Women Building Peace: From the Local to the International offered space on exchanging best practices on how women build peace from the local to the international levels. Experiences and case studies from theatres of conflict from Rwanda to Sri Lanka were used to identify both the challenges and the possibilities that women’s peacebuilding entails. The

speakers – diplomats, civil society actors, media persons and academics looked at how women build peace through a multi-chromatic lens. Some of our speakers included, Ambassador of the Netherlands to India, Marissa Gerards, Ambassador Lakshmi Puri, Deputy Head of Mission of Italy to India, Marcella Zaccagnino, Editor Shillong Times, Patricia Mukhim, Assistant Director-Research at United Services Institute, Dr. Roshan Khanijo and other dignitaries.

The deliberation foregrounded the following questions:

- In the largely male space of foreign policy, is a gender lens changing the way in which strategic issues are being discussed?
- How have women diplomats fostered linkages between grassroots initiatives and international forums?
- What change has women’s inclusion in UN Peacekeeping brought about? What are some of the challenges that women peacekeepers face?
- During situations of violence, how do women build bridges of understanding between groups? What techniques of dialogue and reconciliation have they used? What special skills and perspectives do they bring that are otherwise not available?
- How have women media persons contributed to building peace? What does responsible journalism require of them in situations of intra and inter-state conflicts?
- What are the implications of the macro level changes at the UN level on peacebuilding and gender responsiveness?
- How can a new Global Compact, i.e. “Our Common Future” be informed in a manner that alters the global architecture to be more just and inclusive?

It is WISCOMP’s hope that such dialogues will create synergy between the peacebuilding work of women at the local level and the international forums. Drawing on best practices from the EU and India, the deliberations will explore how this synergy can be channeled to create a hospitable environment for women’s leadership in the local, national and international policy spaces.



### Asian Think Tank Forum: Digitalisation as an Opportunity for Inclusive Growth in Asia and the Pacific

02-03 October, 2024

CSIS Indonesia together with The Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), and in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), is convening its annual ATTN Forum under the theme "Digitalization as an Opportunity for Inclusive Growth in Asia and the Pacific".

The forum, designed on basis of an earlier call for paper exercise with the same theme. The objective is to enhance capacity of researchers and think tanks in developing countries and promote policy relevant empirical research in a key development issue in the region.

### Transforming ASEAN - Strategies for Achieving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth

15 July, 2024

CSIS Indonesia presents a book launch of "Transforming ASEAN-Strategies for

Achieving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth". This event aims to provide a platform for dialogue and exchange on ASEAN's sustainability pathways

Click [here](#) to watch the podcast.

### Invest in Indonesia's Energy Transition

16 January, 2024

China RE Invest Indonesia is a multi-stakeholder platform established by Tenggara Strategics and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Indonesia, to bring together renewable energy (RE) stakeholders from China and Indonesia, especially RE investors and financiers from China and RE project owners from Indonesia to increase investment into Indonesia's RE sector.

After its successful annual event in the last two years, Tenggara Strategics and CSIS Indonesia, will host the 3rd China RE Invest Indonesia in 2024 in a hybrid way, offline in Jakarta, and online via zoom on January 16, 2024, to keep the momentum of China's renewable energy investment in Indonesia.

Click [here](#) to watch the podcast.

### The 7th KAS-CSIS Germany- Indonesia Strategic Dialogue

Despite increasingly marked by interconnectedness and interdependence, the current global landscape is characterised by a complex web of geopolitical rivalries, economic uncertainties, environmental crises, and unprecedented disruptions brought about by the digital age. In these turbulent times, it is imperative to recognise the significance of regional organisations in preserving stability, fostering economic resilience, ensuring security, and promoting democratic values. They are the building blocks of the international system, playing a crucial role in crisis management, conflict resolution, and cooperation. All the more so in a time of doubts over the effectiveness of global-multilateral organisations.

To accommodate further discussion regarding this matter, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in collaboration with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) will conduct the 7th KAS-CSIS Germany-Indonesia Strategic Dialogue, raising the theme "The Role of Regional Organizations in Times of Crisis: Views from Southeast Asia and Europe."

### 11th Asian Conference on Safety and Education in Laboratory

Mr Julius Trajano, Research Fellow, and Ms Jeselyn, Research Analyst, participated in the 11th Asian Conference on Safety and Education in Laboratory held at Kyushu University School of Medicine in Fukuoka, Japan from 28 to 29 November 2024. This international conference focuses on safety and security in chemical, biological, health and radiological laboratories in Asia. They had discussions with scientists on developing a positive safety culture and a security culture, norms, and practices while pursuing scientific innovations.



### Trilateral Commission Asia-Pacific Group Regional Meeting

Head of NTS Centre, Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, participated in the Trilateral Commission Asia-Pacific Group Regional Meeting held in Manila, Philippines on 22-23 November 2024. Prof Anthony spoke at the panel on 'Climate Change and Energy Policy' highlighting how important it is for the region not to ignore the complex adaptation challenges faced by states in the developing world, while advancing the goal of low-carbon energy policy.



### Humanitarian Futures Forum (HFF) 2024



The Humanitarian Futures Forum (HFF) 2024, co-organised by RSIS | S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies and the Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (Changi RHCC) on 29 October 2024, is in its third iteration. The Forum focused on discussions to strengthen support systems for policy planners and decision-makers with a focus on futures-thinking to better anticipate, prepare for and respond to humanitarian challenges. HFF 2024 brought together over 150 local and overseas participants from militaries, international organisations, government agencies, Non-Government Organisations, academia, civil society, as well as the philanthropic and private sectors.

## Council of Councils (CoC) Fifteenth Regional Conference



On 28 October, Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony spoke as part of the Session 8 panel on 'What does the Rest of the World Expect from the EU?' at the Council of Councils (CoC) fifteenth regional conference and hosted by Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels. In her speech, Prof Mely outlined that as a normative power, it is vital for the EU to strengthen and promote the international Rules-Based Order, especially with the rise of conflicts around the world. The EU must rally behind and advocate multilateral platforms and the UN system to safeguard global peace and security. As the world shifts toward multipolarity, both the EU and ASEAN should work together to adapt multilateralism to integrate these new realities, demonstrating how the Rules-Based Order can be inclusive of the Global South, but yet resilient in upholding its principles of peace and multilateral institutions.

## 25th Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2024)



On 14 October, Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony spoke at the 25th Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2024) at the Grand Copthorne Waterfront, Singapore, on Navigating Regional Uncertainty: Continuity and Change in the ASEAN Way. In her speech, she elaborated on the impacts of geopolitical rivalry on security and the challenges that ASEAN faces to its unity and centrality, with the rise of unilateral arrangements, sense of drift in addressing the South China Sea disputes, the 2021 Myanmar coup and the Rohingya

crisis.

## SWP-RSIS-KAS Workshop on the Emergence of Greater Asia in Energy and Climate

The Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) at RSIS, with the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, co-organised a workshop on "The Emergence of Greater Asia in Energy and Climate" in Singapore from 9 to 10 October 2024. Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of NTS Centre, discussed major trends in energy transition, climate security and geopolitics in Southeast Asia. Mr Julius Cesar Trajano, Research Fellow at NTS Centre, delivered a presentation on the role of small modular nuclear reactors in Southeast Asia's clean energy transition. This workshop brought together 20 experts in geopolitics, energy, and climate security from Europe and Asia to address one of the most pressing questions of our time: How are shifts in geopolitical power, energy policy, and climate governance reshaping Greater Asia?

Workshop participants actively contributed to academic panels, keynote debates, and policy discussions, along with foresight sessions to explore key trends, uncertainties, and potential wild cards — such as climate-induced disasters or conflicts — that could reshape the Asian energy landscape.



## Information Session/meeting with Consortium for Agricultural Development, Research, and Extension (CADRE) in Southeast Asia



On 9th October, NTU was visited by representatives from the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA), which is a specialist organisation established

in 1996 by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), and headquartered in the Philippines. The meeting was chaired by Dr Jose Ma. Luis Montecarlo, Research Fellow (Food Security) at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), with the participation of representatives from members of the NTU Food Community as well as RSIS including Prof Paul Teng (Adjunct Senior Fellow), Mr Eddie Lim (Head of Outreach), and Ms Jeselyn (Research Analyst). SEARCA representatives included Dr Gerlie Tatlonghari, Program Head, Research and Thought Leadership Department (RTLTD), and Ms Bernice Anne D. De Torres, RTLTD Program Coordinator.

The purpose of the visit was to inform the NTU Food Community of a new initiative, the Consortium for Agricultural Development, Research, and Extension (CADRE) in Southeast Asia as a network of high-caliber, like-minded institutions with a unified goal of driving agricultural transformation toward sustainable and inclusive development in Southeast Asia, and to explore potential interest as well. CADRE was first proposed by SEARCA during the 18th ASEAN Technical Working Group on Agricultural Research and Development (ATWGARD) working meeting last 25 April 2024 in Singapore. Underpinning CADRE will be a commitment to research (biological, physical, social, policy) that supports knowledge generation for development and the subsequent extension of this knowledge to stakeholders along the agriculture value chain.

For background, the NTS Centre's Food Team (Dr Montecarlo, Research Fellow, and Prof Teng, Adjunct Senior Fellow) was involved during CADRE's launch at the Regional Stakeholders' Consultation Workshop for CADRE in July 2024, in collaboration with the ASEAN, which was attended by some representatives from ATWGARD as well as various stakeholders from the government, academe, industry, farmers' and civil society. During this meeting, Prof Teng led the Workshop for the Theory of Change, Mission and Vision, which and Dr Montecarlo co-facilitated.

## RSIS-GRIPS Webinar on "Promoting Regional Stability amid Geopolitical Upheavals"

Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony spoke as a panellist alongside Professor Ken Jimbo from Keio University and Managing Director, International House of Japan



during a webinar co-organised by RSIS and the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Japan on 18 September 2024. Prof Mely discussed the impact of current geopolitical upheavals on the region, the impact on ASEAN and recommendations on how to strengthen the existing regional security architecture. Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS, and Professor Narushige Michishita, Executive Vice President and Professor, GRIPS and Director, Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies (YCAPS), Japan delivered the closing remarks.

### RSIS Seminar by Mr Ronaldo Reario



Mr Ronaldo Reario, Visiting Senior Fellow, RSIS, and Lead for Natural, Environmental and Technological (NEaT) Emergencies, Civil-Military Coordination Service of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, held a seminar on Thursday, 29th August 2024. Mr Reario discussed the added value of Civil-Military coordination in optimising the use of available capacity and resilience-building drawing from practical applications in the context of disaster preparedness and response.

### ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM)



The ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM) was held on 23 August at the Marriott Tang Plaza Hotel, Singapore. The event was co-organised by the Singapore Civil Defence Force, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the AHA Centre, with the RSIS HADR Programme and Nexus Resilience Group participating as knowledge partners for the event. The Welcome Remarks were delivered by Mrs. Josephine Teo, Minister for Digital Development and Information and Second Minister for Home Affairs, Republic of

Singapore. The Opening Remarks were given by H.E. Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Ahmaddin bin Haji Abdul Rahman, Minister for Home Affairs, Brunei Darussalam, and Chair of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management 2024. The Secretary-General of ASEAN, H.E. Dr Kao Kim Hourn and the Ambassador of European Union to ASEAN, H.E. Sujiro Seam, also gave remarks. Under the theme "It Takes a Village: Inclusive Approaches to Enhance Disaster Resilience", this year's event allowed stakeholders with a plurality of perspectives on disaster management to discuss and emphasise the importance of engaging the community to enhance disaster resilience in the region.

### RSIS Seminar by Mr Keith Paolo C. Landicho



Mr Keith Paolo C. Landicho, Associate Research Fellow, held a seminar to discuss the progress and prospects of the multi-phase database project of the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADRD) programme. In his presentation, he discussed the factors and dynamics of HADR provision, referencing disaster events from 2018 to 2024. He also discussed civilian-to-military and military-to-military relations by investigating assets and equipment trade, deployment missions, and participation in exercises and training. This highlighted the central and influential actors in the network and how HADR governance is shaped in the region.

### ANU-RSIS Synthetic Biology Ethics Workshop



The NTS Centre co-organised with the Australian National University (ANU) the ANU-RSIS Synthetic Biology Ethics Workshop in Singapore on 15 August 2024. Around 25 biosecurity and synthetic biology experts from various Asia-Pacific countries, including Australia, Singapore and India, discussed key issues and challenges related to potential ethical frameworks for

deployment of synthetic biology in the Asia-Pacific.

### RSIS Roundtable on "The Emerging Biosecurity Landscape in Southeast Asia"



The NTS Centre hosted a roundtable on the emerging biosecurity landscape in Southeast Asia on July 23 and 24, 2024, at One Farrer Hotel in Singapore. The event gathered 25 participants from various fields, representing five Southeast Asian countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. The primary objective of the roundtable was to facilitate a candid exchange of views on the biosecurity risks and challenges facing Southeast Asia, to examine the current state of biosecurity governance in the region, and to recommend policies for improving biosecurity governance moving forward."

### International Conference on Nuclear Security



Julius Trajano, Research Fellow at NTS Centre, attended the International Conference on Nuclear Security, organised by the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria from 20 to 24 May 2024. He delivered a presentation on the role of think-tanks and universities in enhancing nuclear security in Southeast Asia as part of the panel on the role of civil society in nuclear security.

### 2024 Planetary Health Summit and 6th Annual Meeting



On 8 May 2024, Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony was part of two panels with other



internationally distinguished speakers at the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development 2024 organised by SIPRI. She spoke alongside Nathalie Chuard, Juliana Villegas, Sanam Naraghi Anderlini and Yero Baldeh on “Intersecting Crises and Joint Solutions” and on “Ecological Security” with former Foreign Minister of Sweden Margot Wallstrom, Leonardo Simão, Florian Krampe and Dan Smith from SIPRI. The panels engaged in intensive discussions on the intersecting poly-crises of climate change, food security, Ukraine and Gaza crises, developments in the Red Sea, peacebuilding, human security, and international norms.

## 2024 Planetary Health Summit and 6th Annual Meeting



On 19 April 2024, Ambassador Ong Keng Yong launched the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) Report on Climate Change and its Impact on Peace and Security in Southeast Asia at the 2024 Planetary Health Summit and 6th Annual Meeting, held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The report was well received and sparked constructive discussion and dialogue among participants from ASEAN, ASEAN governments, civil society, academia and the private sector.

In addition, RSIS, in partnership with the Sunway Centre for Planetary Health, convened a roundtable discussion on Climate, Peace and Security in ASEAN, as a follow-up to the ASEAN-UN Regional Dialogue on Climate, Peace and Security (AURED VI) in November 2023. Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony presented the report and its key recommendations at the session with participation from a diversity of stakeholders, to identify potential pathways for the implementation of the recommendations.



## RSIS Closed-door Roundtable with Dr Catherine Bragg



The NTS Centre held a closed-door roundtable discussion with Dr Catherine Bragg, Visiting Senior Fellow, RSIS, and Senior Fellow, Monk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto, Canada, on Wednesday, 28th February 2024. Participants discussed the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence in the 21st Century, the dynamics and trajectory of the entities involved in humanitarian work both inside and outside the formal humanitarian system, and the implications for and the role of crisis-affected people and communities.

## Pacific Forum Workshop on Managing the Future Weapons of Mass Destruction Environment of Southeast Asia



Julius Trajano, Research Fellow at NTS Centre, delivered a presentation on national and regional concerns in Southeast Asia related to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons at the Pacific Forum Workshop on Managing the Future Weapons of Mass Destruction Environment of Southeast Asia. The workshop was held in Singapore on 1 February 2024 and was attended by disarmament and security scholars from the Southeast Asian region and the United States.

## Planetary Health Proposal Development Meeting and Workshop



The Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) held a round-up Planetary Health proposal development meeting and workshop at The Key Point, RSIS, on 2 February 2024.

Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, researchers from various fields at Nanyang Technological University from the RSIS, Nanyang Business School (NBS), College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Asian School of the Environment (CoHASS) and Lee Kong Chian (LKC) School of Medicine, discussed and provided inputs to finalise the proposal.

Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies, RSIS delivered the opening remarks. She highlighted that since the COVID-19 pandemic, Planetary Health has gained momentum, with the rise of climate-induced health and biosecurity threats, such as an increase of zoonotic pathogens and CO2 pollution's impact on health. Key research areas of the proposal could include the impact of business activities on the health of the environment and people, issues of climate justice and groups that are vulnerable to Planetary Health-related disruptions.



Margareth Sembiring, Associate Research Fellow, NTS, RSIS, then shared on the project overview and recap, outlining the key research advancements in Planetary Health, as well as the need for more of a focus and buy-in on the protection and conservation of the environment and biodiversity. Jose Ma. Luis P. Montesclaros, Research Fellow, NTS, RSIS, presented the proposal writing briefing and facilitated discussion among the participants. He highlighted the research objectives and questions of the proposal, how the research is relevant to Singapore, and the outcomes which aim to include journal articles and a potential Planetary Health Scorecard. The discussion was fruitful and demonstrated the value of collaboration across different disciplines. Following this meeting, the team plans to submit the proposal for the Social Science Research Thematic Grant (SSRTG) mid this year.