

A Review of 2024

RSiS

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies

RESEARCH • EDUCATION • NETWORKING

“Ponder the Improbable”

At IDSS, Mr Nathan insisted on research being policy-relevant. He exhorted faculty and research staff to “ponder the improbable”. His international outlook and foreign policy background led to an emphasis on networking, which has contributed to knowledge sharing between RSIS and think tanks from all over the world, and to RSIS’ standing as a critical node in the international network of think tanks and academic institutions dealing with strategic and security studies.

From ClassAct (A monthly e-magazine of the Alumni Affairs Office, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore), December 2011

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN



AMBASSADOR ONG KENG YONG

*Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS,
Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS),
and Head, International Centre for Political Violence
and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)*

Year 2024 marks the 20th anniversary of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, one of the largest in recorded history. More than a quarter million lives were lost and 2 million people displaced across many Asian and African countries.

The leaders of ASEAN Member States came together in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami to ensure a more systematic national and multinational response to future natural and man-made disasters. Their efforts yielded an unprecedented level of inter-governmental and ground-up civic cooperation. Such action for collective good is possible.

Looking at present-day challenges, conflicts have persisted alarmingly and spread to even more regions. Multilateralism is no longer a priority while mini or bilateralism takes over. Competition is now the defining character of the US-China relationship.

Trust has remained elusive as geopolitical competition continues to draw lines and erect barriers. Impact on the ground translates to supply chain disruptions, cost escalation, all adversely affecting people around the world.

What kind of world do we want to see in the coming years? Is there anything we can do about it? Growing great power competition does not mean that other international actors do not have agency to shape their strategic circumstances.

Global leadership is not just an academic exercise, but concerns primarily an existential one. Who leads, what rules to lead and live by, and how to engage and bring everyone on board.

RSIS contributes to thought leadership with research and analyses. RSIS hosts scholars to share their perspectives of the issues of the day, bringing scholars with different points of view together for discussion and exchange of views.

We welcomed on board visiting professors and scholars during the year, some through RSIS' endowment funds, namely, the S. Rajaratnam Professorship in Strategic Studies, The Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in International Relations, the NTUC Professorship in International Economic Relations, the Peter Lim Professorship in Peace Studies, as well as the S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture.

Through the conferences and workshops, some closed-door for frank exchange of views, we encourage insights and exchange of ideas for a better and safer world. We may not be superpowers and some of us are small states. But we have agency to work together for a better world for us and those after us.

As we ponder the improbable, we also believe solutions are possible!

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



PROFESSOR KUMAR RAMAKRISHNA

*Dean, RSIS
Professor of National Security Studies
Provost's Chair in National Security Studies*

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to another exciting academic year at RSIS. As we embark on this journey together, I want to express my sincere appreciation for your commitment to excellence in learning, research, and collaboration.

At the conclusion of the 2023-2024 academic year, 153 students graduated from the RSIS Master's Programmes, and three students earned their doctorate degrees. In the 2024-2025 academic year, the RSIS Master's Programmes continue to attract a diverse and cosmopolitan student body, with nearly 200 students from 23 countries enrolling in August 2024. Among them, 23 students were awarded scholarships and study awards, including the RSIS Scholarship, the Lee Foundation Scholarship, and Student Research Assistantships.

The highly competitive and select PhD programme welcomed two new students from China in August 2024, and we look forward to their contributions to our academic community.

With our distinctive combination of graduate teaching and research expertise, RSIS are committed to enriching the educational journey of our students. They benefit from an integration of policy perspectives in their coursework and have opportunities to participate in a wide range of conferences and events organized by RSIS. Additionally, visits from distinguished professors and global experts provide further insights into regional and international issues.

One key trend that students in RSIS are being exposed to is the geopolitical and security impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other associated emergent technologies. Such technologies have become increasingly relevant not just on the battlefield but also in defining the contours of geopolitical competition between the great powers. RSIS will ensure that its graduates remain up-to-date on these issues.

We particularly value our collaboration with the University of Warwick through the NTU-Warwick Double Master's Programme, as well as our exchange programme with the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University.

Beyond the Graduate School, RSIS has a longstanding tradition of educating senior officers of the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). The Military Studies Programme is now a key strategic partner in the SAF's Professional Military Education, collaborating closely with the SAF-NTU Academy and various SAF schools. Over the years, RSIS has also extended executive education to officers in the security sector and practitioners in the religious and community sectors, providing valuable perspectives on national security issues.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated individuals behind these programmes and to our students for their hard work and commitment!



INTRODUCTION TO RSIS

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) is a global graduate school and think tank focusing on strategic studies and security affairs. Its five Research Centres and three Research Programmes, led by the Office of the Executive Deputy Chairman, and assisted by the Dean on the academic side, drive the School's research, education and networking activities.

The graduate school offers Master of Science Programmes in Strategic Studies, International Relations, International Political Economy and Asian Studies. As a school, RSIS fosters a nurturing environment to develop students into first-class scholars and practitioners.

As a think tank, RSIS conducts policy-relevant and forward-looking research in both national and international security, science and technology, society and economic and environmental sustainability. RSIS also produces academic research on security and international affairs. It publishes scholarly research in top-tier academic journals and leading university presses, and distributes policy research in a timely manner to a wide range of readers. Relevant RSIS research contributes to rule-making and norm-setting in cyber domain and digitalisation. RSIS works closely with other academic institutions and partners including international and regional organisations, global think tanks as well as national agencies to conduct policy relevant research in various areas of interest.

Research in RSIS covers these main areas:

- ▲ The Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) comprises nine research programmes, namely: China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maritime Security, Military Studies, Military Transformations, Regional Security Architecture, South Asia, and the United States. The Military Studies Programme focuses on professional military education for the Singapore Armed Forces.
- ▲ The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) focuses on politically motivated violence and terrorism.
- ▲ The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) covers cyber and homeland defence, radicalisation studies and social resilience.
- ▲ The Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) researches into climate change, resilience and sustainable development; energy security; food security; health security; peace, human security and development; and water security.
- ▲ The Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS) focuses on capacity-building; diplomatic and security multilateralism; economic multilateralism; and international political economy.
- ▲ The Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme focuses on religious peace-building in plural societies; new developments in inter-religious relations from different religious perspectives; tolerance and coexistence in the historical religious traditions; and Singapore's model of managing social cohesion.

- ▲ The National Security Studies Programme (NSSP) conducts research into key episodes of Singapore's national security history and security challenges facing small, globalised, multi-ethnic city-states.
- ▲ The Social Cohesion Research Programme (SCRCP) examines social cohesion with the view to advancing policy-oriented research, forging strategic partnerships, and developing leadership to inspire cohesive and resilient societies.
- ▲ The Future Issues and Technology (FIT) cluster focuses on emerging issues where science and technology intersect with national security.

RSIS researchers participate in deliberations at significant global and regional discussions on strategic and international affairs, such as the Council of Councils meetings (for which RSIS is the sole Singaporean member), Trilateral Commission Conferences, and Shangri-La Dialogues.



The Asia Pacific has its share of flashpoints that have the potential for creating regional instability, through triggering clashes of interests among the three big powers (China, Japan, and the US). These strategic developments and the existence of flashpoints around us will dominate the current dynamics of our strategic environment.

The establishment of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies will enable scholars and students to research and test ideas on the impact and implications of this rapidly changing strategic environment for Singapore's security.

DR TONY TAN

7th President of Singapore; and then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, at the launch of IDSS in July 1996

VISION

To be the premier global graduate school and pre-eminent think tank in strategic studies and international affairs, offering unique Asian perspectives.

MISSION

RSIS is a global graduate school and think tank focusing on strategic studies and security affairs.

As a school, we foster a nurturing environment to develop our students into first-class scholars and practitioners.

As a think tank, we conduct policy-relevant and forward-looking research in both national and international security, science and technology, society and economic and environmental sustainability.

We respect, build and maintain enduring relationships with our stakeholders and our international networks. We embrace integrity and collaboration; and strive for excellence in our work.

VALUES

R.S.I.S

- **Respect and Integrity**
- Strive for **Excellence**
- **Innovation**
- Support **Collaboration**

BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS

Before the inauguration of RSIS in 2007, it was known as the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS). By establishing the IDSS in 1996, then Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Dr Tony Tan wanted to inform policymakers of the political uncertainty in the Asia Pacific region arising from the post-Cold War era, and the possible implications of this uncertainty on Singapore's security and defence. The late S R Nathan was selected to head the institute, thanks to his vast experience in confronting geopolitical issues.

In 2007, RSIS was inaugurated, signifying the maturation of IDSS as a research institute. IDSS remains a prominent research centre within RSIS.

The school was named after Mr S. Rajaratnam in recognition of his contributions to Singapore as its first Foreign Minister.



At the inauguration of IDSS in July 1996, I explained what I thought should be the purpose of the Institute. First, 'to develop, and in due time nurture, a core of knowledgeable scholars engaged in the continuous study of questions of strategic interest to Singapore and the region around us'. I had hoped that the Institute would 'in due time develop expertise to seek answers, and develop persuasive tools, to address complex problems of diplomacy and security' so that they can help us understand how best to limit the risks in an unpredictable world.

MR S R NATHAN

6th President of Singapore; and Founding Director of IDSS, at the launch of RSIS, 11 December 2006



Scan to read more about the history of RSIS

MILESTONES

1996

30 JULY
IDSS was set up. Mr S R Nathan became the founding Director of IDSS while Dr Andrew Chew was appointed Chairman of the Board of Governors.

1999

17 AUGUST
Prof Khong Yuen Foong succeeded Mr S R Nathan who left to serve as the 6th President of Singapore.

2000

1 OCTOBER
Amb Barry Desker succeeded Prof Khong as Dean. Prof Khong remained affiliated to RSIS as Senior Research Adviser and Professor of International Relations for another 15 years.

2004

20 FEBRUARY
IDSS launched the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), which was inaugurated by then Minister for Home Affairs Mr Wong Kan Seng.

2006

1 APRIL
IDSS launched the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) to study the extremist and terrorist threat networks within and outside Singapore.

2009

JANUARY
Mr Eddie Teo took over as Chairman of the RSIS Board of Governors.

2008

6 MAY
RSIS launched the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) in pursuit of solutions to non-traditional security issues that arose from crises such as the 2003 SARS epidemic and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

2007

1 JANUARY
RSIS was officially inaugurated, with IDSS remaining as a prominent centre within the School.

2011

14 OCTOBER
RSIS launched the Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS) to conduct academic and policy research on economic multilateralism and regional economic integration.

2014

9 JUNE
The Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme was inaugurated by Dr Tony Tan, then NTU Chancellor and 7th President of the Republic of Singapore.

3 NOVEMBER
Amb Barry Desker handed over leadership of RSIS to Amb Ong Keng Yong as the Executive Deputy Chairman under a new management structure. Prof Joseph Liow became the Dean of RSIS.

2017

1 SEPTEMBER
RSIS launched the Future Issues and Technology (FIT).

2016

The National Security Studies Programme (NSSP) was inaugurated in April.

2018

1 AUGUST
Dr Tony Tan took over chairmanship of the RSIS Board of Governors from Mr Eddie Teo.

2019

1 JANUARY
Prof Ralf Emmers succeeded Prof Joseph Liow as the Dean of RSIS. Prof Liow remained affiliated to RSIS as its Research Adviser.

2023

1 JANUARY
Prof Kumar Ramakrishna succeeded Prof Ralf Emmers as the Dean of RSIS.

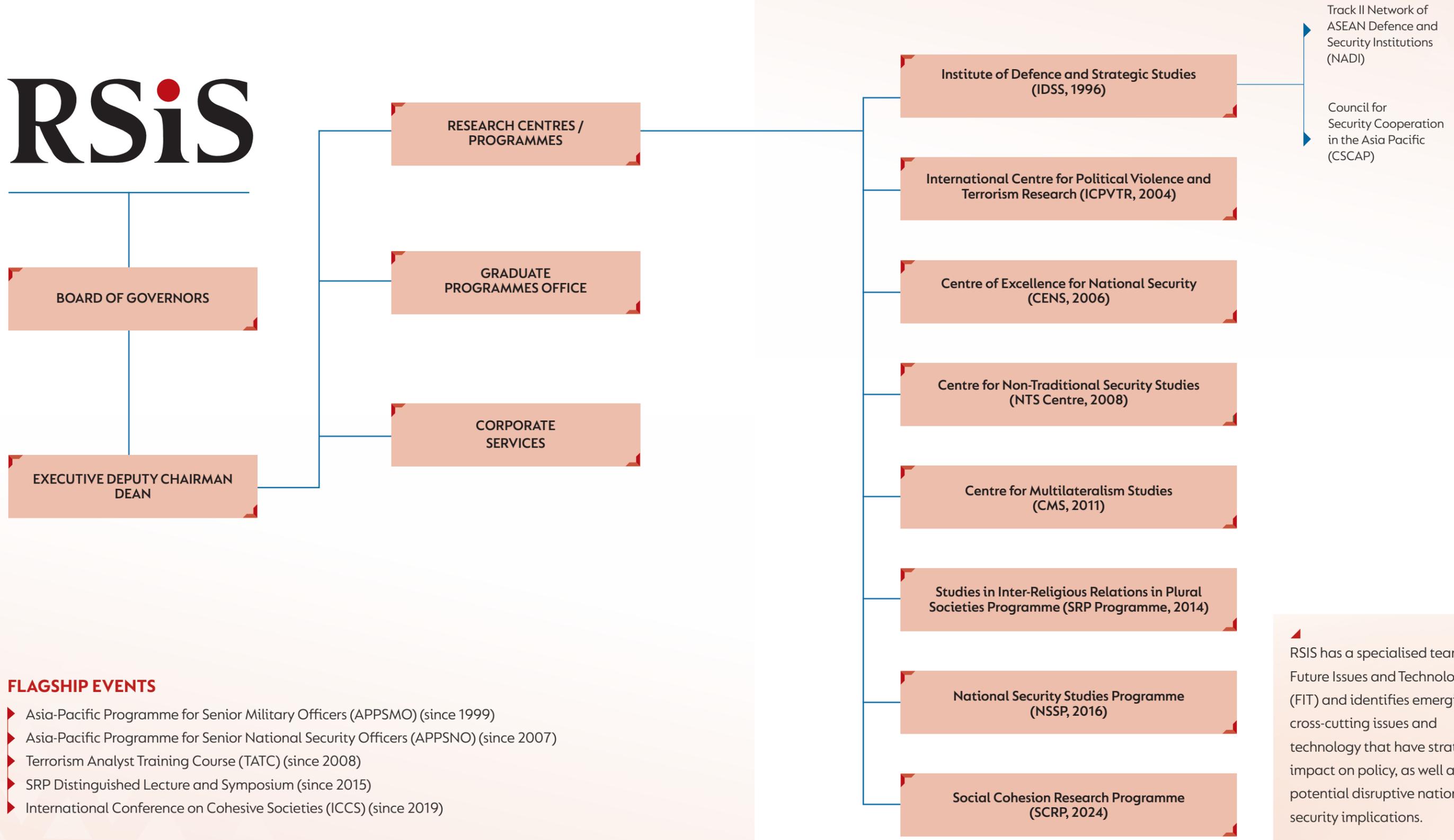
2021

23 NOVEMBER
RSIS commemorated the 25th anniversary of IDSS/RSIS with the launch of an IDSS book and the planting of bonsai trees.

2024

1 JULY
RSIS launched the Social Cohesion Research Programme (SCRIP). It examines social cohesion with the view to advancing policy-oriented research, forging strategic partnerships, and developing leadership to inspire cohesive and resilient societies.

ORGANISATION OF RSIS



FLAGSHIP EVENTS

- ▶ Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO) (since 1999)
- ▶ Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior National Security Officers (APPSNO) (since 2007)
- ▶ Terrorism Analyst Training Course (TATC) (since 2008)
- ▶ SRP Distinguished Lecture and Symposium (since 2015)
- ▶ International Conference on Cohesive Societies (ICCS) (since 2019)

RSIS has a specialised team on Future Issues and Technology (FIT) and identifies emerging cross-cutting issues and technology that have strategic impact on policy, as well as potential disruptive national security implications.

RESEARCH CENTRES AND PROGRAMMES

Office of the Executive Deputy Chairman

The Executive Deputy Chairman (EDC) is the executive head of RSIS and is responsible for providing overall leadership to RSIS in professional, academic, and administrative matters, including think tank and policy research management.

The Office of the EDC houses emerging issues that RSIS is incubating. This includes the Future Issues and Technology (FIT) cluster and the Digital Impact Research (DIR) team.

The FIT cluster covers challenges and opportunities on the intersection of national security and science and technology. DIR deliberates on policy implications of digitalisation and effects on the economy and society.

Dean's Office

The Dean is the chief academic officer of RSIS. The Dean's Office is responsible for the administration of the RSIS MSc and PhD programmes. It oversees the recruitment and career progression of RSIS faculty, while exploring potential opportunities for academic research, student and faculty

exchanges with reputable universities overseas that strike a good balance between academic rigour and policy relevance.

The Dean's Office also works closely with the Office of the Executive Deputy Chairman on a range of issues, including the career development of RSIS think tank track researchers as well as the identification of suitable distinguished visiting scholars to engage with faculty, researchers and students. Invited visiting scholars work on areas of pressing global and regional relevance, such as US-China competition, technology and geopolitics, counter-terrorism and extremism, international political economy, climate change, food security and a host of other topics of concern.

Research Centres and Programmes

RSIS comprises five Research Centres and three Research Programmes.

▲ Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)

IDSS comprises nine research programmes, namely: China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maritime Security, Military Studies, Military Transformations, Regional Security Architecture, South Asia, and the United States. The Military Studies Programme focuses on professional military education for the Singapore Armed Forces.

▲ International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)

ICPVTR is a specialist, policy-oriented centre within RSIS, which conducts research, training, and outreach programmes aimed at reducing the threat of politically motivated violence and mitigating its effects on the international system. The Centre integrates academic theory with practical knowledge, which is essential for a complete and comprehensive understanding of threats from politically-motivated groups. ICPVTR is culturally and linguistically diverse, comprising functional and regional analysts. It is staffed by researchers, academic specialists, religious scholars, and language experts.

▲ Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS)

CENS is a research unit established on 1 April 2006. The CENS *raison d'être* is to raise the intellectual capital invested in strategising national security. To do so, CENS is devoted to rigorous policy-relevant analysis across a range of national security issues. CENS is multinational in composition, comprising both Singaporeans and foreign analysts who are specialists in various aspects of national and homeland security affairs.

▲ Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre)

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

▲ Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS)

CMS conducts cutting-edge research, teaching/training, and networking on cooperative multilateralism in the Asia Pacific region. The Centre aims to contribute to international academic and public discourses on regional architecture and order in Asia Pacific. It aspires to be an international knowledge hub for multilateral and regional cooperation. The Centre's research agenda includes international and global forums, as well as expressions of cooperative multilateralism on economic multilateralism and diplomatic and security multilateralism.

▲ Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme

SRP aims to study various models of how religious communities develop their teachings to meet the contemporary challenges of living in plural societies. It will also deepen the study of inter-religious relations, formulate models for the positive role of religions in peace-building and produce knowledge to strengthen social ties between communities. SRP seeks to be at the forefront in the development of scholarship and applied knowledge on the roles of religion and inter-religious relations in plural societies today.

▲ National Security Studies Programme (NSSP)

NSSP was launched in April 2016 with the primary aim of conducting research into key episodes in Singapore's national security history, and to draw out contemporary implications for today. Its research seeks to address a range of national security challenges facing small, globalised, multi-ethnic city-states and generate intellectual capital pertinent for security practitioners. Apart from producing research and teaching on the Master's Programme in RSIS, NSSP researchers also share their insights with public officers in various seminars or training courses.

▲ Social Cohesion Research Programme (SCRIP)

SCRIP was established to advance the study of social cohesion. It seeks to engage in policy-oriented research, forge strategic partnerships, and develop leadership to inspire cohesive and resilient societies, both within Southeast Asia and beyond. With this in view, SCRIP aspires to promote social cohesion research and nurture research talent in this domain, create platforms for dialogue and problem-solving on interfaith and social cohesion issues, and inspire collaborative approaches across societies towards the practice of social cohesion.



BOARD OF GOVERNORS

As at end November 2024

The Board of Governors sets academic and policy research objectives for the School. In addition to providing strategic directions for RSIS, the Board also institutes new programmes, reviews ongoing activities, and approves plans and budgets. The Board consists of Singaporean and international members.



Dr Tony Tan
Chairman
Honorary Patron and Distinguished Senior Fellow, Singapore Management University



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong
Deputy Chairman
Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS, Director, IDSS, and Head of ICPVTR



Professor Michael E. Brown
Professor of International Affairs and Political Science, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University



Mr Chan Heng Kee
Permanent Secretary (Defence), Ministry of Defence



Ms Chew Gek Khim
Executive Chairman, The Straits Trading Company Limited

MEMBERS



Mr Albert Chua
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Dr Bates Gill
Senior Fellow, Asian Security, National Bureau of Asian Research, US; Non-resident Senior Policy Fellow, Asia Society Australia; and Senior Associate Fellow, Royal United Services Institute, London



Mr Peter Ho
Senior Advisor, Centre for Strategic Futures, Prime Minister's Office



Professor Lam Khin Yong
Vice President (Industry), Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Nanyang Technological University



Mr Pang Kin Keong
Permanent Secretary (Home Affairs), Ministry of Home Affairs



Professor Sir Steve Smith
UK Government International Education Champion, and Prime Minister's Special Representative to Saudi Arabia for Education, Department for Education and Department for International Trade



Mr Peter Varghese AO
Chancellor, The University of Queensland



Mr Leo Yip
Head of the Civil Service, Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (Strategy), Permanent Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, and Permanent Secretary, National Security and Intelligence Coordination



Professor Stuart Croft
Vice-Chancellor and President, University of Warwick



Ms Selena Ling
Chief Economist, Head of Treasury Research and Strategy, Global Treasury, OCBC Bank



Professor Kumar Ramakrishna
Dean, RSIS, Professor of National Security Studies, Provost's Chair in National Security Studies, Research Adviser to ICPVTR

AWARDS & GRANTS

National Day Awards

Two members of the RSIS Board of Governors received National Day Awards in 2024.

Mr Peter Ho, member of the RSIS Board of Governors, Chairman of the Urban Redevelopment Authority and Senior Adviser to the Centre for Strategic Futures, received the Order of Nila Utama (With High Distinction), the highest accolade given in 2024. Mr Ho has contributed to Singapore for more than 50 years, including as a public servant for more than three decades.

Mr Pang Kin Keong, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.



Mr Pang Kin Keong



Mr Peter Ho

Photos: Ministry of Digital Development and Information (MDDI)

Research Grants

The NTS Centre obtained a grant to conduct a multi-year research study on Biosecurity and International Security, in partnership with the Asia Centre for Health Security (ACHS). ACHS is a new academic think tank based at the Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health at the National University of Singapore, working in close partnership with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at the Nanyang Technological University.

The Biosecurity and International Security project examines biosecurity threats in the Asia-Pacific and potential risks associated with emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, advances in life sciences and biotechnology, including the proliferation of laboratories, dual-use research of concern, and deliberate misuse of biological materials. It explores implications of both the conventional biological threats and the fast-evolving biotechnological landscape in the region on regional and international security. It also identifies, through baseline studies, common challenges, capacity gaps, as well as good practices in the context of crafting policies, institutionalising norms and developing technical expertise in mitigating and responding to emerging biological threats and biological incidents whether natural, accidental, or deliberate in origin.



NTU SSHR2025

The Social Science and Humanities Research 2025 (SSHR2025) Strategic Plan harnesses the diversity of academia in NTU to position the university at the forefront of research in the fields of arts, social sciences, humanities, education, and business. A Working Group of faculty members from RSIS, with the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CoHASS), Nanyang Business School (NBS), and National Institute of Education (NIE), are working on six non-STEM interdisciplinary clusters: (i) Sustainability and Resilience; (ii) Culture and Creativity; (iii) Education and Transformation; (iv) Leadership and Disruptive Innovation; (v) Human Behaviour and Technology; and (vi) Language and Heritage.

Prof Ang Cheng Guan, Associate Dean of RSIS, is a member of Cluster 3 (Education and Transformation), while Assoc Prof Li Mingjiang is involved in Cluster 4 (Leadership and Disruptive Innovation). Assoc Prof Bhubhinder Singh, Associate Dean of RSIS, is the Cluster Lead for Theme 1: Sustainability and Resilience, and Theme 7: Open Category.

The Dean's Office works with the other Schools to encourage and coordinate research collaboration between RSIS and other NTU researchers in five inter-related domains: (i) Secure Society; (ii) Healthy Communities; (iii) Sustainable Environment; (iv) Sustainable Industry; and (v) Civil Society.

Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony is also a member of the Sustainability and Resilience cluster. She and the NTS Centre, of which she heads, received an SSHR 2025 Seed Grant from March 2022 to February 2024 for their project "The Future of Planetary Health: Lessons from a Global Pandemic". This research project investigated how a planetary health approach can be applied to mitigate Anthropocene risks and build resilience for a more sustainable and prosperous world.

RESEARCH AND NETWORKING EVENTS

During the year, RSIS staff continued delving into their respective areas of expertise, and shared their findings and analyses through various publications and online platforms. RSIS scholars also published peer-reviewed books on their areas of research and op-eds in policy-relevant and other publications, and participated in forums and discussions with other think tanks and institutes.

RSIS continues to serve key roles in security dialogues and exchanges within the region, serving as Secretariat for both the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP Singapore) and the Track II Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI), as well as for the Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Asia Consortium. Through these roles, RSIS contributes actively to discussions on regional security, supports the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) with relevant inputs and timely ahead-of-the-curve policy recommendations, and helps to build the confidence of ASEAN think tanks and research institutions.

COUNCIL FOR SECURITY COOPERATION IN THE ASIA PACIFIC (CSCAP)



CSCAP Study Group on the Safety and Security of Digital Infrastructure (SSDI), 1-3 October 2024

The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) provides an informal mechanism for scholars, officials and others in their private capacities to discuss political and security issues and challenges facing the region. It also offers policy recommendations to various inter-governmental bodies, convenes regional and international meetings and establishes linkages with institutions and organisations in other parts of the world to exchange information, insights and experiences in the area of regional political-security cooperation. RSIS is the Secretariat for CSCAP Singapore.

Over the past year, CSCAP Singapore took part in various study group activities. The first was a Co-Chairs' Meeting of the Study Group on Strengthening the Rules and Principles Underpinning the International Order (RPUIO) in Cyberjaya, Malaysia, in March. The meeting was convened to analyse the findings of the study group's activities and as Co-Chair, CSCAP Singapore acted as penholder for drafting a memorandum as the study group moves to a conclusion. RSIS Senior Fellow Dr Alvin Chew participated in the Study Group

on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament held in Bangkok in August. Co-chaired by US CSCAP and CSCAP Vietnam, key issues discussed ranged from relevant strategic risks stemming from great power competition, the growing arms race driven by threat perceptions, emerging technologies like drones and AI in nuclear doctrines, and the balance between nuclear disarmament and the need for nuclear energy.

In addition, CSCAP Singapore participated in the 59th CSCAP Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) in Bangkok, in November 2023, hosted by CSCAP Thailand. The 59th SCM supported CSCAP Singapore's proposal to initiate a Study Group on the Safety and Security of Digital Infrastructure (SSDI). The Meeting also saw the formal conclusion of the Study Group on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), following the circulation of its Memorandum. CSCAP Singapore also participated in the 60th CSCAP SCM in Kuala Lumpur in June, hosted by CSCAP Malaysia on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Roundtable. At the meeting, member committees approved CSCAP Singapore's proposal for a Study Group on Biosecurity and Health Security in the Asia-Pacific (BHSAP), to be coordinated by the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS) in RSIS.

CSCAP Singapore subsequently held the inaugural meeting of the CSCAP SSDI Study Group in October in a hybrid format in Singapore, organised with CENS. Asha Hemrajani, Senior Fellow at CENS, served as speaker and coordinator. The meeting attracted over 40 regional and local participants, facilitating discussions on cable cuts and vulnerabilities, laws and regulatory frameworks for their protection and repair, and the role of public-private partnerships in addressing cable threats.

CSCAP Singapore convened a meeting with its executive committee, participated in the upcoming SCMs and the biannual CSCAP General Conference in Kuala Lumpur in December 2024. Together with NTS Centre, CSCAP Singapore will organise the first meeting of the CSCAP BHSAP Study Group in 2025. Overall, 2024 has been a productive year for CSCAP, with proactive initiatives and significant contributions from the CSCAP Secretariat and Member Committees to advance regional security dialogues in the Asia-Pacific.

TRACK II NETWORK OF ASEAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY INSTITUTIONS (NADI)

The Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI) is a Track II forum comprising defence and security institutions from the 10 ASEAN Member States (AMS), which supports the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) with relevant and timely ahead-of-the-curve policy recommendations. NADI is also a forum that builds confidence and familiarity among the ASEAN think tanks and research institutions. As the Secretariat for NADI, RSIS hosts the NADI website, which carries reports of the NADI meetings, workshops, and retreats. Over the last 17 years, NADI has contributed ideas and policy recommendations to the ADMM. In 2024, NADI institutions held four in-person meetings.

RSIS organised a NADI Meeting from 4 to 6 November 2024. The Meeting focused on "Conflicts Affecting the Region, and the ADMM/ADMM-Plus' Role in Conflict Prevention and Management".



Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI), 4-6 November 2024

As the NADI Chair, the Military Science and History Department (MSHD), Ministry of National Defence, Lao PDR, hosted the 17th NADI Annual Meeting from 29 April to 2 May 2024. Subsequently, the NADI Meeting on “Evolving and Emerging Non-Traditional Security Challenges in the Era of Disruptive World” was held from 15 to 18 July 2024, organised by the Strategic Studies Center (SSC), National Defence Studies Institute (NDSI), Royal Thai Armed Forces, Thailand. This was followed by the NADI Meeting on “The Emerging Security Architecture in Asia-Pacific, Assessment of Implications, and Recommendations for ASEAN” was held from 18 to 21 September 2024, organised by the General Department of Policy and Foreign Affairs (GDPFA), Ministry of National Defence, Cambodia.

CONSORTIUM OF NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

RSIS is also the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia. A network of 31 institutions and think tanks across Asia, NTS-Asia is a platform for academic and policy exchange on developments on NTS issues and research across the Asian region. The Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies (NTS Centre) staffs the secretariat.

The NTS-Asia Consortium continues to serve as a one-stop platform for all its members to share and exchange their NTS-related works through the NTS-Asia website. The NTS-Asia Consortium Secretariat based at the NTS Centre regularly updates the open-access website with members’ latest publications and activities. To facilitate outreach, the NTS-Asia Secretariat sends out EDMs periodically. The January 2024 EDM featured WorldFish’s participation at the COP28 in late 2023, a roundtable on “The Moving Image: Addressing Violence, Reframing Peace” organised by the Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) in New Delhi, India, and the 2nd Humanitarian

Futures Forum organised by RSIS and the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC), Singapore. It also showcased working papers by WorldFish and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Jakarta, Indonesia, an RSIS commentary, and a policy report by the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

RSIS FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES

The 25th iteration of the Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO) held from 13 to 17 October 2024, discussed the theme “APPSMO@25: Navigating Complexity in Geopolitics Today”. APPSMO began as the RSIS Summer Camp for senior military officers in 1999 under the auspices of IDSS. It has provided an informal



APPSNO, 15-19 April 2024



APPSMO, 13-17 October 2024

forum for military officers from the Asia Pacific and beyond to interact on a pan-regional scale. It also enables senior military officers to meet and establish personal relationships as well as share knowledge about military and security developments that would be of professional interest to them. Through this process, the participants could contribute towards fostering a dynamic yet stable environment conducive to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region. As the region continues to deal with a dynamic security environment, APPSMO commemorated 25 years by bringing together experts and practitioners to revisit and recalibrate the senior military officers on the discussion of complexity in global and security affairs today.

The 15th Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior National Security Officers (APPSNO) focused on the theme of “Defining the State of Security in Uncertain Conditions: Lessons and Responses”. Held from 15 to 19 April 2024, APPSNO was organised by CENS. Discussions were centred on the increasingly amorphous global landscape for middle powers, further complicated by local ripple effects from international conflicts, the promises and perils of emerging



TATC, 15-19 July 2024



RSIS Trilateral Exchange, 23 April 2024

technologies, and the unpredictability of extreme climate events. Against this backdrop, panels focused on emerging national security risks in relation to energy, economics and trade, supply chains, technology and digitalisation, social resilience, and the information domain. National security practitioners and experts from 21 countries across the Asia Pacific, South Asia, Middle East, North and South America, and Europe, were joined by their Singaporean counterparts from various ministries and agencies.

ICPVTR hosted the 16th edition of its annual flagship capacity-building and networking programme, the Terrorism Analyst Training Course (TATC), in July 2024. Over five days, participants from local and regional government bodies, academic institutions and private sector organisations heard from 16 specialist speakers on topics ranging from country-specific threat assessments, to jihadists’ use of social media, to weaponisable technologies such as artificial intelligence, drones and 3D-printed weapons. The keynote speaker, Mr Ali Soufan, founder of The Soufan Center and chief executive officer of The Soufan Group, delivered a pertinent and timely lecture on developments in global conflicts and associated impacts on terrorism, with the volatile Middle East developments as the backdrop.

GREAT POWER COMPETITION AND THE WORLD

The continuing war in Ukraine, and the widening Israel-Hamas conflict cast ever longer shadows on the world and geopolitical developments. The United States (US)-China competition and relations continue to underpin developments and formed the backdrop to many a discussion on security-related issues during the year.

The 5th Trilateral Exchange on “Rising to the Challenge: Global Leadership in a Fractured World” brought scholars from the United States and China together for a closed-door discussion. Held on 23 April 2024, participants discussed and re-examined what global leadership meant in today’s world, given the increasingly complex relationship between both countries. It was a fruitful occasion, which saw robust discussion and active interaction among the participants.

The US Programme covered the US Presidential Elections in its podcast series “Election Watch with USP,” in which members of the US Programme discussed developments on the campaign trail in the lead-up to the US Elections in November 2024. The podcast series is accessible at the QR code.



The 2024 Indonesian Elections were the focus of webinars/seminars and publications by the Indonesia Programme. The webinar titled “Post-2024 General Elections and Indonesia 2045 Vision: Strategic Challenges and Opportunities” discussed the implications of the 2024 General Elections and the country’s 2045 Vision. Held on 15 March 2024, the webinar also examined the geopolitical dynamics and strategic challenges surrounding the fulfilment of the vision. Participants discussed the influence of domestic politics as well as geopolitical dynamics to the realisation of the 2045 Vision. Other webinars/seminars looked into the dynamics in Sumatra and Java, and gave views on how the elections could turn out.

Regional developments were the focus of some seminars/webinars such as those on topical developments in Malaysia. Topics covered included regular events by the Malaysia Programme on key political and foreign policy issues in Malaysia, as well as party coalition dynamics and race and religion controversies.

MARITIME SECURITY

Challenges to regional maritime security continue to dominate the annual Regional Maritime Security Outlook, which offered a platform for critical evaluation and a vibrant discussion on the complex and dynamic development in the maritime domain. Held from 25 to 26 January, participants analysed contemporary maritime affairs and discussed emerging issues that affect both the region and the global community. More than 90 participants from around the world attended the Regional Maritime Security Outlook 2024.

RSIS partnered with ReCAAP ISC, the Asian Shipowners’ Association (ASA) and INTERTANKO to co-organise the annual conference on Piracy and Armed Robbery on 16 April 2024. Held on the sidelines of the Singapore Maritime Week, the conference brought together government officials, academicians, journalists, and stakeholders from the private maritime sector, for a critical assessment and analysis on the issue of piracy and armed robbery across the world. It was a reminder that safeguarding maritime interests demands a concerted effort from all stakeholders, be it the government, or the private sector.



Regional Maritime Security Outlook, 25-26 January 2024

DIGITAL DEFENCE AND TECHNOLOGIES



2nd Digital Defence Symposium, 24-25 July 2024

RSIS co-organised the second Digital Defence Symposium with the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) Cybersecurity and Information Centre of Excellence (ACICE). The symposium was held from 24 to 25 Jul 2024, in support of defence diplomacy and multilateral cooperation in safeguarding the region’s peace and security from digital

threats such as cyberattacks and disinformation. It saw participation from more than 200 senior military and defence officials from 22 ASEAN and non-ASEAN countries, academic and think tank institutions, and industry experts, on the overarching theme: “Evolving Cyber and Information Trends: Opportunities and Threats for Defence”. The symposium offered opportunities for bilateral engagements on the sidelines. These included the 2nd ASEAN Roundtable on Navigating Digital Space attended by senior ASEAN Cyber defence officials.

Responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Military Domain (REAM) Regional Consultations (Asia) brought defence and foreign affairs officials together in February to foster a more inclusive Asia-focused dialogue on REAM. RSIS’ Military Transformations Programme (MTP) co-organised the inaugural event together with the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. Hosted by the Ministry of Defence, in partnership with the Netherlands and Republic of Korea, participants exchanged views, shared best practices, and discussed areas of potential cooperation for military AI governance.



RSIS Conference on “Navigating Uncertainty: Arms Control in an Age of Disruptive Technologies”, 7-8 November 2024

MTP also held its annual Track 1.5 conference on “Navigating Uncertainty: Arms Control in an Age of Disruptive Technologies” in November 2024. The conference explored how advancements in disruptive technologies and their wider application by militaries is creating challenges for existing arms control governance mechanisms. The panels focused on issues such as the implications arising from advancements in military AI, norms to ensure responsible behaviour in the cyberspace, and competing international outer space security agendas within the context of arms control. The event brought together and offered a networking platform for engagement among policymakers, international organisations, academics, and the private sector.

DISTORTIONS, UNTRUTHS AND SOCIAL COHESION

The annual DRUMS (Distortions, Rumours, Untruths, Misinformation, and Smears) workshop in November 2024 focused on “Information Manipulation and Interference in the Global Political Environment of Uncertainty”.

“Words that Wound: Encountering & Combating Religious Intolerance,” was the theme of the 9th edition of the SRP executive programme held from 16 to 17 July 2024. The theme related to the spread of hate speech, misinformation, and disinformation - all of which could undermine interreligious relations and social cohesion in Singapore. Around fifty participants, ranging from policymakers and civil servants to community and religious leaders, attended.

SCRIP, supported by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, organised the International Conference on Cohesive Societies (ICCS) Inter-sessional Event in September 2024. Titled “Inspiring Cohesive & Resilient Societies,” the event gathered more than a hundred delegates, comprising practitioners, academics and policymakers from diverse backgrounds. Designed to maintain momentum between the larger Conferences, it featured not only the usual plenaries and breakout sessions but also skills workshops and community engagement. Delegates were also invited to develop solutions to the pertinent challenges impacting social cohesion today.

COUNTER-TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM

ICPVTR/RSIS continues to study the terrorist threat and the challenges of counter-terrorism and counter-extremism. ICPVTR hosted seminars and webinars throughout the



ICCS Inter-sessional Event, 24-26 September 2024

year, engaging both external and internal speakers to share their latest research and thoughts on issues such as the reintegration of former violent extremists into society, the crime-terror nexus and cryptocurrency, non-white involvement in white supremacy and the future of global jihadist movements, among others.

NATIONAL SECURITY FORUM FOR SINGAPORE UNIVERSITIES

“Together We Keep Singapore Strong” was the theme for the Singapore Universities’ National Security Forum 2024 held on 5 July 2024 at the Singapore Management University (SMU). The theme was also in commemoration of the 40th anniversary of Total Defence. Jointly organised by NSSP and SMU’s Apolitical Society, co-organised by the Singapore University of Social Sciences’ (SUSS) Public Safety and Security Interest Group (PSS IG) and Current Affairs Interest Group (CAIG), the forum engages undergraduates on issues pertaining to Singapore’s national security. It saw the attendance of close to 140 undergraduates.

BIOSECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY RESEARCH

RSIS is participating in the Asia Centre for Health Security (ACHS), launched on 17 April 2024. The ACHS is a new Singapore-based academic think tank that will prepare Asia for current and emerging biological threats and safeguard the health of our communities. The new centre is a multi-disciplinary collaboration, based primarily at the National University of Singapore’s Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health. Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Head of Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies, leads the team that contributes in biosecurity and international security research.

PLANETARY HEALTH

NTS Centre held the Planetary Health proposal development meeting and workshop on 2 February 2024. Following a series of meetings within the last two years, this workshop also served to finalise the grant proposal



Planetary Health Proposal Development Meeting and Workshop, 2 February 2024

which aims to investigate how planetary health offers a more comprehensive approach to mitigating the effects of climate change on human and environmental health. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach, NTU researchers from RSIS, Nanyang Business School (NBS), College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CoHASS), Asian School of the Environment (ASE) and Lee Kong Chian (LKC) School of Medicine; provided inputs and participated in the discussion.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMMES

The Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Programme, NTS Centre, organised the 3rd Humanitarian Futures Forum in October in Singapore, jointly with the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC). As the region and wider world strives to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the forum will strengthen support systems for policy planners and decision-makers on ways to better prepare for and respond to humanitarian challenges in this decade and beyond.



3rd Humanitarian Futures Forum, 29-30 October 2024

ASEAN DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The ASEAN Strategic Policy on Disaster Management (SPDDM) focused on the theme “It Takes a Village: Inclusive Approaches to Enhance Disaster Resilience”. Held on 23 August 2024, it was the concluding event of the ASEAN Disaster Management Week (ADMW) 2024. The event was organised by The ASEAN Secretariat, the AHA Centre, the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, with HADR Programme, RSIS, as the knowledge partner. SPDDM 2024 focused on the importance of engaging the community to enhance disaster resilience in the regional through a multi-faceted approach.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER THINK TANKS AND OTHER NETWORKING EVENTS

RSIS continued collaboration with other think tanks and institutions, deepening existing ones and starting new ones.

The RSIS-SWP Dialogue, done in partnership with the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik or SWP), was held in Berlin in September 2024. The dialogue discussed the “Manoeuvring the New Global Techno-Economic Governance Landscape”, with the researchers from both institutions addressing the sub-themes; (i) Manoeuvring New Global Techno-Economic Governance: The Role and Agency of Germany and Singapore; (ii) The (Geo)politics of Energy Transition – Perspectives from Germany and Singapore; and (iii) From Free Trade to Geoeconomics: How to Deal with the Slow Death of the Multilateral Rules-Based Trade System?

Prof Kumar Ramakrishna, Dean of RSIS, and delegation visited Jakarta in July. Among the visits was a visit to the Sekolah Staff Komando Angkatan Laut (SESKOAL) of the Republic of Indonesia in Jakarta on 30 July 2024. During the visit, Prof Geoffrey Till, Advisor to the Maritime Security Studies Programme, gave a lecture on ‘Grey-

zone Operations’ to the current 62nd cohort of SESKOAL students. Dean and delegation also visited the Republic of Indonesia Defence University (RIDU) in Jakarta on 31 July 2024. During the visit, Prof Ramakrishna gave a lecture on ‘Indirect Strategy’ to the current cohort of RIDU postgraduate students.

In October, Prof Ramakrishna led delegations to Shanghai, visiting the Institute of International Relations, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS); Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS); Institute of International Studies (IIS), Fudan University; School of International Relations and Public Affairs (SIRPA), Shanghai International Studies University (SISU); Nanjing University - Collaborative Innovative Center of South China Sea Studies; and US-China Centre, Johns Hopkins – Nanjing University. Prof Ramakrishna gave a talk on transnational terrorism trends at the School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Shanghai International Studies University. Dean also led another delegation to Beijing to have an exchange with the South China Sea Strategic Situation Probing Initiative (SCSPI) in November.



Prof Kumar Ramakrishna at SESKOAL

ASEAN STRATEGIC POLICY DIALOGUE ON DISASTER MANAGEMENT 2024

It Takes a Village: Inclusive Approaches to Enhance Disaster Resilience

Session 1: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN ASEAN AND UNITED NATIONS

“It Takes a Village: Inclusive Approaches to Enhance Disaster Resilience”

Dr. Raditya Jati
Deputy Minister for System and Strategy, National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) Indonesia

Mr Marco Toscano-Rivalta
Chief of Office, UNDRR Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Moderator
Ambassador Ong Keng Yong
Executive Deputy Chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)



ASEAN Strategic Policy on Disaster Management (SPDDM), 23 August 2024

IDSS and the Institute for Defence International Relations (IDIR), Vietnam, convened the 3rd IDSS-IDIR Dialogue in Hanoi on 17 April 2024. Participants exchanged views on security in the Taiwan Strait, the impact of minilaterals in the Indo-Pacific on ASEAN, and energy security in an evolving strategic environment.

Following on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between RSIS and the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV), IDSS also paid a visit to the DAV. Both sides had an exchange of views on broad regional security dynamics, internal challenges that ASEAN faces, and the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in the future of warfare.



(Clockwise from top left): Dean Guo Shuyong, School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Shanghai International Studies University; Prof Wu Xinbo, Fudan University; Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences; Prof Zhu Feng, Executive Dean, School of International Studies, Nanjing University; Prof Chen Dongxiao, President, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS); and Visit to Johns Hopkins University, Nanjing University.



ENDOWMENTS AND ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS

SPONSORS AND FUNDING

Over the years since its establishment, sponsors have contributed grants to support the activities of RSIS. They include the Lee Foundation, the late Dr Lee Seng Tee, The Ngee Ann Kongsi, Mr Peter Lim, National Trades Union Congress, Singapore Totalisator Board, Temasek Foundation, and Temasek Holdings (Private) Limited. Major sources of funding include the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF), the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS), which engage RSIS as a knowledge partner for research.

RSIS ENDOWMENT FUND

RSIS launched the RSIS Endowment Fund on 31 March 2008 to engage world-class faculty and research staff to the School and award scholarships to talented students. It provides students with a wider choice of courses, higher levels of excellence in teaching, and increased research support. The RSIS Endowment Fund arose from a fund-raising effort after RSIS was inaugurated on 1 January 2007. RSIS held a fund-raising effort for the RSIS Endowment Fund, with the aim of \$40 million (including dollar-for-dollar matching grants from the Singapore Government). After the target was met, RSIS launched the Endowment Fund in 2008.

The RSIS Endowment Fund remains open for contributions from well-wishers.

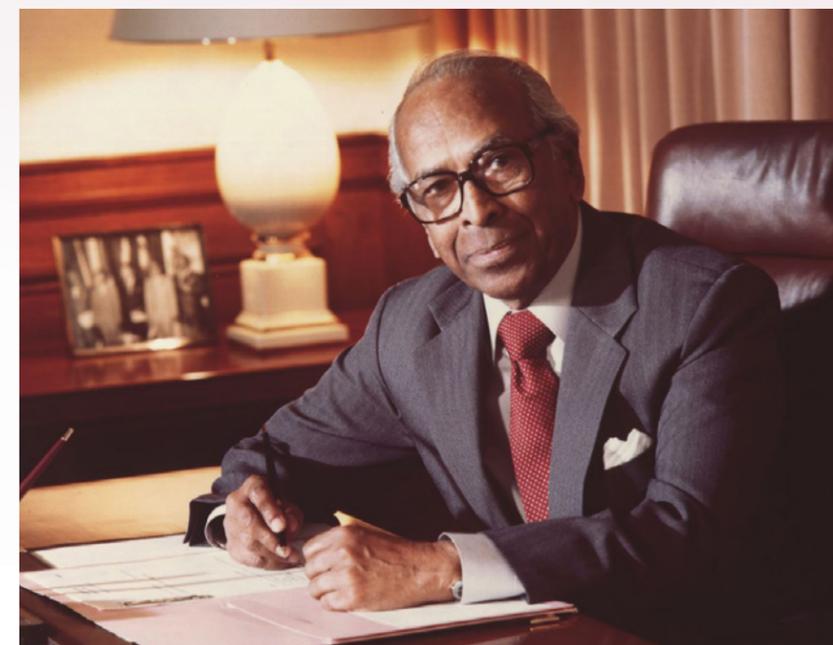


ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS

RSIS endowment funds include provisions for four professorships established from donations together with matching grants from the Government. They are the S. Rajaratnam Professorship in Strategic Studies, The Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in International Relations, the NTUC Professorship in International Economic Relations, and the Peter Lim Professorship in Peace Studies. These endowed professorships have enabled RSIS to engage renowned scholars from various fields to teach and conduct research at the School, besides sharing their knowledge with the wider community through public lectures and seminars.

S. RAJARATNAM PROFESSORSHIP IN STRATEGIC STUDIES

The S. Rajaratnam Professorship in Strategic Studies at RSIS was established in honour of Mr S. Rajaratnam's distinguished services to the nation. Mr S. Rajaratnam, born in 1915, was elected Member of Parliament for Kampung Glam in 1959 and continued to represent the constituency until his retirement in 1988. He became the Minister for Culture in 1959 and the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1965 and, in the latter capacity, took on a second portfolio as the Minister for Labour from 1968 to 1971. He became Second Deputy Prime Minister (Foreign Affairs) in 1980, after which he was appointed Senior Minister until his retirement. He passed away in 2006.



Mr S. Rajaratnam

The professorship was made possible by the \$2.6 million fund (excluding a matching grant from the Singapore Government) raised by the Fundraising Committee. The committee was chaired by Mr S. Chandra Das, former Member of Parliament for Cheng San Group Representative Constituency (1980–1996). Income generated from the invested funds helps maintain the professorship.

Inaugurated on 31 August 1998, the professorship brings on board internationally renowned scholars in strategic studies and related fields who could help review and develop the curriculum, teach, initiate and undertake joint research projects with the academic staff, and give public lectures and conduct seminars. Other than widening its international network, RSIS could benefit from the knowledge and experience of eminent scholars appointed to the chair.



Prof Kitaoka Shinichi

Prof Kitaoka Shinichi, Emeritus Professor of the University of Tokyo and Rikkyo University, and Special Advisor to the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), visited RSIS in March 2024 while Prof M. Taylor Fravel, Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science and Director, Security Studies Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, visited RSIS in August. Prof Kitaoka Shinichi spoke on "Japan's Position in the World" and Prof M. Taylor Fravel on "The Future of US-China Relations and the Implications for the Global Order - Is Engagement Dead" during their respective RSIS Distinguished Public Lectures.

Prof Geoff Till held the S. Rajaratnam Professorship while he taught “Globalisation, Arms-Racing and Naval Development in the Asia Pacific” at the RSIS Graduate School during Trimester 2 of the Academic Year 2024/2025. Prof Till is the Emeritus Professor of Maritime Studies of King’s College London and Chairman of the Corbett Centre for Maritime Policy Studies. He was previously Dean of Academic Studies at the UK Command and Staff College and Head of the Defence Studies Department of King’s College London. Since 2009, he has been a Visiting Professor in the IDSS’ Maritime Security Programme.



Prof M. Taylor Fravel



Prof Geoff Till

THE Ngee ANN KONGSI PROFESSORSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Ngee Ann Kongsi Professorship in International Relations was established on 27 November 2007 through a donation of \$3 million from The Ngee Ann Kongsi and a matching grant from the Singapore Government. Income from the endowment is used to identify and nominate world class scholars in the area of international relations to teach and do research in RSIS, to help the School achieve its vision of being the premier graduate school of international affairs in the Asia Pacific.



Prof Chen Dongxiao

Prof Chen Dongxiao visited Singapore under The Ngee Ann Kongsi Endowment Professorship in September 2024. Prof Chen, President of Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), spoke on “Can China Handle Trump 2.0?” at an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture, and gave two seminars during the visit.

NATIONAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS (NTUC) PROFESSORSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

In 2007, the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) raised a total of \$2.5 million which, with additional funding from the Singapore Government and other sources, enabled RSIS to establish an endowed chair — the NTUC Professorship in International Economic

Relations. The NTUC, set up in 1961, is the national federation of trade unions that works with trade associations, social enterprises, and other enterprise partners to create better lives for workers here in Singapore.

Income from the endowment enables RSIS to appoint internationally renowned professors who can help review and develop the curriculum, teach, initiate and undertake joint research projects with the academic staff, give public lectures and conduct seminars.

Prof Tan Kong Yam, Emeritus Professor of Economics at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), with vast experience

in economics, especially in relation to China, taught “Economics for International Political Economy” at the RSIS Graduate School during Trimester 1 of the Academic Year 2024/2025. He also gave an RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture on “Under the Shadow of Sustained US-China Rivalry: The Conceptualisation of a Pro-ASEAN Geoeconomic Strategy” in August.

PETER LIM PROFESSORSHIP IN PEACE STUDIES

The Peter Lim Professorship in Peace Studies was launched on 9 June 2014 during the inauguration of RSIS’ SRP Programme.

The professorship was established through a gift of \$3 million from Mr Peter Lim and a matching grant from the Singapore Government. Mr Lim, a well-known Singaporean philanthropist, hoped that his donation could bring together distinguished scholars and thought leaders to study how Singapore can further preserve and promote the existing harmonious relations amongst its different communities, so that the nation will continue to enjoy peace and harmony. The endowment enables the SRP Programme to appoint a professor who can lead the programme in researching and teaching peace studies.

Dr Abdullah Saeed held the endowed chair from October 2015 to May 2024. Dr Abdullah Saeed is the Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies and Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia.

S. T. LEE DISTINGUISHED ANNUAL LECTURE

RSIS also holds the S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture, where world-class distinguished scholars and policymakers are invited to speak to a Singapore-wide audience on key strategic issues.

Established in 2007, the S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture series is funded by an endowment established from a generous personal donation by the late Dr Lee Seng Tee, a well-known Singaporean philanthropist, and with a matching grant from the Singapore Government. Dr Lee was a well-known benefactor of educational establishments both local and overseas, including NTU Singapore.

Prof Jia Qingguo, former Dean of the School of International Studies at Peking University, Director of the Institute for Global Cooperation and Understanding and Director of Global Governance at Peking University, gave the S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture in October 2024. Prof Jia spoke on “The US Presidential Elections: Implications for China-US Relations”. He also gave a Special Lecture on “Rising Geopolitical Competition: Implications for Asia-Pacific and Southeast



Prof Tan Kong Yam



Prof Jia Qingguo

Asia” to participants of the 25th edition of APPSMO during the visit.

Earlier in the year, in February, Lieutenant General (Ret) H.R. McMaster spoke on “Competing Visions for the Indo-Pacific and the World” during his visit as the NSSP Distinguished Visiting Fellow. Lieutenant General (Ret) McMaster is the Fouad and Michelle Ajami Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, and Bernard and Susan Liautaud Visiting Fellow, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University; and Former National Security Advisor, United States of America.



Lieutenant General (Ret) H.R. McMaster

VISITING SCHOLARS

Visiting scholars during the year included the following:

- ▲ Prof Amin Saikal
Adjunct Senior Fellow; and Emeritus Professor of Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Islamic Studies, Australian National University, 24 to 30 November 2024
- ▲ Dr Frank Umbach
Adjunct Senior Fellow; and Senior Associate of the Centre for European Security Strategies, 6 to 8 June 2024
- ▲ Dr Makio Miyagawa
Adjunct Senior Fellow; and Senior Advisor to the Japan National Security Secretariat, 19 to 26 November 2024
- ▲ Dr Marty M. Natalegawa
Distinguished Visiting Fellow; and Distinguished Fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025
- ▲ Dr Duvvuri Subbarao
Visiting Senior Fellow; and Former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, 19 May to 1 June 2024
- ▲ Amb Derek Mitchell
Visiting Senior Fellow; and Senior Adviser (Non-resident), Office of the President and Asia Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 13 to 24 May 2024
- ▲ Dr Cung Vu
Visiting Senior Fellow, 28 April to 10 May 2024

VISITING SCHOLARS



RESEARCH AT CENTRES AND PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTE OF DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC STUDIES (IDSS)

The Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) is consistently ranked among the top think tanks in the region. In addition to its academic and policy-oriented publications, IDSS hosts conferences and webinars, and conducts regular briefings to government officials and other parties. The research agenda and activities of IDSS in 2024 were driven by the respective priorities of its nine programmes.

These programmes are China, United States, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maritime Security, Military Transformations, Regional Security Architecture, South Asia, and Military Studies.



Cake-cutting ceremony to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO), 14 October 2024.

The China Programme has published its research in prominent peer-reviewed journals, including commentaries in think tank outlets such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, as well as media platforms like Channel NewsAsia. In collaboration with the US Programme, it also organised the 5th RSIS Trilateral Exchange, which facilitated a dialogue among scholars from Singapore, the United States, and China on recent developments in US-China relations.

The US Programme focused on developments in US defence and security policies as well as the US presidential elections through webinars and a new podcast series, "Election Watch with USP." Other than co-organising the 5th RSIS Trilateral Exchange in 2024, it has regular exchanges with US think tanks. The team published book

chapters in edited volumes as well as commentary pieces in *The Diplomat* and *Channel News Asia*.

The Indonesia Programme focused on Indonesian politics, military, foreign policy, and developments in Indonesian Islam. This year saw the publication of the book "Indonesia and Islam in Transition" (by Palgrave Macmillan), which is based on research on Indonesian Islamic organisations and movements. The Programme also published two RSIS Policy Reports on the 2024 Presidential Elections as well as articles in leading peer-reviewed journals.

The Malaysia Programme published papers and commentaries, and organised regular events on key political and foreign policy issues in Malaysia. These included party coalition dynamics and race and religion controversies. In particular, the Programme looked closely at the foreign policy preoccupations of the Anwar Ibrahim government, including Malaysia's relations with the major powers, the promotion of foreign investments in Malaysia, the Israel-Gaza conflict and Malaysia's upcoming ASEAN Chairmanship.

The Maritime Security Programme (MARSEC) covered a broad spectrum of issues related to developments in the maritime security environment in its research, teaching, and networking agenda. The 2024 iteration of the annual Regional Maritime Security Outlook Conference brought together a group of international experts to share perspectives on the changing strategic environment and the maritime implications for the region. The Programme, in collaboration with Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), co-organised the Regional MARSEC Practitioner Programme, which brought together more than 130 MARSEC practitioners from regional and extra-regional navies, coastguards, maritime and enforcement agencies, and the shipping community to facilitate exchange of views and perspectives on MARSEC issues.

The Military Transformations Programme (MTP) focused its research, events, and publications on mapping contending defence and military innovation issues, trends, and trajectories. In addition to policy reports and commentaries,

MTP published an edited volume "The AI Wave in Defence Innovation", which brought together leading experts to assess military AI strategic perspectives from major and middle powers alike. MTP also organised a Track 1.5 conference: "Beyond Nuclear: Disruptive Technologies and Strategic Stability in the 21st Century".

The Regional Security Architecture Programme focused its research and publications on security and defence developments in the evolving regional dynamics and the implications of the developments for ASEAN. The Programme published a book chapter on ASEAN's digital transformation and the China-US technological competition in an edited volume. Networking activities included the Track II Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions (NADI) as well as engagements with Vietnamese and Australian counterparts. The Programme also co-organised the 2nd Digital Defence Symposium with the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Cybersecurity and Information Centre of Excellence.

The South Asia Programme (SAP) covered academic and policy research relevant to security issues in South Asia, with a specific focus on India. SAP staff took part in various seminars, including key regional gatherings such as the Raisina Dialogue. SAP has continued to engage with several research institutions focused on India and globally. The programme continues to publish articles in leading

media outlets, think tank publications and peer-reviewed academic journals.

The Military Studies Programme (MSP) collaborates with the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) as a strategic partner in its Professional Military Education and Continuing Education Master's Programme. Committed to addressing the SAF's evolving needs in a dynamic security environment, MSP continually updates and enhances its curriculum to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM RESEARCH (ICPVTR)

Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2024, the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) proved its continuing relevance as a leading regional institute in the fields of counterterrorism (CT) and preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE) through timely research contributions, sustained partnerships and enhanced capacity-building endeavours.

Publications and Research

Throughout the year, ICPVTR's analysts contributed numerous articles, op-eds and commentaries to a number of local and international media platforms, including the *Global Network on Extremism & Technology (GNET)*, *East Asia Forum*, *Lawfare*, *The Diplomat*, *Channel NewsAsia* and *Mimbar Darul Tafsir*.

Senior Fellow Dr Muhammad Haniff Bin Hassan also published a co-translated book, titled *Islamic Rulings and Modern Society: The Imperative Need for Re-contextualising Fatwas to Today's Age* (Muhammadiyah Association Singapore), and contributed a chapter to another volume, titled *Contextualisation of Islam in Singapore: Reviewing Quranic Texts and Prophetic Narrations, in Past and Contemporary Applications* (Muhammadiyah Association Singapore).



ICPVTR 20th Anniversary and Commemorative Tree-Planting Event, 25 March 2024

In collaboration with the non-profit Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), a team of ICPVTR's researchers also created a codebook highlighting the key symbols, slogans and slurs related to terrorism and violent extremism currently in use among Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Melayu speakers within the digital landscape in Indonesia and Malaysia. The codebook was launched during GIFCT's annual Global Multistakeholder Forum in June 2024.

Moreover, in commemoration of ICPVTR's 20th anniversary, RSIS released an edited book volume towards the end of the year providing a comprehensive sweep of developments since ICPVTR's founding, with contributions from ICPVTR heads and analysts, past and present. A special edition of its in-house journal, *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, was also issued in March 2024 which provided an overview of key trends and developments in the past 20 years.

Partnerships

In view of the importance of partnerships and information sharing to CT and P/CVE efforts, for the second year running, ICPVTR conducted a five-day course for members of the Jordanian security apparatus, focusing on the threat landscape and trends in Southeast Asia as well as domestic rehabilitation strategies. Additionally, the Centre hosted several delegations of government and law enforcement officials from the United Arab Emirates, Australia, Japan and the Philippines.

Capacity Building

Now in its 16th edition, ICPVTR held its annual flagship capacity-building and networking programme, the Terrorism Analyst Training Course (TATC), in July 2024. Over five days, participants from local and regional government bodies, academic institutions and private sector organisations heard from 16 specialist speakers on topics ranging from country-specific threat assessments, to jihadists' use of social media, to weaponisable technologies such as artificial intelligence, drones and 3D-printed weapons. This year's keynote speaker, Mr Ali Soufan, founder of The Soufan Center and chief executive officer of The Soufan Group, delivered a pertinent and timely lecture on developments in global conflicts and associated impacts on terrorism, with the volatile Middle East developments as the backdrop. Participants also paid a site visit to Singapore's Internal Security Department (ISD) Heritage Centre and took part in a tabletop exercise to put theory into practice.

ICPVTR also organised about 20 seminars and webinars throughout the year, engaging internal and external speakers to provide their expertise and insights on issues such as the reintegration of former violent extremists into society, the crime-terror nexus and cryptocurrency, non-white involvement in white supremacy and the future of global jihadist movements, among others.

The Centre's scholars were themselves invited to share their insights with local and international entities including the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the INTERPOL Innovation Centre, the Institute of Regional Studies Islamabad and the Home Team Academy Singapore.

ICPVTR's analysts further enriched their research by undertaking field trips to the Philippines, Bangladesh and the United Kingdom (UK) to engage with and learn from local experts, and by attending and presenting at conferences at home and abroad in the UK, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Canada.

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY (CENS)



DRUMS Conference on "Information Manipulation and Interference in the Global Political Environment of Uncertainty", 19-20 November 2024

The Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) is the research centre at RSIS that explores policy issues of Cyber, Disinformation, Foreign Interference, Hybrid Threats, and Threats to Social Resilience.

CENS' publications include articles, edited volumes, book chapters, op-eds, and commentaries on cybercrime, international cyber norms and confidence building measures, international law and rules of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, protection of critical infrastructure and operation technology, cyber threat landscape,

cybersecurity regulation, foreign influence and foreign interference (through investment, economic coercion, business and clan association), POFMA (Protection of Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act), and FICA (Foreign Interference Countermeasures Act), polarisation of society, faultlines and vulnerabilities, gender and security in digital space, identity of diaspora groups, geopolitics and supply chains, AI (Artificial Intelligence) and security, and quantum technology and security (together with the Future Issues and Technology Cluster).

CENS researchers continue to be invited to speak at conferences and workshops around the world on the topics listed above, and CENS continues to participate in Substantive Meetings of the United Nations Open Ended Working Group on Security of an Information and Communication Technologies (UN OEWG on Cyber) in New York, as well to contribute to the Study Group of the Council for Security Cooperation Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

CENS organised annual conferences and workshops to bring together international experts, practitioners, and academics, on Hybrid Threats, "Distortions, Rumours, Untruths, Misinformation, Smears" (DRUMS), and Extremism. The DRUMS 2024 conference focused on "Information Manipulation and Interference in the Global Political Environment of Uncertainty", while the Hybrid Threats 2024 workshop focused on "Confronting Complexity: Safeguarding National Security Against Hybrid Threats".

CENS flagship annual conference has been the Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior National Security Officers, with the support of the National Security Coordination Secretariat (NSCS) in the Prime Minister's Office. It brings together senior government officials with responsibilities for national security matters from Singapore, the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

In 2024, CENS, together with IDSS, co-organised the 2nd Digital Defence Symposium, "Evolving Cyber and Information Trends: Opportunities and Threats for Defence", with support from the ADMM Cyber and Information Centre of Excellence (ACICE). This Symposium brought together ASEAN and non-ASEAN senior defence and military officials, academics, think tanks, and private sector experts to discuss common digital security challenges faced by the defence sectoral.

As rapid technology changes continue to drive the evolution of national security threats, CENS strives through its activities and networks to stay on the cutting edge of this research.

CENTRE FOR NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY STUDIES (NTS CENTRE)

In 2024, the NTS Centre remains highly active and prolific, conducting research and producing policy-relevant analyses through books, journal articles, policy reports, op-eds, and participation in expert discussions (ASEAN, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI),



Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony (left), Head of NTS Centre, speaking at the SWP-RSIS-KAS Workshop on "The Emergence of 'Greater Asia' in Energy and Climate: Geopolitical Trends and Implications for Asia-Europe", 9-10 October 2024

the International Atomic Energy Agency, Planetary Health Summit and 6th Annual Meeting, Pacific Forum Workshop and the Asia-Pacific Leadership Network) aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Biosecurity

The Centre, in collaboration with the Asia Centre for Health Security, released its report "Emerging Biosecurity Landscape in Southeast Asia" (Professor Mely Caballero-Anthony, Mr Julius Trajano, Dr Jose Ma. Luis Montesclaros and Ms Jeselyn). This builds on literature reviews and fieldwork across five Southeast Asian countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand), and culminated in a policy roundtable involving biosecurity experts from various fields. It also co-organised the Australian National University-RSIS Synthetic Biology Ethics Workshop.

Changing Security Environment

Prof Caballero-Anthony, spoke on regional and global security challenges at the ASEAN Think Tank Summit in September, SIPRI 2024 and the Council of Councils (CoC) fifteenth annual conference in Brussels. She published the article “Climate security in Southeast Asia: Navigating Concepts, Approaches and Practices” in *Third World Quarterly* and co-edited the book *Human Security and Empowerment in Asia: Beyond the Pandemic* (Taylor & Francis).

Climate Change and Security

The climate research team completed its two-year Planetary Health seed grant under the Social Science and Humanities Research 2025 Strategic Plan in 2022, culminating in a proposal development meeting and workshop in February, bringing together researchers from various fields at NTU. It published the “*Climate Change and its Impacts on Peace and Security in Southeast Asia*” (Prof Caballero-Anthony, Mr Trajano, Dr Alistair D.B Cook, Ms S. Nanthini, Dr Montesclaros, Mr Keith Paolo C. Landicho and Ms Danielle Lynn Goh), launched at the 2024 Planetary Health Summit in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. RSIS partnered with the Sunway Centre for Planetary Health on a roundtable discussion on Climate, Peace and Security in ASEAN. Ms Margareth Sembiring presented her paper “Critical Geopolitics of Global Environmental Norms: Exploring Indonesia’s Response to Climate Mitigation Agenda” at the 120th American Political Science Association Meeting (Philadelphia, US), while Ms Goh was a discussant at the Asia-Pacific Roundtable on Climate Change and Environmental Security.

Food Security

Given the critical role of ASEAN regional food supply chains to Singapore’s food security, Professor Paul Teng and Dr Montesclaros co-facilitated the Mission-Vision workshop for the newly established Consortium for Agricultural Development, Research, and Extension in Southeast Asia as a network to drive agricultural transformation toward sustainable and inclusive development, hosted by the Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture. This year also saw the launch of the Food Security Issues in Asia book, edited by Professor Teng with a foreword by Amb Ong Keng Yong, and Dr Montesclaros among the authors/co-panelists. Dr Montesclaros chaired the webinar “Policy Options for Asia and Global Community in the Face of Export Bans”, and spoke on digital agricultural transformation during the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community’s forum on Digital

Transformation for Poverty Alleviation; ASEAN Critical Emerging Technologies Summit; and 20th ASEAN-India Summit: From Outcomes to Implementation seminar.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)

The HADR Programme actively contributed to scholarly and policy discussions on humanitarian and disaster issues in Asia, serving as the knowledge partner for the ASEAN Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management. The Programme, in collaboration with the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre, co-hosted the 3rd Humanitarian Futures Forum, bringing together various stakeholders to improve strategic foresight and multi-stakeholder collaboration on humanitarian affairs. It launched an edited collection, “Disasters and Humanitarian Action: Dynamic Shifts, Reflections and Anticipating Future Directions” at the Humanitarian Futures Forum. Dr Cook and Prof. Caballero-Anthony co-edited a special issue on climate security in the *Third World Quarterly* journal. Ms Nanthini participated in regional HADR events such as the Disaster Resilience Programme of the Indo-Pacific Cooperation Network in Fiji and Tonga, while Mr Landicho became a certified ASEAN competency assessor in disaster management through the ASCEND initiative.

Nuclear Energy

Mr Trajano presented the role of think tanks and universities in enhancing nuclear security in Southeast Asia at the International Conference on Nuclear Security, organised by the International Atomic Energy Agency in Austria in May, as well as 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 in February.

Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

The Centre actively engaged in the emerging discussion on WPS, following the release of the WPS Regional Plan of Action (RPA) in Southeast Asia. Dr Tamara Nair was named one of the top 20 Thought Leaders on WPS in the region by UNWomen and was featured at a photo exhibition, during the launch of the WPS RPA in Phnom Penh in December 2022. She was also involved in key meetings on WPS and regional security such as the CSCAP WPS Study Group meetings. As the Singapore representative to the ASEAN Women for Peace Registry, she is currently working on the Singapore Report for the ASEAN-wide study on Women in Peace Processes.

CENTRE FOR MULTILATERALISM STUDIES (CMS)

The Centre for Multilateralism Studies (CMS) conducts cutting-edge research, teaching, training, and networking on cooperative multilateralism in the Asia Pacific region. The Centre aims to contribute to international academic discourse and policy dialogue, mainly through its two research strands—economic multilateralism, and diplomatic and security multilateralism—which focus on scholarly and policy research on multilateral issues and the regional architecture in the Asia Pacific.

CMS’ research on economic multilateralism concerns issues of international trade, monetary, and financial integration in ASEAN and the wider region; tracing the advances in ASEAN’s digital economy and data



Dr Joel Ng, Research Fellow and Deputy Head of CMS, speaking at the RSIS-IPI Report Launch Seminar on “Small States and the Multilateral System: Creating a More Inclusive and Equitable World for All”, 1 November 2024. Beside him is Dr Kaewkamol Pitakdumrongkit, Senior Fellow and Head of CMS.

governance; and exploring the evolving linkages between various Asian sub-regions and with countries outside the region through multilateral trade agreements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). CMS also looks into developments in the centralised rules-based global economic architecture, including the Group of Twenty (G20), to ensure complementarity between global and regional initiatives.

As the race to construct a global data governance regime intensifies, the International Political Economy team examined ASEAN’s trajectory in digital competition through the Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA). The team also published works discussing what the 2024 US Presidential Election would portend for the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) Supply Chain Agreement; Singapore’s proposal on global generative AI governance;

how a new evolving global economic architecture, or a Bretton Woods 2.0, would look like; and examined issues of copyright dilemma shaping the future of generative AI.

The Centre’s research on diplomatic and security multilateralism focuses on inter-governmental mechanisms and Track 2 initiatives in defence diplomacy such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit (EAS), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Shangri-la Dialogue, and the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP). Research outputs included, among others, published works on the BRICS Plus challenge and emerging hierarchical multilateralism; explored the prospects of armed naval multilateralism in the Red Sea; debated on the relevance of the UN under the pressure of today’s great power competition; and examined the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation initiative and prospects for synergies in sub-regional cooperation. Together with the International Peace Institute, CMS launched a headline report on small state agency and improving global governance through the multilateral system, in conjunction with the UN Summit of the Future.

CMS organised various workshops, seminars, and roundtables throughout the year, covering topics such as “The Return of Autarkic Thought” which explored whether multilateral free trade can ebb the tide of contemporary autarkic thinking in major economies. The seminars on “Hedging by Multiple Means? Middlepowerism and the Bilateral-Multilateral Nexus in Indo-Pacific” discussed the conceptions and misconceptions of hedging and their implications for regionalism; “Global Order and Multilateralism: Adaptation Beyond the State” examined the sources of the global order’s resilience; “Small States and the Evolving International Order” discussed how small states have approached order problems, how their responses have reshaped international order, and what this bodes for the future; and “AI Governance: Should Domestic or International Policy Lead?” explored how best to sequence domestic and international policy on AI. The CMS annual workshop for 2024 on the topic “Navigating Global Challenges: ASEAN’s Responses to the Changing Strategic and Economic Landscape” aimed to evaluate the prospects for multilateralism in today’s challenging climate, that is further complicated by trends in industrial policy, digitalisation, and sustainable economic development.

CMS staff's views and opinions were regularly sought out by and appeared in regional and international media outlets such as *Channel NewsAsia*, *South China Morning Post*, *Financial Times (UK)*, *Nikkei Weekly* and *Wall Street Journal*.

STUDIES IN INTER-RELIGIOUS RELATIONS IN PLURAL SOCIETIES (SRP) PROGRAMME

The SRP Programme continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the discourse and study of inter-religious relations in pluralistic societies, particularly in Singapore. Through focused research and collaboration with its religious community partners and wider community engagements, the Programme remains committed to this evolving field.

Enhancing Singapore's Inter-Religious Sector

The SRP Programme is dedicated to enhancing the inter-religious landscape by offering high-quality education. In the academic year 2023/2024, four SRP courses were offered as electives for RSIS' MSc programmes. Several MSc students, along with participants from the Community Access Programme (CAP), enrolled in these courses. CAP, a pioneering initiative within RSIS, provided a platform for religious community members and public service professionals to deepen their understanding of inter-religious relations and social cohesion.



Dr Paul Hedges (right), Professor of Interreligious Studies at the SRP Programme, speaking at the conference on "The Vatican & Inter-Religious Diplomacy in Asia", 29-30 August 2024.

Knowledge Dissemination and Community Engagement

Since its inception, the SRP Programme has been committed to disseminating knowledge to the broader community beyond RSIS. This mission has been sustained through public seminars and webinars, symposiums, and the annual Executive Programme (EP). The 9th Executive Programme,

held from 16 to 17 July 2024, was themed "Words that Wound: Encountering & Combating Religious Intolerance." The event featured 11 distinguished speakers, including academics, social media and corporate representatives, and interfaith activists, engaging around 50 participants from a range of sectors, including policymakers, civil servants, and religious leaders.

In addition to the EP, SRP hosted a series of public seminars and webinars covering diverse themes pertinent to inter-religious relations. Notable webinars included:

1. "Philosophical Encounters: Islam and the Religious Other" by Prof Datuk Dr Osman Bakar
2. "Inclusive or Exclusive? Engaging 'The Religious Other' in Islamic Tradition" by Prof Abdullah Saeed
3. "The Evolution of Wellbeing in Megachurches: From Healing to Personal Fulfilment" by Dr Jayeel Cornelio
4. "Encountering Hindutva in the Diasporas: The Case in the Netherlands" by Dr Priya Swamy

In anticipation of the Pope's visit to Singapore this year, SRP co-hosted the conference "The Vatican & Inter-Religious Diplomacy in Asia" in collaboration with the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at NUS. Held from 29 to 30 August 2024, the conference examined the Vatican's role in fostering interfaith diplomacy in Asia. A total of 70 persons, including local and international scholars, diplomats, religious and community leaders spoke and engaged on the subject over the two-day event.

Contributing to Scholarship in Inter-Religious Relations

The SRP Programme remains steadfast in its commitment to contributing to the academic field of inter-religious relations. Its peer-reviewed online journal, *Interreligious Relations (IRR)*, is now in its fifth year. Since its launch in 2019, the journal has published 30 articles. With an international editorial board of 25 scholars, the journal addresses topics such as religious diversity, religious contextualisation, religious-secular interactions, religiously motivated violence and peacebuilding, and cognate themes.

The Programme continues to pursue important research on several research streams, including Singapore's landscape on interreligious relations, Christian exclusivist ideologies, Hindu nationalism, Islamic extremism, and global trends in religion, exclusivism and secularism.

SRP's 10th anniversary

On 13 November 2024, the SRP Programme celebrated its 10th anniversary with an event attended by RSIS colleagues and the public. The highlight of the celebration was a lecture by Professor Abdullah Saeed, titled "Interpreting Sacred Texts in a Pluralistic World." The event also acknowledged Professor Saeed's invaluable contributions as the Peter Lim (Visiting) Professor of Peace Studies. In commemoration of the anniversary, the SRP Programme released a limited-edition book featuring a compilation of key IRR entries, encapsulating the Programme's significant contributions to inter-religious discourse over the past decade.

NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAMME (NSSP)

The National Security Studies Programme (NSSP) was launched in April 2016 with the primary aim of conducting research into key episodes of Singapore's national security history and drawing out contemporary implications for the academic and larger community. Its research seeks to address a range of national security challenges facing small, globalised, multi-ethnic city-states and generate intellectual capital pertinent for security practitioners. Apart from producing research and teaching the Master's Programmes in RSIS, NSSP researchers also share their insights with various constituencies including public sector officers through seminars or training courses.

NSSP produces policy-oriented research for both the local practitioner community, the general academic and public audiences.

NSSP researchers contributed to academic and public discussions on national security issues including the significant local media platforms such as *The Straits Times*, *TODAY*, *Channel NewsAsia* as well as the *RSIS Commentary* series. NSSP researchers worked on publication projects that presented and discussed critical national security issues in an accessible manner for the general academic and public audiences. NSSP conducted a series of dialogues that address the fundamentals of Singapore's national security policy for public sector professionals and leaders.

NSSP researchers have participated in flagship events for national security practitioners such as the Special Forces Commanders' Conference and the Asia Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers.

NSSP features as lecturers at significant executive education platforms such as the National Security Milestone Programme and National Security Executive Programme for civil service leaders. In addition, NSSP researchers lectured in courses conducted at the Home Team Academy and SAFTI Military Institute. In combination, these engagements form part of its significant role in executive education, a significant aspect of NSSP's work.

As part of its academic enterprise, NSSP held its second "Singapore Universities' National Security Forum". The forum enabled students from Singapore public-funded universities to engage political office holders, policy makers, industry leaders and academics on how Singapore can maintain its standing as a global and open city while effectively resisting external pressures and foreign influence. The Forum helped to commemorate 40 years of Total Defence



Singapore Universities' National Security Forum, 5 July 2024

and the Minister of State for Home Affairs and Social and Family Development, Ms Sun Xueling delivered the opening address for the forum.

NSSP hosted the former US National Security Advisor, Lieutenant General (Ret) Herbert Raymond (H.R.) McMaster for its Distinguished Visitors Programme (DVP) in February 2024. During his week in Singapore, General McMaster delivered closed-door dialogues and a distinguished public lecture on the topics of “Strategic Empathy as the Foundation for Geopolitical Competition”, “National Security Strategy: Integrated Strategies for our Most Pressing Challenges” and “Competing Visions for the Indo-Pacific and the World”. As part the DVP, General McMaster also held discussions and exchanged ideas with various political office holders and senior government officials.

SOCIAL COHESION RESEARCH PROGRAMME (SCRP)

Established in January 2024, the Social Cohesion Research Programme (SCRP) at RSIS seeks to engage in policy-oriented research, forge strategic partnerships, and develop leadership to inspire cohesive and resilient societies, both within Southeast Asia and beyond.

With this in mind, SCRCP aspires to:

1. Promote social cohesion research and nurture research talent in this domain.
2. Create platforms for dialogue and problem-solving on interfaith and social cohesion issues.
3. Inspire collaborative approaches across societies towards the practice of social cohesion.

Within a year of its establishment, the SCRCP team has made significant progress both in research as well as the establishment of strategic partnerships.

Policy-Oriented Research Projects

To advance research on social cohesion, SCRCP has embarked on two projects. First, a follow-up edition of the Southeast Asian Social Cohesion Radar, and second, a study that examines pro-social practices and norms in Singapore.

For the former, 1,000 participants in each of the 10 Southeast Asian countries will be surveyed. The individual-level data will be analysed alongside country-level factors to better elucidate country-specific nuances. The latter project—which is aimed at identifying, codifying and evaluating

pro-social practices and norms that foster cohesion—will examine specific racial and/or religious practices that either promote or hinder multicultural understanding. It is hoped that the findings from both projects would inform policymaking.

Webinar on “Everyday Multiculturalism”

This webinar on 26 March 2024 sought to examine the lived experiences and intersections in our daily rituals that can be harnessed to forge stronger ties with social “others”. It featured Dr Selvaraj Velayutham, Associate Professor of Sociology at Macquarie University, and Dr Laavanya Kathiravelu, Associate Professor of Sociology at NTU. The webinar was inspired by *Confident Identities, Connected Communities*, the edited volume that builds upon conversations from the International Conference of Cohesive Societies (ICCS) 2022.

ICCS Inter-sessional Event 2024: “Inspiring Cohesive and Resilient Societies”

Designed to maintain momentum between the larger Conferences, the ICCS Inter-sessional Event, titled “Inspiring Cohesive and Resilient Societies”, was held from 24 to 26 September 2024. It was attended by more than a hundred delegates from Singapore, Southeast Asia and beyond. Invited speakers include Dr Richard Wike, Prof Mona Siddiqui, Prof Toshiaki Sasao, Dr Selvaraj Velayutham, Ms Wu Ye-Min and Mr Shukul Raaj Kumar. Apart from keynote lectures and panel discussions, two skills workshops on futures planning and conflict mediation also provided delegates a chance to collaborate and develop solutions for some of today’s perennial challenges. As part of community engagement, delegates learnt more about online content moderation through a showcase by Google and visited the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG) Gallery at Masjid Khadijah to learn about the city-state’s ground-up approach in tackling radicalism.

Conferences and Strategic Engagements

Besides local engagements, the SCRCP team has attended over five conferences and more than a dozen strategic engagements with community stakeholders throughout the year. These include a special event hosted by the New Zealand Wellington Interfaith Council in April; the International Interreligious Conference 2024 held in Rome in May; the International Conference on Cross-Cultural

Religious Literacy held in Jakarta in July; the World Association for Public Opinion Research (WAPOR) 2024 Annual Conference held in Seoul in August; as well as the 2nd Dialogue Cities Southeast Asia Conference held in Davao in September.

FUTURE ISSUES AND TECHNOLOGY (FIT)

The Future Issues and Technology (FIT) research cluster identifies emerging cross-cutting issues and technology that have strategic impact on policy, as well as potential disruptive national security implications. It supports the development of RSIS’ research agenda on issues where science and technology intersect with national security, including critical emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), space, quantum, and energy.

FIT analyses the impact of policy and technology developments and is co-publishing multi-stage policy reports. FIT works collaboratively with various programmes in RSIS, NTU, and around the world, and various stakeholders, to explore and incubate topics that could become new research areas. The research team speaks at local and international conferences and builds up RSIS’ networks with science and technology experts and researchers working on ideas yet to enter the mainstream.

Different aspects of emerging technologies are the focus of FIT publications:

1. Artificial intelligence – the dangers of deepfakes to national security and defence, impact of AI on Southeast Asian elections, and ASEAN cooperation against AI-powered cyber influence operations,
2. Space – space economy, Earth observation, and near-equatorial orbit satellites,
3. Energy – fusion, nuclear, and hydrogen, and
4. Applications – the potential of red hydrogen for sustainable aviation, and applications of space technologies for public health.

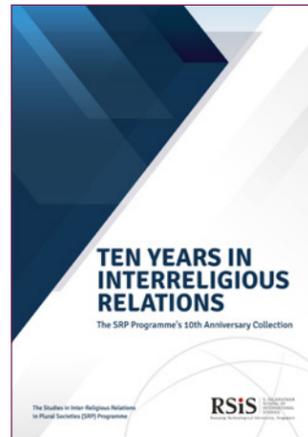
FIT also hosted and brought together experts at events which highlighted the impact of technological geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific region:

1. RSIS roundtable on differentiating among deep tech projects (from AI to the metaverse) for policymakers, and
2. RSIS / CQT / SG Innovate workshop on responsible quantum technologies.

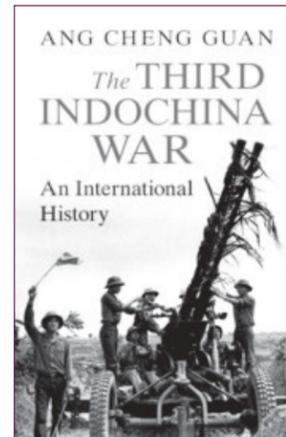


Dr Leong Chan-Hoong, Head of SCRCP, giving the opening address at the ICCS Inter-sessional Event, 24-26 September 2024

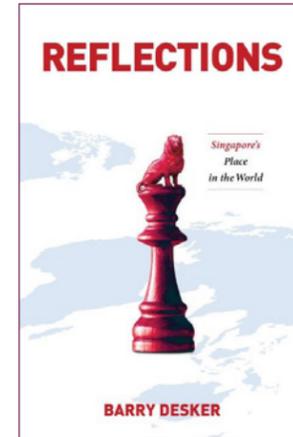
BOOKS BY RSIS STAFF



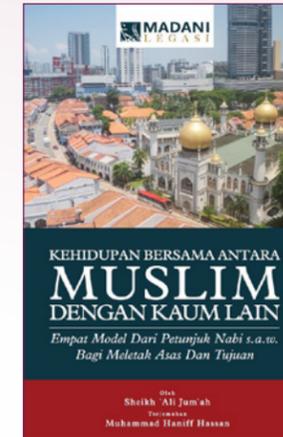
Ten Years in Interreligious Relations: The SRP Programme's 10th Anniversary Collection
Acma! Zuheyr Iefan Bin Abdul Wahid and Mohamed Nassir
 SRP Programme, RSIS
 ISBN: 9789819415045



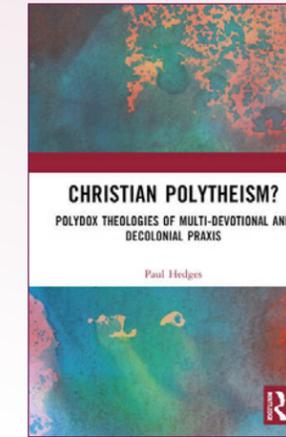
The Third Indochina War: An International History
Ang Cheng Guan
 Cambridge University Press
 ISBN: 9781009560054



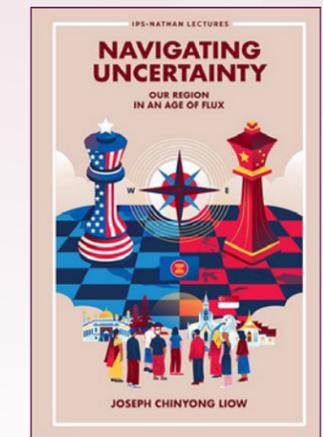
Reflections: Singapore's Place in the World
Barry Desker
 Straits Times Press
 ISBN: 9789815081190



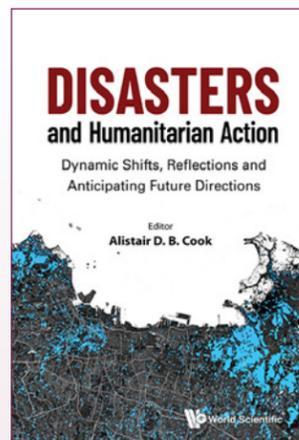
Kehidupan Bersama Antara Muslim Dengan Kaum Lain: Empat Model Dari Petunjuk Nabi s.a.w. Bagi Meletak Asas dan Tujuan (Muslims' Coexistence With Other Communities: Four Models From the Prophet to Provide Foundation and Objective)
Sheikh Ali Jum'ah, Muhammad Haniff Hassan (translators)
 Madani Institute
 ISBN: 9789819405268



Christian Polytheism? Polydox Theologies of Multi-devotional and Decolonial Praxis
Paul Hedges
 Routledge
 ISBN: 9781032605500



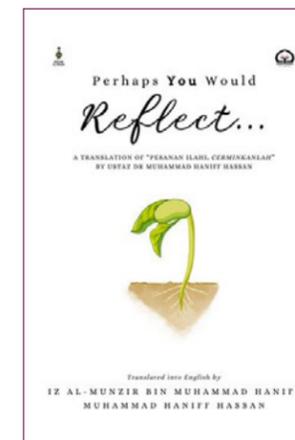
Navigating Uncertainty: Our Region in an Age of Flux
Joseph Liow Chün Yong
 World Scientific
 ISBN: 9789811296260



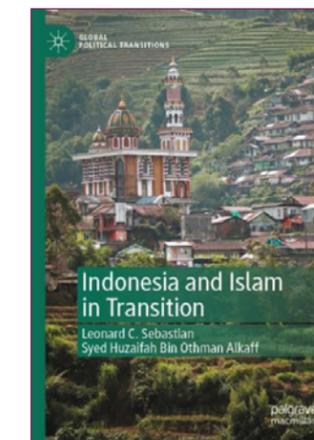
Disasters and Humanitarian Action: Dynamic Shifts, Reflections and Anticipating Future Directions
Alistair D. B. Cook (Ed.)
 World Scientific
 ISBN: 9789819801886

“ This book serves as a poignant reminder that in an ever-changing world so is the risk landscape. Disasters and humanitarian crises can strike without warning underscoring the importance of futures-thinking in policymaking, rooted in a deep understanding of the lessons from the past and the complexities and interconnectedness of the global community. As we navigate the uncertainties of the future, let us draw strength from the lessons learned from the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. Amidst the widespread destruction and despair, stories of courage, hope, and perseverance emerged, serving as an inspiration to rise above adversity and rebuild with renewed determination.

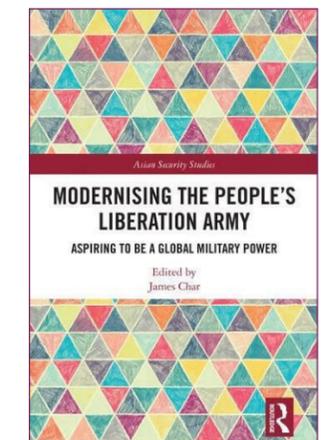
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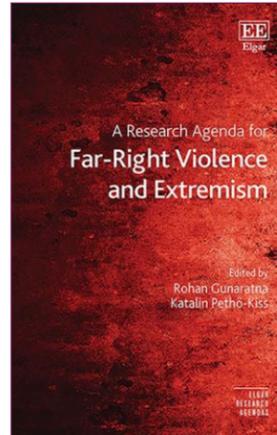
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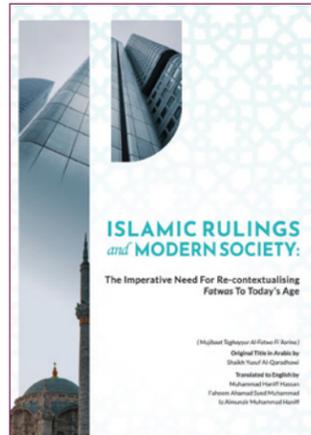
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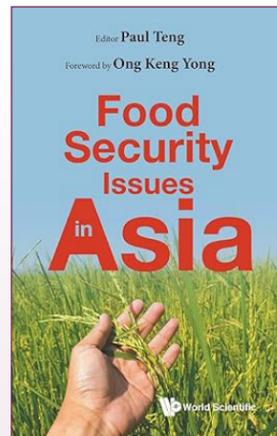
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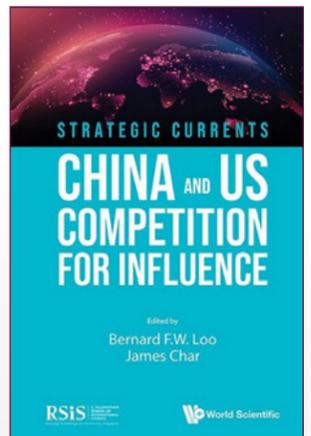
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SELECTED ESSAYS

➤ CHINA UNDER PRESIDENT XI JINPING: A NEW ERA OF STRATEGIC REORIENTATION

By Prof Tan Kong Yam

Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has undertaken a profound transformation, aimed at reshaping its economic, technological, and geopolitical foundations. This shift from a high-growth, export-driven model to one centred on security, sustainability and domestic innovation defines Xi's tenure. It reflects his vision of a modern, self-reliant China poised for global influence, responding to both internal challenges and external pressures.

➤ FOOD SECURITY AS SUPPLY SECURITY: GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ASEAN

By Jose Ma. Luis Montesclaros

Global supply chains have been disrupted in recent years by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical threats such as the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war, the 2023 Hamas-Israel conflict, and the escalating US-China trade war. To buffer against such disruptions, many countries have explored strategies to attain greater supply security in terms of stability of prices and supplies. They have leveraged strategies such as diverting trade towards geopolitical allies (friendshoring), expanding the number of supply sources to reduce dependence on riskier sources (diversification), and increasing reliance on neighbouring countries (nearshoring).

➤ TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND THE FUTURE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS

By Benjamin Ang and Ben Chua

Public policy making has never been easy, and the rapid development of technology has only made it harder. On one hand, the fast pace of technological change makes multi-stakeholder engagement and public-private partnership essential in helping to identify potential impacts, building public legitimacy, balancing interests and ensuring the feasibility and relevance of technology policies. On the other hand, when states and stakeholders are polarised, dramatic deadlocks between them are triggered.

➤ WHAT DOES TRUMP 2.0 MEAN FOR THE US PARTY SYSTEM AND FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA?

By Adrian Ang U-Jin

President-elect Donald Trump's resounding defeat of Vice President Kamala Harris marks a realignment of the US party system and change in the parties' social bases and issue cleavages. Trump 2.0 brings with it the possibility of an intensification of the competition between Washington and Beijing as well as new tariff levels not seen in nearly 100 years. Intensified competition will increase the asymmetry of US engagement in the region — one that is focused on hard power rather than economic engagement — and will increase the region's economic dependence on China.

➤ JOKOWI'S LEGACIES AND THE INCOMING PRABOWO ADMINISTRATION: CHANGE OR CONTINUITY?

By Alexander Arifianto and Adhi Priamarizki

Prabowo Subianto won the 2024 Indonesian presidential election and was sworn in as Indonesia's eighth president on 20 October 2024. This policy report outlines key legacies of his predecessor Joko Widodo ("Jokowi") and develops several scenarios on how the Prabowo-Jokowi relationship could evolve and how it might help shape Prabowo's policies during his upcoming five-year term (2024-2029).

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Xi Jinping's Vision: Addressing Internal and External Challenges

President Xi's leadership has emphasised the importance of securing China's future against the vulnerabilities exposed by its previous growth model. His 2022 speech, published in the party's theoretical journal, *Qiushi* (求是), underscored the existential threat of ideological decay within the Communist Party of China (CPC). Xi warned, "If the people we cultivate no longer believe in Marxism and Communism ... tragedies like the collapse of Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union will occur!" This statement encapsulates his rationale for combining economic reorientation with a robust reinforcement of party control and ideological fidelity.

Economic Transformation: From Speculation to Innovation Redirecting National Savings

Xi's administration seeks to steer China's vast national savings away from speculative real estate investments towards productive sectors. The focus is on advanced manufacturing and supporting industries that contribute to technological advancement.

Technological Self-Reliance: A Strategic Imperative

The realisation of China's technological vulnerabilities, highlighted by US sanctions on companies like ZTE, catalysed an aggressive push for self-reliance. This strategic change in direction was partly triggered by Xi's

painful recognition of China's vulnerability due to its weak technological development. In March 2017, Chinese state-owned multinational telecommunications equipment and systems company ZTE Corp pleaded guilty to illegally exporting US technology to Iran and North Korea in violation of US trade sanctions. It was fined a total of US\$1.19 billion by the US Department of Commerce. However, the Department of Commerce later found that ZTE had made false statements regarding its compliance with some earlier agreements and banned US companies from exporting to ZTE for seven years. At least 25% of the components on ZTE smartphones originated from the United States, including Qualcomm processors and "certified Android" software from Google Mobile Services.

In order to save ZTE, President Xi personally pleaded ZTE's case to then president Donald Trump. On 7 June 2018, ZTE agreed to a settlement with the Department of Commerce in order to lift the export ban. The company agreed to pay a US\$1 billion fine, place an additional US\$400 million of suspended penalties in escrow, replace its entire senior management, and establish a compliance department selected by the US Department of Commerce. President Trump and the US regulatory agency could have forgotten the incident. However, for President Xi, it was a great personal humiliation that he vowed to redress through greater technological independence.

Innovation-driven Enterprises: Prioritising Homegrown Breakthroughs in Sectors Critical for Global Leadership

The government's regulatory crackdown on property developers is designed to curb economic volatility while channeling capital into critical industries, including artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductor production, quantum computing, advanced telecommunications (5G and 6G), biotechnology and healthcare, space exploration, renewable energy systems and battery storage technologies.

The policy focused on transiting from “Made in China” to “Created in China”. This transition to an innovation-led economy is central to Xi’s agenda. The strategy aims to elevate China’s global value-chain position while reducing reliance on foreign technology. Some of the national programmes and policies include the “Little Giants” programme involving state support for small and medium enterprises specialising in critical technologies; public-private collaboration to encourage cooperation between government agencies and private firms like Huawei and Tencent to achieve technological goals; investment in education and R&D, with strong emphasis on STEM education; and funding for research institutions to build a talent pipeline.

Most critically, the strategy is focused on technocratic leadership, promoting the rise of leaders with expertise in science and engineering to ensure alignment with the party’s innovation-driven policies. The CPC’s recent appointments reflect this technocratic focus, with leaders with STEM background promoted to the Politburo, like Ding Xuexiang (b. 1962), first-ranked vice premier of the State Council; Ma Xingrui (b. 1959), party secretary of Xinjiang; Yin Li (b. 1962), party secretary of Beijing; Liu Guozhong (b. 1962), fourth-ranked vice premier of the State Council; Li Ganjie (b. 1964), head of the Central Organisation Department; Zhang Guoqing (b. 1964), third-ranked vice premier of the State Council; Chen Wenqing (b. 1960), secretary of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission; Chen Jining (b.1964), party secretary of Shanghai; and Yuan Jiajun (born 1962), party secretary of Chongqing.

Geopolitical Reorientation: Strengthening Global Influence

President Xi’s strategic reorientation extends beyond domestic reforms, aiming to recalibrate China’s global presence and counter Western dominance. China’s status as ASEAN’s largest trading partner underscores its influence in Southeast Asia. Initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) enhance infrastructure connectivity, with projects such as high-speed rail networks and energy systems reinforcing China’s role as a development partner. China’s partnerships with BRICS and Global South nations provide access to resources and political alliances. Through institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), China offers an alternative to Western-led financial systems, positioning itself as a champion of developing economies.

Promise and Peril: Evaluating Xi’s Strategic Vision

The Promise

Xi’s strategic vision could enhance China’s technological leadership, with advances in AI, renewable energy and space technology underscoring China’s growing innovation capabilities. It could also enhance China’s global influence by expanding global partnerships, strengthening ties with ASEAN and the Global South and diversifying China’s trade and investment networks. Improvement in economic sustainability could also help China to transit to high-value industries and green technologies, thereby ensuring long-term growth potential.

The Peril

However, there is a significant economic drawback to this strategy: domestic overregulation and excessive party oversight risk stifling private-sector dynamism and undermining innovation. In addition, growing inequality and demographic pressures could destabilise the social fabric. Geopolitical risks like aggressive foreign policy actions, particularly in contested regions like the South China Sea, may isolate China diplomatically.

Underestimating US Dynamism

China’s national slogan since 2021, “The East is Rising, the West is Declining”, reflects confidence in its ascendancy over the United States. However, as Singapore’s late leader Lee Kuan Yew noted, the United States excels in leveraging global talent and fostering bottom-up creativity, a strength China struggles to replicate due to its top-down, homogeneous governance model. Writing in *Commentary* magazine on 6 October 2011, Harvard professor Joseph Nye said, “As Lee Kuan Yew once told me, China can draw on a talent pool of 1.3 billion people, but the US can draw on the world’s 7 billion and recombine them in a diverse culture that exudes creativity in a way that ethnic Han nationalism cannot.”

US Responses under President Trump

With the second coming of Donald Trump, a hardline approach towards China is evident in the president-elect’s following nominations for key government positions:

- ▲ Marco Rubio: Secretary of State
- ▲ Pete Hegseth: Secretary of Defense

- ▲ Elise Stefanik: US Ambassador to the United Nations
- ▲ Robert Lighthizer: Trade Policy Lead
- ▲ Mike Waltz: National Security Adviser

Trump’s plan to raise tariffs on Chinese imports to 60% poses great challenges and will have significant impact on China’s growth. According to Morgan Stanley, this policy is projected to reduce China’s 2025 GDP growth from the expected 4.8% to approximately 3.4%, a drop of 1.4 percentage points. UBS bank estimates that imposing 60% tariffs on Chinese goods will suppress China’s GDP growth by approximately 2.5 percentage points within the first 12 months. However, if China implements countermeasures, the drag could be limited to 1.5 percentage points.

Navigating the Future: Challenges and Opportunities

While a fragile truce might emerge in the trade war, the technological rivalry between the United States and China will persist as a long-term conflict. China’s countermeasures

could include expanding domestic demand, broadening markets to reduce reliance on the United States and leveraging centralised negotiation strategies to maintain stability.

Conclusion: Balancing Promise with Peril

President Xi Jinping’s strategic reorientation marks a bold effort to redefine China’s role in the global order. By prioritising self-reliance, fostering domestic innovation and building global partnerships, China seeks to navigate an increasingly complex international landscape. However, the success of this vision depends on balancing economic goals with social stability, asserting global influence without alienating key partners, and responding adeptly to US challenges. If managed poorly, it could undermine China’s long-term sustainable growth and usher in an era of steady decline. If managed effectively, Xi’s agenda could reshape not only China’s future but also the global order in the 21st century.

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FOOD SECURITY AS SUPPLY SECURITY: GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ASEAN



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Global supply chains have been disrupted in recent years by the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical threats such as the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war, the 2023 Hamas-Israel conflict, and the escalating US-China trade war. To buffer against such disruptions, many countries have explored strategies to attain greater *supply security* in terms of stability of prices and supplies. They have leveraged strategies such as diverting trade towards geopolitical allies (*friendshoring*), expanding the number of supply sources to reduce dependence on riskier sources (*diversification*), and increasing reliance on neighbouring countries (*nearshoring*).

Food supply chains are not immune to these challenges. Apart from export bans for critical commodities like rice, wheat and maize, the productivity of the food sector has also been affected by climate impacts, including droughts and floods, and migrations of pests and diseases. As a result of environmental disruptions, agricultural productivity growth has slowed down, leading to rising undernourishment rates globally and within Southeast Asia since 2014, even before the global supply chain disruptions of the 2020s.¹ Food security and the resilience of food supply chains can thus be seen as a subset of the broader supply security landscape that countries are seeking to navigate, as my co-authors and I argued in *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*.² This reality necessitates renewed attention to how countries are securing their rice bowls and breadbaskets and to the role of regional food supply chains in this regard.

Supply Security and Food Security as Critical to States

Supply security has been recognised as a critical challenge for states as disruptions can stagger industrial production, with grave implications for economic security in the form of lost jobs and higher prices of goods. The United States, for instance, passed its *Strategic and Critical Stockpiling Act* in 1939 amid geopolitical tensions at that time in Europe and East Asia.³

Supply security is especially important to the European Union, for instance, given its high degree of trade dependence for domestic consumption. The high frequency of disruptions to the sector has led to calls questioning whether a *laissez-faire* approach is still sufficient to maintain domestic stability.

Like the broader issue of supply security, food security is also important to states since the inability to maintain the stability of domestic food supplies and prices has had critical linkages with the legitimacy of political regimes. A case in point is the 2024 downfall of Bangladesh's prime minister, Sheikh Hasina. Her downfall occurred amid the country's financial crisis, which left over 37 million in economic distress and moderate-to-severe food insecurity.⁴ Sri Lanka's former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa's ouster in 2022 had similar causes. Following a currency reserve shortage, his government swiftly reduced farmer subsidies

for imported fertilisers. Farmers were instead encouraged to engage in organic production, which led to significant harvest losses and food price inflation upwards of 50%. Consequently, 9 in 10 families were forced to skip meals.⁵

On the flip side, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent victory in India's national elections can be attributed in part to the steps he took to enhance food security. His government moved food stocks away from public stockpiles allocated for the poorest populations and into open markets to cool the grain price inflation faced by the growing middle-income population,⁶ which did not qualify for food aid. Additionally, his grain export bans helped further quell domestic grain price inflation. Thus, food security remains one among the contributory factors to the rise and fall of regimes in recent years.

Regional Approach in ASEAN: Food as a Community Matter

In light of the geopolitical disruptions and their implications, attaining food supply chain resilience increasingly requires what a joint publication by the OECD and two UN agencies calls a context-specific "territorial approach"⁷ that addresses the unique constraints countries and their sub-national areas face.

Yet, Dr David Laborde, director of the UN FAO Agrifood Statistics Division, noted during a recent RSIS webinar that countries tend to fall into self-defeating "non-cooperative" behaviour such as by imposing food export bans to safeguard domestic food supplies and affordability.⁸ Other reasons for banning exports include stabilising prices for intermediate goods such as oil palm, which serves as inputs for manufactured goods like vegetable oils and bioethanol, or wheat and maize, which are used as livestock feed. The problem, he noted, lies in the kind of policy tools that countries choose to use. For instance, India's wheat export ban seems to have invited a tit-for-tat response from Indonesia, which followed India's action with a ban on the export of oil palm. Such export bans may effectively be transferring one country's food price inflation to other countries.

Regional platforms such as ASEAN present an opportunity for improving international food supply chain coordination to the benefit of Member States. Responding to the global food price crisis of 2007–2008, ASEAN Member States agreed on a regional food security mechanism, namely, the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework for 2009–2013. In 2017, ASEAN countries committed to the second UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of "Zero Hunger" by 2030.⁹ The latest 2021–2025 AIFS sets out three principles for regional partnership, including country-level ownership of member countries' respective development policies and strategies; alignment of donor support behind the priorities of each member's national development strategy; and harmonisation and coordination of donor efforts to avoid duplication and reduce transaction costs for ASEAN Member States.¹⁰

Thus, regional platforms like ASEAN speak to some of the earlier strategies applied to attain supply chain security. More than just friendshoring, in fact, ASEAN's Member States have a common interest in building a food-secure region as part of ASEAN's envisioned economic and sociocultural communities, feeding into regional sociopolitical stability as well.

Geopolitical Implications: Focusing on Regional Interests

Amid the ongoing trade wars and proactive approaches taken by countries to ensure supply security, ASEAN's regional approach should count among the best practices for countries and regions to emulate. What is of great interest is the region's ability to collaborate despite differences in leanings within the US–China geopolitical spectrum.

For instance, the region maintains an ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS),¹¹ supported by its "Plus Three" partners, comprising China, on one end of the spectrum, and Japan and South Korea (US-aligned), on the other end. This initiative seeks to improve transparency and stability in regional supplies and prices. The ASEAN Plus

¹ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO, "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World: Urbanization, Agrifood Systems Transformation and Healthy Diets across the Rural–Urban Continuum", FAO, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc3017en>.

² Christine Wiecek, Bettina Rudloff, Kristina Mensah, et al., "Geostrategic Dimensions of Recent Food Policy Decisions", *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 2024, 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1002/aep.13479>.

³ A. Glencross, "The Geopolitics of Supply Chains: EU Efforts to Ensure Security of Supply", *Global Policy* 15 (2024), 729–739, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.13388>

⁴ Financial Express, "Bangladesh Crisis: Sheikh Hasina Resigns and Flees – Root Causes and Prognosis", *Financial Express*, 6 August 2024, <https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/bangladesh-crisis-sheikh-hasina-resigns-and-flees-root-causes-and-prognosis/3575501/>.

⁵ Paul Teng and Jose Ma. Luis P. Montesclaros, "The Danger of Misguided Food Production Policies: The Case of Sri Lanka", *Commentary*, RSIS, 28 October 2022, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/global-food-insecurity-the-danger-of-misguided-food-production-policies-the-case-of-sri-lanka/>.

⁶ Jose Ma. Luis P. Montesclaros, "India's Rice Export Restrictions Need Multilateral Solutions", *East Asia Forum*, 18 October 2023, <https://eastasiaforum.org/2023/10/18/indias-rice-export-restrictions-need-multilateral-solutions/>.

⁷ OECD, FAO, and UNCDF, *Adopting a Territorial Approach to Food Security and Nutrition Policy*, OECD Rural Studies, OECD Publishing, 29 April 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264257108-en>.

⁸ David Laborde, "Policy Options for Asia and Global Community in the Face of Export Bans", RSIS webinar, 29 May 2024, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/rsis-event-article/rsis/policy-options-for-asia-and-global-community-in-the-face-of-export-bans/>.

⁹ ASEAN, "ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Ending All Forms of Malnutrition", Manila, 13 November 2017, https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Agd-6.1.c_ADOPTION_2017_ALD-on-Ending-All-Forms-of-Malnutrition_Endorsed-by-the-AHMM.pdf.

¹⁰ ASEAN, "ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region (SPA-FS) 2021–2025", 21 October 2020, <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/42-AIFS-Framework-SPAFS-Final-13-July-2020.pdf>.

¹¹ ASEAN Food Security Information System, n.d., <https://aptfsis.org/aboutUs>.

Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) is likewise a unique regional mechanism whereby ASEAN and its Plus Three partners pledge to maintain a common rice stock for dealing with food sector emergencies as well as price disruptions.¹²

Looking forward, ASEAN would do well to ensure the continued functioning of such initiatives despite the differences in geopolitical leanings of its “Plus Three” partners in East Asia and even of its own member states.

As geopolitical disruptions worsen, the value of such collaborative initiatives can only increase, as highlighted by the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises,¹³ adopted under Indonesia’s 2023 chairmanship of ASEAN. That statement recommended expanding each ASEAN member state’s Local Resource-based Food Reserve (RBFR), sourced domestically and regionally.

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¹² ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve, n.d., <https://www.apterr.org/what-is-aptterr/what-is-aptterr2>.

¹³ ASEAN, “ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Response to Crises”, 5 September 2023, <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ASEAN-Declaration-on-Strengthening-Food-Security.pdf>.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY AND THE FUTURE ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS



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Public policy making has never been easy, and the rapid development of technology has only made it harder. On one hand, the fast pace of technological change makes multi-stakeholder engagement and public-private partnership essential in helping to identify potential impacts, building public legitimacy, balancing interests and ensuring the feasibility and relevance of technology policies. On the other hand, when states and stakeholders are polarised, dramatic deadlocks between them are triggered. Memorable and awkward examples in the past year include the standoff between Meta (parent of Facebook) and Canada,¹ the US Senate hearing on Big Tech firms,² and US lawmakers seeking to ban TikTok.³

Such a confrontational dynamic brings states and stakeholders no closer to solving the issues at hand, which can include mental health risks, child safety, freedom of expression, hate speech, hostile information campaigns, stifling of innovation, economic progress, threats to democracy, and national security. Instead of constructive collaboration, parties seem locked in a prisoner’s dilemma, prioritising their individual short-term interests at the expense of long-term benefit and security for all.

The Role of Stakeholders in a Secure Digital Future

This situation is especially stark in information and communications technology, where hyperscalers like Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, Google, Meta, Apple and

Alibaba have more specialised expertise, resources and influence than many small states. As technology changes the playing field, meaningful stakeholder engagement is even more important.

Stakeholders like academic institutions and researchers can help policymakers understand the implications of new technologies and provide evidence-based recommendations. Civil society and NGOs can surface public concerns on issues like privacy, rights and ethics. Individual experts can provide technically relevant inputs that balance those from technology industry leaders. Investors and financial institutions can help assess the economic impact of technology policies.

While technology has disrupted the traditional stakeholder relationship, it can also be a powerful tool to reinvent that relationship. One such example is vTaiwan, initially a ground-up initiative, now a government-supported digital platform that crowdsources laws and policies in Taiwan.⁴ It enables every willing citizen to participate, then consolidates ideas and inputs from participants to depict levels of consensus, which encourage stakeholders with differing perspectives to continually rework solutions until general agreement is achieved.⁵ Policies are refined through this iterative process as the views of citizens, civil society, government, experts and elected representatives are considered with equal weight. Since its inception, 80% of the 28 cases discussed through the vTaiwan process have resulted in decisive government action and effective legislation.⁶

¹ Blayne Haggart, “Meta’s Tussle with Canada Isn’t Over Principle, or Even Profit: It’s About Control”, Centre for International Governance Innovation, 6 September 2023, <https://www.cigionline.org/articles/metass-tussle-with-canada-isnt-over-principle-or-even-profit-its-about-control/>.

² US Senate Committee on the Judiciary, “Recap”, Senate Judiciary Committee, 1 February 2024, <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/press/releases/recap-senate-judiciary-committee-presses-big-tech-ceos-on-failures-to-protect-kids-online-during-landmark-hearing>.

³ Liv McMahon, “US TikTok Ban: When and Why Could the App Be Outlawed?”, BBC, 16 September 2024, <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-53476117>.

⁴ vTaiwan, “About”, vTaiwan, n.d. Accessed 7 October 2024, <https://info.vtaiwan.tw/>.

⁵ Chris Horton, “The Simple but Ingenious System Taiwan Uses to Crowdfund Its Laws.” MIT Technology Review, 21 August 2018, <https://www.technologyreview.com/2018/08/21/240284/the-simple-but-ingenious-system-taiwan-uses-to-crowdfund-its-laws/>.

⁶ vTaiwan, “A Few Accomplishments”, vTaiwan, n.d., Accessed 7 October 2024, <https://info.vtaiwan.tw/#two>.

Stakeholder engagement is also a hallmark of policymaking in Singapore, from public⁷ and expert consultations to focus group discussions and public opinion polls, as seen in the Public Consultations on the Cybersecurity Act, Operational Technology Cybersecurity Masterplan, and the Securing AI Systems guidelines. In addition to the private sector, civil society and academia, these engagements now include the youth of Singapore. The Youth Panels, launched in 2023 by the National Youth Council, provide opportunities for young Singaporeans and the government to collaborate on policies⁸ across four broad policy areas: financial security, careers, digital well-being, and sustainability.⁹

The Role of Youth Stakeholders in Singapore's Digital Future

We propose that in the formulation of technology policy, it is especially important that there is the political will to recognise youths as a distinct and essential stakeholder group. Young people tend to be digital natives, interacting continuously with digital tools and platforms, so they can provide relevant and practical inputs. They may have fresh ideas attuned to the latest technological developments. Youths will also be the most affected by today's technology policies, so they will seek policies that are forward-looking and consider long-term implications.

Nevertheless, engaging youths comes with its own set of challenges and potential pitfalls. Youths today face a different global dynamic than do policymakers and other stakeholders, who generally tend to be older. Their lived experiences can be informative on current issues and threats, but their lack of experience could mean their suggestions are not practicable. The generation gap between youths and other stakeholders, which often manifests in miscommunication and misinterpretation, can inhibit constructive collaboration. Common exclamations

like "you don't understand what it's like nowadays" or "back when I was your age ..." are not helpful.

These challenges can be overcome. Capacity building can help both youths and policymakers to learn to engage one another collaboratively and constructively. This can be provided by facilitators and interlocutors from civil society and academia who have experience working with both youths and policymakers and can help bridge communication gaps.

Technology can also be used to enhance the engagement of youth stakeholders because digital platforms can reach more digital natives. Systems that consolidate ideas and inputs from participants to build consensus, like the vTaiwan platform, can encourage cross-generational dialogue between youths, policymakers and other older stakeholders.

The creation of the Youth Panels has set a precedent in Singapore's approach to incorporating alternative voices into the shaping of public policy. Established research organisations and civil society groups are well placed to support the landscape by facilitating meaningful engagements between policymakers and youths, including harnessing the cyber world.

A multi-stakeholder search for solutions is vital to actively address the threats and risks we face today.¹⁰ As we look forward, important upcoming policy issues will include the future of education, digital literacy, cybersecurity, privacy and data security, digital inclusion, environmental sustainability, clean energy, security of space, biotechnology and the responsible use of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum technology. It is vital to engage the youth stakeholders who can make meaningful contributions to discussions around policy formation because the policies of today will shape their lives tomorrow.

Benjamin Ang is Head of the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) and of the Future Issues and Technology (FIT) cluster and Digital Impact Research (DIR) at RSIS. Ben Chua is the Chief Executive of Cyber Youth Singapore.

⁷ Cyber Security Agency of Singapore, "Public Consultation on Securing AI Systems", 31 July 2024, <https://www.csa.gov.sg/News-Events/public-consultations/public-consultation-on-securing-ai-systems>.

⁸ Tang See Kit, "New Youth Panels to Develop Policy Recommendations with the Government to Be Launched This Year", Channel News Asia, 21 April 2023, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/new-youth-panels-develop-policy-recommendations-government-3434586>.

⁹ Janella Ching, "4 Youth Panels Formed for Inaugural Run of Initiative; Members to Look at Financial Security, Careers, Digital Well-Being, Sustainability", Youthopia, 25 November 2023, <https://www.nyc.gov.sg/youthopia/4-youth-panels-formed-for-inaugural-run-of-initiative>

¹⁰ Benjamin Ang and Karryl S. Trajano, "Emerging Technologies and National Security", S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Annual Review of 2023, 15 January 2024, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Benjamin-Ang-and-Karryl-Sagun-Trajano-Essay.pdf>.

WHAT DOES TRUMP 2.0 MEAN FOR THE US PARTY SYSTEM AND FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA?



by Adrian Ang U-Jin

President-elect Donald Trump's resounding defeat of Vice President Kamala Harris marks a realignment of the US party system and change in the parties' social bases and issue cleavages. Trump 2.0 brings with it the possibility of an intensification of the competition between Washington and Beijing as well as new tariff levels not seen in nearly 100 years. Intensified competition will increase the asymmetry of US engagement in the region — one that is focused on hard power rather than economic engagement — and will increase the region's economic dependence on China.

This article was first published in the IDSS Paper.

SCAN TO READ



JOKOWI'S LEGACIES AND THE INCOMING PRABOWO ADMINISTRATION: CHANGE OR CONTINUITY?



by Alexander Arifianto and Adhi Priamarizki

Prabowo Subianto won the 2024 Indonesian presidential election and was sworn in as Indonesia's eighth president on 20 October 2024. This policy report outlines key legacies of his predecessor Joko Widodo ("Jokowi") and develop several scenarios on how the Prabowo–Jokowi relationship could evolve and how it might help shape Prabowo's policies during his upcoming five-year term (2024–2029).

This report was first published as an RSIS Policy Report.

SCAN TO READ



i The authors' views are their own and do not represent the official position of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), NTU. These essays may be reproduced with prior permission from RSIS and due credit to the author(s) and RSIS. Please email to contact_rsis@ntu.edu.sg for permission request and other editorial queries.



GRADUATE EDUCATION

The graduate school offers Master of Science Programmes in Strategic Studies, International Relations, International Political Economy and Asian Studies. As a school, RSIS fosters a nurturing environment to develop students into first-class scholars and practitioners.

Master of Science (MSc) Programmes

For the new academic year (AY), RSIS MSc Programmes continued to attract a cosmopolitan student body with a wide range of educational, professional, and cultural backgrounds. Close to 200 students from 25 countries enrolled in RSIS MSc programmes in AY2024/2025. Twenty three students received scholarships and study awards, including two RSIS Scholarships, five Lee Foundation Scholarships, and 16 Student Research Assistantships.

Doctoral Programme

RSIS' PhD Programme has a diverse and cosmopolitan student body comprising 30 doctoral candidates, including 2 new PhD students who joined in August 2024. The students are of nine different nationalities hailing from countries across Asia and North America. Some of these students are integrated into both RSIS institutional and individual faculty research programmes which enrich learning experiences whilst supporting a broad-based collegial research effort.



RSIS Alumni Dinner, 26 July 2024

Convocation

The RSIS class of 2024 comprising 153 Master's students (including one NTU-Warwick Double Master's student) graduated on 26 July 2024. They attended the convocation ceremony at the Nanyang Auditorium on campus as well as at the RSIS Alumni Dinner that same evening.

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong, Executive Deputy Chairman of RSIS and Prof Kumar Ramakrishna, Dean of RSIS, congratulated the graduates. In their respective messages to the students, the two encouraged them to remain resilient and remain connected with the RSIS family.

Asst Prof Stefanie Kam presented the academic award winners for AY2023/2024 during the convocation ceremony. They included five Master's students who distinguished themselves through their outstanding academic achievements.



RSIS convocation, 26 July 2024

Mr Eddie Lim, President of the RSIS Alumni Association, welcomed the graduates to the RSIS Alumni Association and shared the social platforms they could join to be part of the growing RSIS alumni family.



RSIS Student-Staff football match, 11 May 2024



RSIS Student-staff-alumni mixer, 20 January 2024

Outreach and Engagement

RSIS engaged with the students in class and socially as well. RSIS hosted its first student-staff-alumni mixer in January 2024. The event, attended by around 100 people, gave an additional opportunity for current students, staff, and alumni of RSIS to meet, connect, and engage with one

another as part of the RSIS family. They also connected on the field when RSIS staff and students pitted their wits and athletic prowess on the football pitch on Saturday, 11 May 2024. The annual RSIS Student-Staff football match ended with a 3-1 win for the students, after an action-packed game. More than a game, it was an opportunity for our RSIS community to come together and strengthen bonds through friendly competition.

RSIS continued to strengthen its outreach initiatives for quality enrolments and engagement with its growing alumni network. These included information-sharing sessions, Masterclasses on key international affairs topics to showcase RSIS teaching, as well as participating in leading postgraduate education fairs in Singapore and overseas. GPO leveraged various online platforms to engage prospective students and will continue to strengthen its outreach by engaging relevant organisations on the value of RSIS' professional graduate education. The RSIS alumni network also bears testimony to the value of the MSc Programmes, adding to a growing community steeped in knowledge of international relations and strategic geopolitical issues.



Prof Kumar Ramakrishna
Dean of RSIS,
Professor of National Security Studies
Provost's Chair in National Security Studies
Research Adviser to ICPVTR



Prof Ang Cheng Guan
Associate Dean of RSIS
Professor of the
International History of
Southeast Asia



Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony
Associate Dean (International Engagement)
Head of Centre for
Non-Traditional Security Studies
President's Chair in International Relations
and Security Studies



Dr Alan Chong
Coordinator of
MSc (International Relations)
Programme



Asst Prof Benjamin Ho
Deputy Coordinator of
MSc (International Relations)
Programme



Dr Bernard Loo
Coordinator of
MSc (Strategic Studies)
Programme



Assoc Prof Bhubhindar Singh
Associate Dean (Academic Affairs)
Head of Graduate Studies



Assoc Prof Li Mingjiang
Deputy Head of Graduate Studies
Coordinator of PhD Programme



Asst Prof Stefanie Kam
Coordinator of
MSc (Asian Studies) Programme



Dr Ong Wei Chong
Deputy Coordinator of MSc (Strategic Studies)
Programme



Ms Geanina Bujoreanu
Senior Manager,
Graduate Programme Office



Asst Prof James Char
Deputy Coordinator of
MSc (Asian Studies) Programme



Asst Prof Su-Hyun Lee
Coordinator of
MSc (International Political Economy)
Programme



Asst Prof Zhang Hongzhou
Deputy Coordinator of
MSc (International Political Economy)
Programme

Milestones

IDSS launched its first academic programme, the Master of Science in Strategic Studies, with ten students

IDSS welcomed its first doctoral student

RSIS launched the Master of Science in Asian Studies



IDSS launched its second master's programme, the Master of Science in International Relations

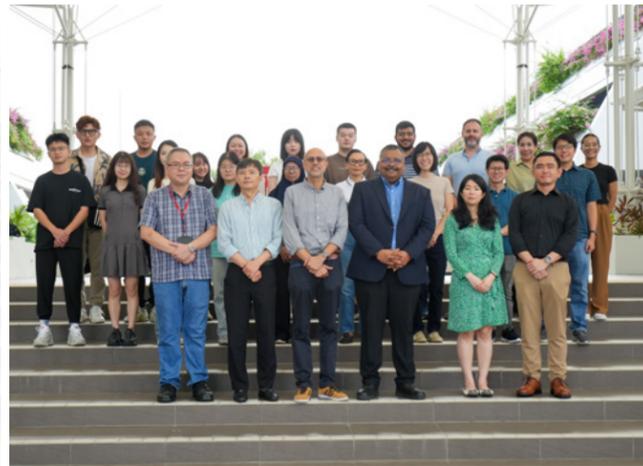
IDSS launched the Master of Science in International Political Economy

RSIS introduced the two-year NTU-Warwick Double Master's Programme

New MSc Cohort



MSc (Strategic Studies)



MSc (Asian Studies)



MSc (International Relations)



MSc (International Political Economy)



Studying at RSIS was profoundly rewarding due to its wealth of resources and a faculty of seasoned professors who foster a rigorous research environment. Their dedication to research and policy analysis deeply influenced my academic and professional outlook. I am truly grateful for their inspiring guidance and support during my time at RSIS.

Gu Bin
MSc (International Relations) Programme
Recipient of the Liow Keng Teck and Dorothy Liow Gold Medal



My time at RSIS was an intellectually-stimulating experience. The diverse cohort, with students from various countries and professional backgrounds not only created a rich learning environment but also profound friendships. Importantly, the rigorous academic environment also kept me pondering the improbable.

Asyhsam Dwi Ihza Muhammad
Winner of the Tay Seow Huah Book Prize

TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

2023/2024

The Award for Teaching Excellence in Academic Year 2023/2024 went to **Dr Alan Chong**, Senior Fellow, RSIS. The annual award recognises teaching excellence and outstanding contributions to the enhancement of teaching and learning at RSIS. Dr Chong teaches international relations at the RSIS Graduate School.



Gold Medals, Book Prize for Outstanding Students

The most outstanding student in each of the respective RSIS Master's Programmes is awarded a Gold Medal each year. A book prize is also given to the student with the best dissertation. The awards for AY2023/2024 are listed below. We thank the sponsors for their generous donations and continuous support through the years.



Mr Roy Chaudhury Shantanu
winner of the Rajabali Jumabhoy Foundation Gold Medal for the best academic performance in the MSc (Asian Studies)



Mr Lin Kan
winner of the Lion Group Gold Medal for the best academic performance in the MSc (International Political Economy)



Ms Gu Bin
winner of the Liow Keng Teck and Dorothy Liow Gold Medal for the best academic performance in the MSc (International Relations)



Mr Mathias Jahn
winner of the United Overseas Bank Gold Medal for the best academic performance in the MSc (Strategic Studies)



Mr Asyhsam Dwi Ihza Muhammad
winner of the Tay Seow Huah Book Prize for the best dissertation



RSIS OUTREACH: BUILDING AN ECOSYSTEM OF GLOBAL REACH

RSIS Outreach seeks to enhance RSIS' role as a global think tank and school for graduate education by focusing on three key pillars: (i) Global Networks, (ii) Executive Education and (iii) International Programmes.

GLOBAL NETWORKS

As a member of an ecosystem of like-minded institutions researching key and current issues, RSIS works with local, regional and global partners across various platforms. These issues include geopolitics, international political economy, and non-traditional security. In recent years, RSIS has enhanced its research in cybersecurity, military transformation, the implications of Artificial Intelligence and understanding the grey zone in international relations.

RSIS' global networks are encapsulated within three broad categories: (i) academic and research institutions, (ii) foreign official representation such as embassies/missions, and (iii) private enterprises. Our partners include institutions from Southeast Asia, East Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America. Within this milieu, RSIS collaborations have yielded policy publications, research and networking events, and academic exchanges. One such collaboration is between RSIS and the National Resilience Institute of the Republic of Indonesia (*Lembaga Ketahanan Nasional Republik Indonesia* – Lemhannas RI), focuses on establishing collaboration through academic exchanges, joint research activities and publications.

EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

Executive education has been a part of RSIS' mandate since its inception as IDSS in 1996. It is an important part of institution building and talent development. The academic and research strength of RSIS and its constituent Centres and Programmes revolve around smart networking and outreach innovations which a well-organised and well-positioned executive education eco-system will facilitate. The changing world necessitates lifelong learning and preparedness. As a think tank in a world-class university, RSIS has constantly evolved, and this includes the commitment to executive education.

Building on its expertise and experience in this area, RSIS extended its executive education in 2023 to cover the private sector by designing a dedicated executive programme for a multinational corporation headquartered in Singapore. RSIS senior faculty provided insights and perspectives on regional and current issues and their implications on regional economies. Through the lens of applied research, RSIS brings a unique approach to understanding the dynamic intersections between geopolitics, enterprise and industry issues.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES

In 2024, RSIS partnered the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (*Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik - SWP*) for the 6th RSIS-SWP Dialogue, a platform that offers a unique opportunity for two think tanks that are focused on geopolitics and international relations to discuss issues of common interest. Such programmes underline the significant role RSIS plays in the ecosystem of research and academic excellence. The same year also saw RSIS co-organising a panel at the Doha Forum, which provides an opportunity to exchange ideas that address issues of geopolitics, economic development, emerging technologies, security, and cultural diplomacy.

Amongst others, RSIS was a knowledge partner of the 5th Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF) in Turkey, where geostrategic issues were examined through unique regional lenses, offering perspectives distinct from those of the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and the US. A paper on "ASEAN's Security Architecture for the Region and Beyond" was presented at the 9th Ulaanbaator Dialogue (UBD) on Northeast Asian Security to over 200 participants from international think tanks, academia, and governments. The dialogue focuses on addressing regional challenges such as peace, stability, and economic development through multilateral engagement. The RSIS delegation also took the opportunity to connect with other think tanks on the sidelines of the dialogue.



RSIS-SWP Dialogue 2024

ANNEX A

RSIS LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

The people behind RSIS are scholars and researchers who delve into geopolitical developments and areas of their expertise, and teach at the Graduate School, as well as corporate service staff who give critical support to RSIS and ensure its smooth operation.



Scan the QR Code to know more about the RSIS leadership and staff

Long Service Award 25 years

Dr Leonard C. Sebastian
Senior Fellow, Indonesia Programme, IDSS

Ms Chong Yee Ming
Librarian

Long Service Award 20 years

Dr Rohan Gunaratna
Professor of Security Studies, RSIS

Mr Karim Bin Lampu
Senior Driver

Long Service Award 15 years

Ms Cindy Goh
Assistant Manager

Ms Sarimah Binti Raduan
Senior Receptionist

Ms Mani Amudha
Finance Manager

Dr Nah Liang Tuang
Research Fellow, Military Studies Programme, IDSS

Long Service Award 10 years

Mr Adrian Tan
Executive Coordinator, Policy Research Office; Head of Special Projects, and Deputy Director of IDSS

Mr Benjamin Ang
Senior Fellow and Head of CENS

Dr Joel Ng
Research Fellow and Deputy Head of CMS

Dr Lee Su-Hyun
Assistant Professor and Coordinator of MSc (IPE Programme)

Dr Alistair D. B. Cook
Senior Fellow and Coordinator of HADR Programme, NTS Centre

Dr David Han
Research Fellow, Malaysia Programme, IDSS

Ms Adilah Binti Anwar
Language Officer, ICPVTR

Ms Cheryl Chan
Secretary to Dean

Ms Jenny Tan
Human Resource Manager



RSIS Day 2024

ANNEX B

As of 15 November 2024

RESEARCH ARTICLES IN JOURNALS AND OTHER EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

RSIS scholars continue to publish their research in books and other publications. RSIS researchers' analyses and perspectives are also published in top-tier academic journals and leading university presses, and other publications. This Annex lists some of the books and articles published during the year.



Scan this QR Code for the full listing.
www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/staff-publications/external-publications-for-the-year/

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RSIS PUBLICATIONS

RSIS produces policy-relevant research for policymakers, thought-leaders, and practitioners, and shares analyses and perspectives on geopolitical, security, and related issues. This Annex gives a sampling of the RSIS publications produced during the year.



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RSIS Policy Reports

- Karryl Kim Sagun Trajano, Iuna Tsyrlneva and Chee Yong Sean Chua, *AI in Space Technologies: A Singapore Case Study*, October 2024
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- Robert C. Beckman, Asha Hemrajani, Tara Davenport and Sean Tan, *Enhancing the Security of Singapore's Submarine Cables: Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities*, May 2024
- Margareth Sembiring, *Marine Environmental Protection in the South China Sea: Advancing Stronger People-to-People Cooperation on Plastic*, April 2024
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- Ooi Kee Beng, *Anwar Ibrahim in Power: A Historical Locating of the Limits for Change in Malaysia*, July 2024
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- Science, Technology and Security Bulletin — Future Issues and Technology Cluster, RSIS. Available at www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/rsis-publications/future-issues/
- Think Tank: News from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies — RSIS. Available at www.rsis.edu.sg/think-tank

ANNEX D

As of 15 November 2024

RSIS DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC LECTURES

RSIS organises public lectures on topics of interest to shed light and generate discussion on key developments in the region and the world. The distinguished public lectures held during the year are listed in this Annex.



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- The S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture by Professor Jia Qingguo, former Dean of the School of International Studies, Director of the Institute for Global Cooperation and Understanding and Director of Global Governance, Peking University, on **“The US Presidential Elections: Implications for China-US Relations”**, 16 October 2024
- RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by Ngee Ann Kongsi Professor in International Relations, Professor Chen Dongxiao, President of Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), on **“Can China Handle Trump 2.0?”**, 5 September 2024
- RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by S. Rajaratnam Professor in Strategic Studies, Professor M. Taylor Fravel, Arthur and Ruth Sloan Professor of Political Science and Director of the Security Studies Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on **“The Future of US-China Relations and the Implications for the Global Order - Is Engagement Dead?”**, 20 August 2024
- RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by NTUC Professor in International Economic Relations, Professor Tan Kong Yam, Emeritus Professor of Economics at Nanyang Technological University, on **“Under the Shadow of Sustained US-China Rivalry: The Conceptualisation of a Pro-ASEAN Geoeconomic Strategy”**, 7 August 2024
- RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by Dr Marty Natalegawa, Distinguished Visiting Fellow at RSIS, and Former Foreign Minister of Indonesia, on **“Promoting Amity: Diplomacy and Dialogue as Statecrafts in a Fragmented World”**, 11 June 2024
- RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by S. Rajaratnam Professor in Strategic Studies, Professor Kitaoka Shinichi, Emeritus Professor of the University of Tokyo and Rikkyo University, on **“Japan’s Position in the World”**, 19 March 2024
- RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture by Professor Michael Wesley, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global, Culture and Engagement, University of Melbourne, on **“Australia’s Role in the Indo-Pacific”**, 8 March 2024
- The S. T. Lee Distinguished Annual Lecture by Lieutenant General (Ret) H. R. McMaster, Fouad and Michelle Ajami Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, on **“Competing Visions for the Indo-Pacific and the World”**, 2 February 2024

ANNEX E

As of 15 November 2024

RSIS CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, AND ROUNDTABLES

RSIS brought together scholars, researchers, policymakers and practitioners at events organised throughout the year on key developments in the region and the world. This Annex lists a sampling of the events held during the year.



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- RSIS Seminar by Professor Amin Saikal on “The Israel-Iran Conflict and its Implications”, 26 November 2024
- RSIS Seminars by Dr Makio Miyagawa on
 - ▶ Japan-SEA relations: Crises and Opportunities, 22 November 2024
 - ▶ The Future of Sino-Japan Relations: Change or Continuity?, 20 November 2024
- CENS Workshop on DRUMS: “Information Manipulation and Interference in the Global Political Environment of Uncertainty”, 19-20 November 2024
- SRP Lecture by Professor Abdullah Saeed on “Interpreting Sacred Texts in a Pluralistic World”, in conjunction with the SRP Programme’s 10th Anniversary, 13 November 2024
- RSIS Conference on “Navigating Uncertainty: Arms Control in an Age of Disruptive Technologies”, 7-8 November 2024
- NADI Meeting on “Conflicts Affecting the Region, and the ADMM/ADMM-Plus’ Role in Conflict Prevention and Management”, 5-6 November 2024
- RSIS-IPI Report Launch Seminar on “Small States and the Multilateral System: Creating a More Inclusive and Equitable World for All”, 1 November 2024
- Humanitarian Futures Forum and launch of the book “Disasters and Humanitarian Action: Dynamic Shifts, Reflections and Anticipating Future Directions”, 29-30 October 2024
- RSIS Seminar on “Anticipating the Prabowo Presidency: Key Insights and Expectations”, 29 October 2024
- RSIS Book Launch Seminar of “Reflections: Singapore’s Place in the World” by Professor Barry Desker, 24 October 2024
- CENS Workshop on “Confronting Complexity: Safeguarding National Security Against Hybrid Threats”, 23-24 October 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Mr Steven Okun on “The 2024 US Presidential Election: Dynamics and Foreign Policy Implications”, 22 October 2024
- 25th Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2024), with Special Lecture by Prof Jia Qingguo and Distinguished Speaker’s Lecture by Dr Yose Rizal Damuri, 13-17 October 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Dr Zack Cooper on “American Strategy in a Fragmented Multipolar World”, 10 October 2024
- SWP-RSIS-KAS Workshop on “The Emergence of ‘Greater Asia’ in Energy and Climate - Geopolitical Trends and Implications for Asia-Europe”, 9-10 October 2024
- CSCAP Study Group Meeting on the Safety and Security of Digital Infrastructure, 2-3 October 2024
- ICCS Inter-session Event on “Inspiring Cohesive and Resilient Societies”, 24-26 September 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Associate Professor Ngeow Chow Bing on “Malaysia-China Relations under Anwar Ibrahim’s Unity Government: A Return to the Special Relationship?”, 19 September 2024
- RSIS-GRIPS Webinar on “Promoting Regional Stability amid Geopolitical Upheavals”, 18 September 2024
- RSIS Seminars by The Ngee Ann Kongsi Professor in International Relations, Professor Chen Dongxiao on
 - ▶ A Chinese Perspective on the Prospect of Regional Order Building in the Indo-Pacific, 10 September 2024
 - ▶ Chinese Foreign Policy under Xi Jinping: Analysing Success and Challenges, 3 September 2024
- RSIS-SWP Dialogue 2024 on “Manoeuvring the New Global Techno-Economic Governance Landscape”, 3-5 September 2024
- SRP Webinar on “The Vatican & Inter-Religious Diplomacy in Asia” Conference, 29-30 August 2024

- RSIS Seminars by S. Rajaratnam Professor in Strategic Studies, Professor M. Taylor Fravel on
 - ▶ China's Quest for International Influence: China's Belt and Road Initiative and Three Global Initiatives, 22 August 2024
 - ▶ Strategic Ambiguity or Strategic Clarity?: US Taiwan Policy and Cross-Strait Relations, 27 August 2024
- RSIS Book Launch Seminar of "Indonesia and Islam in Transition", 6 August 2024
- 2nd Digital Defence Symposium on "Evolving Cyber and Information Trends: Opportunities and Threats for Defence", 24-25 July 2024
- 9th SRP Executive Programme 2024 on "Words That Wound - Encountering and Overcoming Religious Intolerance", 16-17 July 2024
- Terrorism Analyst Training Course 2024, 15-19 July 2024
- Singapore Universities' National Security Forum 2024 on "Together We Keep Singapore Strong", 5 July 2024
- RSIS Seminars by Visiting Senior Fellow of RSIS, Ambassador Derek Mitchell on
 - ▶ The Tragedy of Myanmar: Seeing Through a Glass Darkly, 23 May 2024
 - ▶ Realists Need to Get Real: The Case for Democracy, 16 May 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Visiting Senior Fellow of RSIS, Dr Duvvuri Subbarao on "India's Economic Prospects: Ten Questions and Maybe Some Answers", 21 May 2024
- SRP Webinar by Professor Abdullah Saeed on "Inclusive or Exclusive? Engaging 'The Religious Other' in Islamic Tradition", 21 May 2024
- RSIS Roundtables by Visiting Senior Fellow of RSIS, Dr Cung Vu on
 - ▶ New Biofrontiers: Intersection of Biotechnology, National Security, and Geopolitics, 8 May 2024
 - ▶ Beyond the Horizon: Exploring the Power and Potential of Space Technology and its Geopolitical Implications, 6 May 2024
 - ▶ Artificial Intelligence: Transforming National Security, Geopolitics, and Beyond, 2 May 2024
 - ▶ Navigating the Complex Intersections: Semiconductors, Rare Earth Elements, National Security, and Geopolitics, 30 April 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Mr Matt Sheehan on "Chinese AI Governance at the Crossroads: Implications for US-China Competition and Global AI Governance", 2 May 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Distinguished Visiting Fellow of RSIS, Dr Marty Natalegawa on "The South China Sea: The Case for Renewed Political Impetus", 26 April 2024
- 5th RSIS Trilateral Exchange on "Rising to the Challenge: Global Leadership in a Fractured World", 23-25 April 2024
- 15th Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior National Security Officers (APPSNO), 14-19 April 2024
- ICPVTR 20th Anniversary Seminar and Commemorative Tree-Planting Event, 25 March 2024
- RSIS Seminar by Dr Ooi Kee Beng on "Reformasi, Perpaduan, Madani: Anwar Ibrahim's Search for a Sense of Common Purpose", 21 March 2024
- RSIS Webinar on "Post-2024 General Elections and Indonesia 2045 Vision: Strategic Challenges and Opportunities", 15 March 2024
- RSIS Seminars by S. Rajaratnam Professor in Strategic Studies, Professor Kitaoka Shinichi on
 - ▶ Recent Developments in Japan's Security and Foreign Policy, 14 March 2024
 - ▶ Japan and Southeast Asia, 11 March 2024
- RSIS Workshop on "Navigating Global Challenges: ASEAN's Responses to the Changing Strategic and Economic Landscape", 29 February 2024
- CENS Workshop on "Shifting Landscapes: Mapping the Implications of Radicalism, and Terrorism on Global Security", 27-28 February 2024
- RSIS Webinar on "Indonesia's 2024 General Elections: Dynamics in Sumatra, West Java, Central Java, and East Java", 7 February 2024
- Planetary Health Proposal Development Meeting and Workshop, 2 February 2024
- RSIS Conference on Regional Maritime Security Outlook 2024, 25-26 January 2024
- RSIS Webinar on "Indonesia's 2024 Presidential and Legislative Elections: Election Update", 17 January 2024

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who has contributed to this Annual Review.
Thank you to all who have extended support
in various ways all these years.*

Ponder the Improbable 

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