

20TH ASIA PACIFIC PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS (APPSMO)

Event Report
5–11 August 2018



S. RAJARATNAM
SCHOOL OF
INTERNATIONAL
STUDIES

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore



**NANYANG
TECHNOLOGICAL
UNIVERSITY**
SINGAPORE

Event Report

20TH ASIA PACIFIC PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS (APPSMO)

ASEAN AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC SECURITY ORDER

Organised by:

**Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS)
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)
Nanyang Technological University (NTU)
Singapore**

**5–11 August 2018
Village Hotel Changi
Singapore**

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This report summarises the proceedings of the conference as interpreted by the assigned rapporteurs and editor. The speakers neither reviewed nor approved this report.

The conference adhered to a variation of the Chatham House Rule. Accordingly, this report carries only a summary of the points made by the speakers in their prepared papers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception in 1999, the Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO), organised by the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) has provided a unique and important forum for military officers and defence analysts from the Asia-Pacific region and beyond to network and exchange views on a broad range of subjects related to regional and international security. The 20th APPSMO, held from 5 to 11 August 2018, continued to facilitate defence diplomacy, with 48 military officers and defence planners from 20 countries in Asia, Oceania, North America and Europe attending.

The theme for APPSMO 2018 was “ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific Security Order”. Key topics discussed included challenges and trends in the regional security order, the future of war and war strategy, terrorism, cyber and information threats, the shifting geopolitical landscape, and regional defence cooperation and confidence building measures.

Apart from attending seminars and discussions, the participants visited the Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (RHCCC) at Singapore’s Changi Command and Control Centre, visited a frigate at Changi Naval Base, toured Clementi Camp, visited the regional headquarters of Microsoft, and undertook a military heritage tour of Fort Siloso in Sentosa and the former Ford Factory. On 9 August 2018, the participants and speakers dined at the NTU Alumni House, where they also had the opportunity to view a live telecast of the flypast segment of Singapore’s National Day Parade that featured combat aircraft, transport aircraft and combat helicopters from the Republic of Singapore Air Force, as well as the Red Lions parachute team from the Singapore Army. APPSMO 2018 continued to play an important role as an additional channel for defence diplomacy by facilitating learning and interaction among senior military officers in and beyond the Asia-Pacific region.

WELCOME REMARKS



Ambassador Ong Keng Yong

*Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS, and
Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, RSIS*

On the occasion of APPSMO's 20th edition, **Ambassador Ong Keng Yong** thanked those who had contributed to it in one form or another through the years. He also reminded the audience of APPSMO's vision of gathering the best and brightest of military officers and defence experts from around the world to share ideas, learn from one another and exchange alternative views. He expressed his hope that such interactions would build friendships and networks.

Amb Ong announced that RSIS will be commemorating the 20th APPSMO by launching a Distinguished Speaker Seminar Series soon after the conference proceedings. The series will run until the beginning of APPSMO 2019. He added that former APPSMO participants who have become prominent scholars and policymakers would be invited to attend. The details of the seminar series will be publicised in due course.

Amb Ong noted that this year's theme, "ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific Security Order", was intended to address questions and issues regarding ASEAN's role in a changing international environment. Prominent scholars, practitioners and policymakers had been brought in to explore and discuss the best approaches to strategic planning and defence relations for maintaining Asia-Pacific stability. Through panel sessions and a distinguished

lecture, the speakers would discuss topics such as geopolitics, the future of conflict, terrorism, information and cyberwarfare, defence cooperation, and ASEAN.

Acknowledging his gratitude to the key sponsor of the conference, Singapore's Ministry of Defence, Amb Ong urged the delegates to avail themselves of the opportunity to tap the expertise of the distinguished line-up of professionals. He also encouraged them to build networks and friendships among one another as APPSMO alumni tended to move on to hold key government appointments.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

ASEAN AND THE ASIA-PACIFIC SECURITY ORDER



Dr Ng Eng Hen

Minister of Defence, Singapore

Minister Ng began by paying tribute to the late Mr S.R. Nathan, former President of Singapore, and his vision for APPSMO. As a former diplomat, Mr Nathan, he said, had understood the benefits of having an international network and good foreign relations. Mr Nathan also believed that the military could benefit from foreign exchanges. It was with these aims that he had launched APPSMO as a summer camp for senior military officers from military organisations across the world.

Minister Ng remarked that ASEAN had come a long way since its founding in 1967. When ASEAN was formed, it was difficult to imagine that the organisation could contribute to geopolitics, with the ongoing Vietnam War, the wider Cold War climate and proxy wars that cast a dark shadow over the region. However, ASEAN endured, and after 50 years of existence, there was now ASEAN centrality in the various geopolitical and economic mechanisms involving the region. Minister Ng noted that ASEAN centrality was a concept that the major powers supported. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi had emphasised ASEAN centrality at this year's Shangri-la Dialogue. Minister Ng remarked that despite ASEAN accounting for only 7 per cent of global trade and the combined ASEAN military spending being less than Japan's military spending, ASEAN defied political reality, as

illustrated by Thucydides' Melian Dialogue, where "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must".

How did ASEAN progress towards achieving centrality? Indeed, why do the larger powers agree with ASEAN centrality? Minister Ng gave three reasons to explain the phenomenon of ASEAN centrality:

- (i) All countries understand that the region would be destabilised if any large or even middle powers asserted themselves to change the status quo and gain dominance.
- (ii) The geographical coverage of ASEAN includes vital trade routes, such as the South China Sea and Straits of Malacca, which account for more than US\$5 trillion in global trade.
- (iii) The core values of ASEAN are agreeable to the regional and great powers.

Minister Ng commented that it was debatable whether ASEAN centrality became a reality by design or accident. However, he enunciated a few crucial policies that ASEAN must pursue if it was to maintain its centrality:

- (i) The ASEAN states must not take sides with the large powers.
- (ii) ASEAN should sustain multilateral trade agreements.
- (iii) ASEAN member states must promote ASEAN connectivity.
- (iv) The ASEAN states must promote stability, of which the conclusion of a Code of Conduct (COC) for the South China Sea is an important element.

Minister Ng noted that ASEAN centrality was also reflected in defence matters and relationships. He highlighted the example of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), which is an inclusive meeting of Defence Ministers aimed at enhancing dialogue and cooperation. The ADMM-Plus, he noted, was meeting more frequently since its inception in 2010, in response to the growing threats in the region. For example, regional attacks by groups inspired by the Islamic State movement (ISIS) had taken the ASEAN states by surprise, and since such terrorist groups continue to be a threat to the region, they need to be dealt with to prevent instability.

In closing, Minister Ng said he believed ASEAN had great potential for growth. ASEAN's low median age, the increased air traffic and sea travel in the region, ASEAN's ability to digitally leapfrog other countries and regions, its US\$9 trillion aggregated economy with a 6 per cent compounded annual growth rate, and sustainable development, gave ASEAN member states advantages for growth and development in the next 20 years, Minister Ng concluded.

PANEL I

CHALLENGES AND TRENDS IN THE REGIONAL SECURITY ORDER



From left to right: Prof Evelyn Goh, Vice ADM Yoji Koda, Dr Amy Searight, and Amb Ong Keng Yong (chair)

Dr Amy Searight

*Senior Advisor and Director, Southeast Asia Programme
Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), USA*

Dr Amy Searight began by explaining that power entails a distribution of capabilities. Currently, the United States has a larger economy than China and a bigger GDP per capita than China. It is also more technologically advanced than China. However, China is narrowing the gap as it becomes the largest trading nation. In military terms, the competition between China and the United States has shifted to the maritime domain where, in contrast to the earlier Cold War, it is essentially a competition between land forces. Dr Searight added that, according to the Lowy index, China is set to overtake the United States in 2030 and it appears that a unipolar world order based on US hegemony is ending. The world appears to be in transition to bipolarity, where the United States will have to share power with China. However, the United States would still have strong alliances and other power aspects that are difficult to quantify.

In a new bipolar international order between the United States and China, the main competition between the two powers will very likely be one that involves the control of spheres of influence and characterised by a competition for maritime assets and access. However, even as such competition threatens the world, the geopolitics of the region will not be conducive for war between the great powers. Instead, the two powers will use institutions and norms to maintain and, if possible, expand their respective powers. As a result, certain rules and norms can be expected to evolve over time. On the question of where there is room for middle powers

in such a world order, Dr Searight noted that the current trend shows that the influence of middle powers such as Australia and Japan will shrink by 2030, while Indonesia and India will not come close to becoming great powers. She believed that the middle powers might work among themselves or take up the challenge to restore a regional balance of power. Evidence of such actions can be seen with Japan taking the lead in driving the Trans Pacific Partnership and the revival of the Quad, a geostrategic grouping of the United States, Japan, Australia, and India.

Dr Searight highlighted that ASEAN has been traditionally independent of the great powers. ASEAN plays a critical role in creating norms, building trust and promoting regional economic growth. It is also a supporter of a liberal rules-based order. Looking ahead, she noted that the challenge of Chinese dominance over the South China Sea poses a threat to ASEAN's centrality in regional mechanisms. She also cautioned that ASEAN would lose its centrality if the great powers find non-ASEAN related ways of engaging one another.

Professor Evelyn Goh

*Shedden Professor of Strategic Policy Studies and Director of Research
Strategic and Defence Studies Centre
Australian National University*

Professor Evelyn Goh outlined three great challenges to Asian Security: the end of US hegemony; East Asian great powers; and the economic–security nexus.

Regarding the first challenge, she noted that the end of US hegemony is not the same as the United States in decline or a US withdrawal. The end of US hegemony entails the move from a post-World War II approach of a single power to the emergence of multiple powers. Hence, a new strategic thinking is required when it comes to Asia because this shift in power increases the importance of self-reliance and of more interconnectivity among states, while placing a greater focus on regions and regional security issues. Prof Goh gave two examples to illustrate the shift. The first example is Europe's need to focus on military power as the United States cannot be relied upon to deal with European problems. This creates a new balance, with Europe emerging as a counterweight to US global actions. The second example is South Korea's decision to take greater control of regional stability, as seen through its pursuit of friendlier inter-Korean relations.

On the second challenge, Prof Goh put forward the idea of competing regional geographical constructs or concepts. The first imagined region is

cutting the Pacific into two and sticking them back again to bring the two sides of the Pacific closer. The second imagined region is China's new Silk Road, also known as the Belt and Road Initiative. The last imagined region is the Indo-Pacific, an alternative to the new Silk Road, which links the Indian Ocean, South China Sea and Pacific Ocean together. The latter two regions are linked to the East Asian great powers of China and Japan, which together constitute the second challenge to Asian security. Noting that East Asia has been dealing with power transitions for a long time, Prof Goh argued that the recent power transition is not one involving the United States and China; instead, it involves China and Japan. This power transition was disrupted by the end of World War II and the Cold War. The US presence in the region had served to keep China and Japan apart. However, since the 1990s, this restraint between the two East Asian powers may be breaking down as Japan appears to be moving towards remilitarisation with the evolution of the US–Japan alliance.

Finally, addressing the economic–security nexus, Prof Goh commented that economic and security links and relationships are increasingly difficult to tear apart. Investment in infrastructure has established networks and channels of influence, creating structural power that discourages states from disagreeing with their larger neighbours. Governance and rule-making are being challenged as rules are negotiated, and the economic–security nexus has opened up opportunities to make new rules.

Vice Admiral (Ret) Yoji Koda

*Advisor, Japan Marine United Corporation
Japan*

Vice Admiral (Ret) Yoji Koda made three fundamental points regarding the South China Sea dispute. Factually, he noted, China had established control over the Paracel Islands in 1974, but it does not control large features in the Spratly Islands group other than rock features. Countries such as Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia and the Philippines have traditionally exerted control and influence over the large features in the area. For example, Vietnam has expanded the island it controls through coastal reclamation; Taiwan has rebuilt a sea wall and port on the feature that it controls; and, Malaysia and the Philippines have reinforced or expanded the features that they control in the Spratlys. China, on the other hand, has created artificial islands out of the rock features that it controls, but the Permanent Court of Arbitration does not recognise these as islands. China has even gone one step further and militarised the artificial islands despite President Xi Jinping's promise to President Obama in 2015 that there will be no militarisation of

the South China Sea. VADM Koda pointed out that China's argument for its militarisation of the artificial islands was that it was intended to protect Chinese sovereignty. In China's eyes, the presence of the United States in the region is a violation of the 2015 agreement between the two leaders. In response to China's militarisation, the United States has been conducting freedom of navigation operations as a diplomatic act to communicate with China.

VADM Koda pointed out that China's militarisation of the South China Sea had much to do with the concept of the "nine dashed lines" claiming most of the South China Sea as Chinese waters. Currently, international law on the high seas applies in the South China Sea. However, if the nine dashed lines were to be recognised as official, China's domestic laws would apply within those boundaries. If that were to happen, foreign sailors would be obliged to defer to unfamiliar Chinese domestic maritime laws when operating in much of the South China Sea. Currently, the South China Sea is governed by the simple and common international law on the high seas. If Chinese domestic maritime law were to be used to govern the South China Sea, maritime traffic in the South China Sea would become extremely complicated and difficult, and even dangerous, for international sailors, and would impede free maritime traffic in the region.

VADM Koda explained that controlling the South China Sea meant securing control over Scarborough Shoal. At the moment, no artificial islands are being constructed there. However, if China exerts military control over Scarborough Shoal, it would gain a strategic hold over the entire South China Sea.

VADM Koda cautioned that while all eyes are on developments in the South China Sea, China is also exerting influence in the Mekong River. China, he noted, plans to build some 12 dams in the upper Mekong River within its borders, which will affect rice farming communities along the Mekong River that depend on the river's waters for rice cultivation and sustenance.

PANEL II

FUTURE OF WAR AND STRATEGY: IMPACT ON THE ASIA-PACIFIC



From left to right: Prof Pascal Vennesson, Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi, Prof Anthony King, and Assoc Prof Ahmed Salah Hashim (chair)

Professor Anthony King

Professor of War Studies

University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Professor Anthony King spoke about the issue of command. He explained that command is the authority vested in an individual to make decisions. Command is also the means by which large numbers of individuals could be coordinated and orchestrated in a complex and large-scale manner. Military operations require command; without command, conducting coherent military operations is not possible.

Commanders in the 21st century are confronted with the fact that military operations have grown in complexity and now have expanded to include domains such as the urban, information and cyber areas. If the challenge of command in the 20th century was scale, the command challenge of the 21st century is scope, and this move from scale to scope has transformed the practice of command.

In the 20th century, armed forces had institutionalised a relatively individualised system of command. In contrast, command in the 21st century has become a highly professionalised and collectivised practice. In other words, through devices such as the “Decision Point”, the officers on a commander’s staff play an important role in structuring and directing the decision-making process. They not only anticipate when the commander is going to be asked to make the decision, but actually frame what a good and sensible decision is, through a system of conditions that have been pre-identified.

Prof King pointed out that the Decision Point allowed for coherent delegation of command. This is because if commanders can anticipate when decisions need to be made, and under which conditions, they can lay down the guidelines for sensible decisions. It then becomes possible to delegate decision-making downwards. Delegation is absolutely critical in the 21st century because there will be occasions when important decisions need to be made even in the absence of the commander. However, even if there is a delegation of decision-making authority, it does not diminish responsibility as the commander still holds responsibility for defining, scoping or framing the mission's parameters or objectives.

Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi

Distinguished Fellow

Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, India

Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi began by discussing the evolution of warfare since the 17th century. He pointed out that modern wars began in 17th century Europe with the appearance of modern governments and their organised armies. Warfare in the 19th century demonstrated that armies could overwhelm entire nations. Napoleon's armies crushed his European rivals in the early part of the 19th century. However, during the latter part of the 19th century, Prussia, with its massive army, defeated France. Warfare in the 20th century was radically different from 19th century warfare. The concept of the decisive battle had become an elusive one in 20th century warfare.

Dr Joshi then noted that since the latter part of the 20th century, with the arrival of nuclear weapons, no great wars and few decisive battles have taken place. Furthermore, the rate of technological advancement is increasingly influencing the way wars are fought. Dr Joshi added that the emergence of artificial intelligence, robotics and big data analytics makes it a big challenge to work out policy responses before designing defence systems to utilise those technologies or defend against them.

Another change that Dr Joshi pointed out was the change in the nature of war. The total wars of the 17th century gave way to proxy conflicts during the Cold War of the mid-20th century. In recent years, a sort of hybrid warfare seems to have emerged, that is, the combination of conventional and irregular modes of operations such as cyberwarfare and terrorism. Warfare has also evolved to encompass attempts to curtail or defeat an adversary below the threshold of open war. These new forms of war pose additional challenges to conventional militaries.

The changing nature of war, however, does not mean militaries have become obsolete, Dr Joshi stressed. The army continues to be a nation's tool to deter enemy aggression by maintaining the capability to wage war. Nations cannot dispense with militaries; they would still need to organise, train and maintain armed forces. Concluding, Dr Joshi said that at the heart of military force is the need for leaders who can make sharp policy decisions.

Professor Pascal Vennesson

Professor of Political Science, Military Studies Programme, RSIS

Professor Pascal Vennesson explored the relationship between globalisation, and strategy and war. Examining the contrasting perspectives of traditional and global realists, he noted that traditional realists are usually sceptical of globalisation while global realists argue that we should pay attention to transnational dynamics. He then discussed how these views apply to war.

War, in Prof Vennesson's view, is a complex interplay of passion, emotion, reason and chance, and it does not change fundamentally. What has changed in terms of the nature of war are the ends, the ways and the means that constitute the character of war: the ends are the objectives of adversaries, the ways point to the courses of action to reach these objectives, and the means are the resources available. The underlying dynamics that contribute to changes in the character of war are technology and politics. There has been much debate on the relationship between technology and the changing character of war. However, this is only one part of the picture; the major underlying phenomenon is, in fact, politics. The key political dynamics witnessed increasingly around the world today are the shifting boundaries between the national and the transnational. Indeed, the way nation-states and transnational actors interact is a central political change.

Prof Vennesson presented the views of scholars and practitioners who argue that transnational factors have little influence on the character of war. For example, they believe that the existence of violent non-state actors has been overrated. Another view is that technology does not eliminate strategic distance, which comprises both geographical as well as "political" distance. Hence, missiles can have long ranges but are unable to defeat political will. For traditional realists, the world of armed conflict is not transnational.

On the other hand, global realists believe that the dichotomy between the national and transnational is not helpful in understanding war. These scholars believe that states and non-state actors can coexist.

Prof Vennesson pointed out that the global village provides a set of conditions and resources to strategise and plan for war. For example, a number of violent transnational non-state actors have sought to compensate for their relative weakness by using unconventional tools of war like foreign fighters and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Transnational non-state actors think transnationally about what they want to accomplish with force. At the same time, they will face other non-state actors who will try to resist what they are trying to accomplish. Such a meeting point reflects the changing character of war today.

Illustrating his view, Prof Vennesson used the example of foreign fighters and IEDs. Foreign fighters are one key characteristic of many of the conflicts in Syria and Iraq. These fighters owe allegiances to different groups offering improvements to the war-fighting capacity of local fighters and a more reliable source of manpower, especially for non-state actors. There are also states exploiting these foreign fighters for their own purposes. The pairing up of Iran and the Lebanese Islamist movement Hezbollah is a good example. Even if countries do not support these foreign fighters, they may simply tolerate them and allow them to cross their territory. The other example is IEDs, which have been used by the Islamic State movement (ISIS) and others on a massive scale. Users of IEDs are able to quickly acquire technologies to build such devices and to keep them stockpiled. A study done by Conflict Armament Research showed that there was a related global supply chain of 20 countries for IED component parts. These countries do not sell directly to ISIS but much of the trade and delivery of those goods goes through Turkey and Iraq to reach their intended users.

In conclusion, Prof Vennesson argued that global realists were closer in their assessment of the character and the changing character of war. This was because global realists recognised that insurgent movements and their leaders think transnationally and use transnational relations to accomplish their goals. Ultimately, the exploitation of the global village and international strategic opportunities makes violent non-state actors a dangerous and disruptive presence in the regional and global space, he said.

PANEL III

TERRORISM AND SOUTHEAST ASIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



From left to right: Assoc Prof Kumar Ramakrishna, Ms Maria Ressa, Prof Rohan Gunaratna, and Prof Ralf Emmers (chair)

Professor Rohan Gunaratna

Head, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, RSIS

Professor Rohan Gunaratna kicked off his presentation by describing the terrorism landscape of Southeast Asia, where over 60 extremist groups, mainly based in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). He highlighted a number of significant events that demonstrate the threat that some of these groups pose to the region. The first was the emergence of Al Qaeda-centric groups when some 600 people across Southeast Asia travelled to Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s and trained with Osama bin Laden's groups and affiliated entities. With their training completed, these individuals returned to their home countries and established regional franchises of Al Qaeda. Examples of these include Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiyah.

A second wave of groups emerging in Southeast Asia was shaped by developments in Iraq and Syria. These groups have been inspired by ISIS, and they have carried out a number of attacks in the region in recent years, such as attacks on police stations in Indonesia. These groups have also been responsible for carrying out suicide bombings in the region in recent years. The larger threat posed by these groups in Southeast Asia is that they are inspired by ISIS ideology.

Prof Gunaratna stressed that combatting these groups requires actively challenging them through a combination of the efforts of law-enforcement services, the intelligence services, and the armed forces. He used the siege of Marawi in the Philippines beginning in May 2017 as an example to show that the initial government attempt to combat extremists using only law-enforcement services was insufficient. The Philippine army had to be mobilised to assist the police. This led to an escalation of the use of force but it was necessary in order to contain the threat and eventually defeat the armed extremists. Prof Gunaratna noted that the ISIS entity that occupied Marawi appeared to have been well trained for urban warfare. Conversely, the Philippine army and regional militaries appeared to be unprepared to engage in urban combat. There was also lack of cooperation between the various Philippine government agencies in key areas that could have helped to curb the flow of money and foreign fighters who entered the country to support the extremists during the siege.

Prof Gunaratna recommend that regional states adopt the following best practices in counter-insurgency/counter-terrorism to fight the ISIS threat: (i) establishing a common extremism database that the police, the military, and other national security agencies can access; (ii) holding exchange programmes between personnel of nation security organisations like the military and internal security agencies to boost interoperability; (iii) holding joint training/operations between the military and law-enforcement services; and (iv) sharing experience and expertise between these agencies and individuals involved in the anti-ISIS effort.

Prof Gunaratna highlighted the May 2018 Surabaya bombings to illustrate the impact of ISIS outreach efforts and the ability of ISIS to radicalise whole families to commit acts of terrorism. If left unchecked, family radicalisation could become a trend in the region. Indeed, in his view, the recent suicide attacks by ISIS-linked groups in Southeast Asia are indicative of a new threat in the region and a new phase of global expansion that Western analysts have tried hard to explain to the public.

Ms Maria Ressa

*Chief Executive Officer, Rappler, Inc
The Philippines*

Ms Maria Ressa examined the global and regional reach of extremist groups. She shared the results of a survey conducted with about 3,000 people in the Philippines by an international non-governmental organisation (NGO). The survey showed that during the siege of Marawi the Philippine military was the entity most trusted by Filipinos, compared to local authorities and NGOs. The survey suggested that the lack of jobs and similar socio-economic issues contributed to the rise of extremism in the country, as experienced in Marawi.

Ms Ressa noted that ISIS has been more successful in recruiting young boys in the Philippines than in neighbouring Indonesia, a surprising result, considering that the Philippines is a country that is traditionally less swayed by religious ideology. ISIS has been successful in the Philippines because it promised to provide educational opportunities to Filipino youth. Ms Ressa suggested that in a country beset with socio-economic problems such as poverty, ethnic marginalisation, and ineffective governance, education appears to offer one a solution to break out of the poverty trap.

Ms Ressa then talked about ISIS recruitment tactics in the Philippines, which she noted resemble Russian information warfare. Soviet leader Yuri Andropov had once said, “disinformation is like cocaine — sniff once or twice, it may not change your life. If you use it every day, though, it will make you an addict.” Ms Ressa used this quote to examine the use of information warfare where an enemy would constantly tap into the protest potential of a country’s population with the aim of recruiting volunteers. Similarly, ISIS used disinformation to attract recruits who felt disenfranchised. Information warfare could create chaos in society and divide a nation from within. Russian aggrandisement in Ukraine in 2014 was a good example of information warfare at work, and also demonstrated the insidious nature of this type of warfare’s, that is its plausible deniability.

Ms Ressa suggested that to counter information warfare one needs to tap technology, specifically data and information. The sharing of data and information freely with the population prevents information from being manipulated for political ends. Ms Ressa revealed that she founded Rappler News in her home country as a sort of petri dish to test the Filipino response to social media stories, given that Filipinos ranked very highly in the region in terms of online penetration.

Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna

Head of Policy Studies and Head of the National Security Studies Programme
RSIS

Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna presented his “4M” methodology to counter violent extremism (CVE) efforts. This is a strategic communications approach that helps ensure that positive narratives, rather than violent extremist ideologies, are absorbed by the target audience. Assoc Prof Ramakrishna provided a broad overview of the evolving terror threat in the region, noting that ISIS is seeking to expand its reach in Southeast Asia, and that the extremist group may be trying to create an East Asian wilayah or province in Mindanao in the Philippines. The ISIS threat, he stressed, is very real.

The first “M” of Assoc Prof Ramakrishna’s 4M approach is Message, which is about achieving information dominance over one’s audience with a “sticky” or memorable message. To this end, the various slogans or memes that comprise a wider overall narrative must be catchy.

The second “M” is the Messenger entrusted to deliver the Message. The Messenger must be credible and trusted by the target audience; there should not be a one-size-fits-all approach where one single Messenger attempts to target all potential audiences. In CVE programmes, a judicious mix of scholars and former militants are likely needed as “Messengers” customised to different audiences. Assoc Prof Ramakrishna suggested that modern CVE practitioners could for instance take a leaf from the British, who during the Malayan Emergency (1948–60) deployed surrendered Communists who were turned and used to persuade other active Communist fighters to lay down their arms.

The third “M” is Mechanism, which refers to the underlying philosophy behind the various online and real-world platforms to deliver the Message. Assoc Prof Ramakrishna suggested that “softer”, indirect, and non-governmental platforms, such as popular talk show hosts and media personalities, are often effective ways of reaching an audience wary of any platform that is obviously government-linked.

The last “M” is Market Receptivity, which refers to the readiness of audiences to absorb the Message. This is similar to the way consumers react to new products in the market. A lot depends on the external climate prevailing at any point in time. During the Malayan Emergency, when the British colonial government offered amnesty to Communist fighters in September 1949 they failed to attract any takers. However, a similar offer

made later by then Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman in 1957 succeeded in damaging Communist morale. This was because in 1949 the Communists and local population saw that the government was not winning the fight against the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), hence the offer of amnesty was not effective. However, by 1957, the MCP was clearly losing the war, and the offer of amnesty was made by the government from a position of strength.

In closing, Assoc Prof Ramakrishna reiterated that winning the hearts and minds of a target audience in the CVE domain depends on securing information dominance with a positive narrative that can be effectively absorbed by the target audience — to the virtual exclusion of other, competing extremist narratives.

DISTINGUISHED DINNER LECTURE

ASEAN'S ROLE IN THE CHANGING ASIA-PACIFIC SECURITY ORDER



From left to right: Mr Bilahari Kausikan, and Prof Joseph Liow (chair)

Mr Bilahari Kausikan

*Chairman, Middle East Institute
National University of Singapore*

Mr Bilahari Kausikan highlighted some fundamental realities about ASEAN that have not received sufficient emphasis. He argued that ASEAN is often talked about within the context of an over-simplified analysis of the competition for influence between the United States and China. This form of analysis is too binary and simplistic. Instead, it is important to understand ASEAN's past, the formation of ASEAN, and the lessons to be drawn from its history.

Mr Kausikan stressed that ASEAN's effort at sustaining regionalism should not to be taken for granted. It had required much effort for ASEAN member states to ease the tensions and suspicions that had plagued their bilateral relations. However, these tensions and suspicions cannot be erased as they are the consequence of Southeast Asia's diversity. The diversity is not just about the differences in political systems or levels of economic development; the most important differences are primordial: race, language and religion. Primordial diversities can be managed, but they will never go away.

Mr Kausikan attributed ASEAN's survival essentially to Suharto's Indonesia accepting the principle of decision-making by consensus, and its corollary, namely, non-interference, rather than trying to impose Indonesia's will by force. Consensus decision-making is a means of accommodating nationalism

by reassuring each member state that the basic value of autonomy can be upheld by working together without the risk of having one nationalism overwhelming another. Regionalism based on nationalism might seem a contradiction but it worked in practice, Mr Kausikan noted.

In Mr Kausikan's view, domestic politics and domestic political changes are the crucial determinants of the direction of Southeast Asian regionalism. ASEAN is an organisation of sovereign states that can do no more than what its members allow it to do. The domestic politics of its members will, therefore, continue to be the key factor shaping ASEAN's future. Nation-building and the consolidation of the state are still on-going processes in Southeast Asia. The political systems of ASEAN members are thus still malleable and evolving. As such, Mr Kausikan contended, region-building is still an uncompleted project.

Mr Kausikan noted that the major powers have competed since the 1950s to influence Southeast Asian regionalism. However, none of them had ever been able to shape the regional architecture according to their respective preferences. The major power contest to shape Southeast Asian regionalism is, however, not over. Located at the strategic intersection of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Southeast Asia will always be an arena of major power competition. As such, the concept of "ASEAN centrality" does not seek to exclude the major powers, but invites all the major powers to advance their interests through ASEAN, while limiting their ability, since they compete against each other, to stymie ASEAN's most vital designs.

Mr Kausikan noted that the United States was more interested in preserving as much as possible the East Asian architecture built around its "hub and spokes" alliance system. Such a system maximises the scope for smaller states to exercise agency, provided no vital US interest is at stake. The term "rules-based order" and the more recent "free and open Indo-Pacific" are code-words for this system. On China, Mr Kausikan noted that Beijing wanted its new status acknowledged as a new hierarchical norm of the region's international relations, with China at the apex. But, a hierarchical order structurally minimises the scope for agency for small states.

According to Mr Kausikan, China would continue to exercise significant influence in Southeast Asia. China's gravitational pull is being enhanced by various infrastructure projects, the majority of which are under the ambit of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). For recipient countries, the "debt trap", where client states find themselves unable to pay back Chinese infrastructural loans, is foremost among the liabilities. In Southeast Asia, concern over the terms of China's infrastructure building agreements have

led to delays and attempts to renegotiate certain projects. Nevertheless, every country in Southeast Asia still wants to benefit economically from China but not at the expense of pursuing other interests and relationships.

Mr Kausikan noted that every ASEAN member at bottom still wants the best possible relationship with China, Australia, South Korea and an India that is now an integral part of an expanded Asia Pacific. Throughout the Asia-Pacific region, concerns over China coexist uneasily with awareness of interdependency with China. The fundamental challenge, therefore, is to find a balance between these not easily reconcilable considerations.

In conclusion, Mr Kausikan argued that it was easier to imagine a multi-polar future for the Asia-Pacific region. The United States cannot preserve the status quo as it has already changed. However, China's ambition of a hierarchical order with itself at the apex is also impossible. The most probable future Asia-Pacific architecture, thus, will be one of multiple overlapping security and economic frameworks.





PANEL IV

CYBER AND INFORMATION THREATS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



From left to right: Dr Shashi Jayakumar, Dr Michael Sulmeyer, Mr Matthias Yeo, and Mr Eddie Lim (chair)

Mr Matthias Yeo

*Chief Information Officer, Fund Singapore
Singapore*

Mr Matthias Yeo spoke on the need for more innovation in cybersecurity. Cybersecurity, in his view, is associated with more than just the Internet or information technology; it is about trust. Mr Yeo cited the example of the recent Trump-Kim summit, where Singapore was chosen by the US and North Korean governments as the venue for the meeting because Singapore was considered safe and secure; Singapore was trusted by both sides, and the trust brought new opportunities for Singapore.

New technologies will profoundly shape the behaviour of people, and some innovations could effect change sooner rather than later, said Mr Yeo. For example, digitisation will create many business opportunities owing to the development of, and demand for, services like cashless transactions and the automation of processes. Such services and developments will place a demand on secure systems, and, therefore, cybersecurity cannot be an afterthought. This is because cyber criminals are opportunists who seek to utilise system flaws and compromise networks for their gain.

Mr Yeo flagged the Internet of Things (IoT) and user privacy as trends to observe in the future of cybersecurity. He noted that organisations are increasingly tapping the IoT for data collection and research to simplify everyday processes. Hackers, however, could exploit the IoT for malicious

purposes owing to the lack of security solutions to protect IoT devices and the lack of security awareness on the part of IoT users. In addition, manufacturers of IoT devices may not have considered the importance of cybersecurity when designing and manufacturing such devices. Moreover, there is a need to go beyond basic security monitoring to ensure that IoT devices are not being compromised and repurposed for malicious use. For example, in a supply chain attack, a perpetrator will search for information on the IoT, where data has been collected for research, and information on everyday processes is stored. From the data collected, the perpetrator would be able to mine the data for IP addresses, computer names, and installed software. The information could then be sent to third-party computer servers and even sold to third party vendors. Owing to the massive amount of data, participants and parties involved, it can be difficult to detect such intrusions. Mr Yeo noted that as part of its data protection efforts Singapore has been collaborating with iTrust at the Singapore University of Technology and Design to increase cybersecurity. iTrust is a centre that conducts research on cybersecurity and is currently funding a project to detect emerging cyber threats.

While the IoT has simplified many processes, one of the biggest cybersecurity challenges faced across industries dealing with personal data is privacy, noted Mr Yeo. He cited the example of the data hack in April 2017 relating to 1,200 InterContinental hotels across the world, where the credit card information of hotel guests was stolen using malware. Furthermore, the increasing use of biometrics such as through fingerprint scanning could be a boon for cyber criminals. Unlike a password, biometric information is irreplaceable and cannot be changed. If a database containing the biometric information of individuals is stolen, it would grant cyber criminals access to personal, and even in some cases restricted, data. Thieves who have stolen biometric information could subject the owners of everyday devices such as smartphones, watches, and fitness trackers to ransom. This form of attack is also known as Ransomware, where cyber criminals lock out owners from their own personal devices until a ransom is paid to have it unlocked. Such cyberattacks are becoming increasingly prevalent.

Mr Yeo warned that cybersecurity should not just be considered a concern for governments and companies; it should be taken seriously by everyone. Cybersecurity has to be part of everyday life and a major consideration in the development of new technologies. While there will always be an element of messiness and chaos in creative endeavours, cybersecurity discipline must still be in place, Mr Yeo stressed.

Dr Michael Sulmeyer

Director, Cyber Security Project, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs Harvard Kennedy School

Dr Michael Sulmeyer emphasised that militaries need to learn how to fight in cyberspace. He lamented that while there has been much talk of cyberspace as an operational domain, the reality is that it is often being treated like a mere support function. Traditionally, cybersecurity has been lumped under the Communications domain of a military organisation's staff system. Such an arrangement, he stressed, was outdated owing to the increasing importance of cybersecurity in the contemporary battlespace. Cyberspace, in his view, should be treated as part of the Operations domain to reflect its use and capability in military operations.

Concerning the training of cybersecurity forces, Dr Sulmeyer advocated that it be conducted with the same frequency as the other services. He suggested that emphasis be placed on the recruitment of new talent for a cybersecurity force and the retraining of existing staff over the procurement of material capabilities. This can be difficult for militaries as they would not be able to compete with the private sector in terms of remuneration for cyber experts. However, militaries could appeal to the individual's sense of a higher calling.

Dr Sulmeyer stressed that cybersecurity forces should be ready to fight at all times and be postured to act decisively because cyberattacks can happen at any time. More importantly, the response time to react between the early detection of an intrusion and an actual cyberattack is short. The nature of cyberattacks is such that the attacks often reap benefits out of proportion to their costs. While improving cyber defence should be a constant, at times it will be necessary to degrade a competitor's cyber capabilities, Dr Sulmeyer suggested.

Dr Shashi Jayakumar

Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security, and Executive Coordinator of Future Issues and Technology, RSIS

Dr Shashi Jayakumar presented a broad overview of cyber threats. He commented that data is the new "oil" resource of this century and that there is a great demand for it. However, a lucrative shadow economy for data has led to the creation of cyber hacking. Ransomware has become a service to both extract data and monetise data, and cyber criminals are developing increasingly sophisticated malware to target major organisations.

Against major organisations, however, the success rate of malware attacks is relatively low owing to these organisations' investment in strong cyber defences. Moreover, the type of data that has been traditionally targeted by hackers such as banking information and credit card information has become less attractive owing to their limited shelf life as these types of information can be easily changed. Cyber criminals have, therefore, switched their focus to a different set of data, for example, personal health data, which has become more valuable to cyber criminals and was most recently hacked into in Singapore. In another example, the 2015 cyber-strike on Ukraine's power grid that left many thousands of people without electricity during the height of winter suggests that cyber criminals could even offer their services to target industrial control systems and infrastructure.

Dr Jayakumar noted that the methods used by cyber criminals to extract data are growing in sophistication. Cyber criminals are increasingly turning to social engineering to fish for data. For example, an academic may receive a fake e-mail inviting him to attend a high-profile conference. Believing that the invitation is legitimate, the academic would respond and provide his personal information to the e-mail sender, who ostensibly needs the information to help make the registration or travel arrangements for the academic to attend the fictitious conference. Owing to the nature of such cyber criminal activities, national authorities alone cannot guarantee any form of cybersecurity; there needs to be cooperation between governments and organisations, and participation from citizens, stressed Dr Jayakumar. The challenge is to get all the parties to step up and take collective responsibility for cybersecurity and to assign responsibility to the various stakeholders. Unfortunately, this is not happening yet, Dr Jayakumar lamented. It is no exaggeration to say that cybersecurity should be embedded in the basic fabric of the national psyche, he stressed.

Dr Jayakumar went on to note that the major powers seemed to want to maintain the status quo on cyberspace activities, where, for instance, there are no clear red-lines drawn on what type of activity is permissible and what is not. This is because cyberspace enables the major powers to attack other states surreptitiously or via proxies. Dr Jayakumar contended that this should not be the end of having "rules of the road" or established norms in cyberspace.

Dr Jayakumar observed that the East and West often do not see eye to eye on cyber issues. Western nations see cybersecurity measures by Eastern countries as a means of political control and censorship. This perception inhibits the sharing of information and good practices. It is only through genuine cooperation and sharing that the fight against cyber hacking and subversion can be carried out effectively, Dr Jayakumar concluded.

PANEL V

THE SHIFTING GEOPOLITICAL LANDSCAPE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ASIA-PACIFIC SECURITY ORDER



From left to right: Mr Jusuf Wanandi, Dr Euan Graham, Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi, and Assoc Prof Li Mingjiang (chair)

Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi

Distinguished Fellow

Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, India

Dr Manoj Joshi highlighted the importance of geography in strategic thinking. Countries like India, Russia, the United States and China, he noted, are shaped by the geographical obstacles they face and opportunities that their geography presents. Geopolitics is, therefore, the way countries deal with their geography. For example, the renaming in May 2018 of the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) as United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) demonstrates that geopolitical constructs are something borne out of political interest rather than universal consensus.

Dr Joshi argued that the two big global power shifts currently underway involve power shifting from the West to the East, and from states to non-governmental actors. The global centre of gravity in these power shifts is now in Asia. It is this shift and the pivot points that have caught the attention of China, which is keen to capitalise on these changes. While its geopolitical focus remains in the East, China now sees itself in a more central position globally, a kind of “China in the middle” with ambitions to become a hub in international affairs. This concept is being propagated intentionally with the benign message of co-existence under what has been called the “Community of Common Destiny”. Dr Joshi suggested that China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is one of the key strategies that underpin this shift in China’s perspective as it seeks to shrink the distances in the large region of Eurasia through the building of high-speed rail lines. These rail links will

enable China to export its goods to European markets. While many countries situated along the BRI route have welcomed Chinese investments, the BRI ultimately promotes Chinese interests, Dr Joshi stressed.

Currently, the United States, with its vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific, offers a counterweight to China's geopolitical ambitions. Unlike China, the United States prefers the region to be a place where everybody plays by the rules and interacts within a network of strong bilateral relations. India's inclusion as a new but important player in the existing Asia-Pacific network could balance out the emerging Chinese influence in the region. However, Dr Joshi noted, the United States is now experiencing the effects of its withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as it is now forced to confront China directly. Nevertheless, in Dr Joshi's view, the continued presence of the United States in the region is critical to maintaining the regional balance of power. If the United States abandoned the region, states like Japan and South Korea would be very likely to go nuclear to preserve their interests and place in the region, he contended.

Dr Euan Graham

*Director, International Security Programme
Lowy Institute, Australia*

Dr Euan Graham stressed that geography is a fixed part of the international system and geopolitics. With a whole generation having grown up within the framework of globalisation and confronting issues like terrorism, cyber issues, and even the threat of nuclear destruction, it appears that there is a tendency towards a borderless perspective; geography has been eclipsed in such a way as to render it useless when discussing or understanding regional security issues. Yet, Dr Graham contended, a large part of international relations continues to be dictated by geography. This could be seen in the discourse over the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific nomenclatures, and the objectives of China's BRI. There are also contending definitions of what Asia is. These discourses are all underlined by competing geopolitical visions. They take the form of opposing maritime and continental visions, and differing ideas of geostrategic and geo-economic visions.

Dr Graham noted that these competing visions mirror the concept and debate over "Rimland", a concept championed by Nicholas John Spykman, a Sterling Professor of International Relations at Yale University, who died in 1943. Spykman defined "Rimland" as the strip of coastal land that encircles Eurasia and posited that whoever controlled Eurasia controlled the world. To control Eurasia is to exert control over the Rimland. Dr Graham agreed with

Spykman's theory but only to a certain extent. Noting that the bulk of the world's wealth passes through Southeast Asia, one of the major regions that make up the Rimland, ASEAN centrality would be an important fulcrum in any geopolitical framework, he said. However, in discussing the control of the region, there is no simple binary position between land power and seapower and debating which is greater is pointless, he contended. For example, if the objective of the BRI is to exert control over part of the Rimland using maritime and continental methods, then this has been framed in extremely ambitious terms. How the attempt is framed will have a bearing on the way resources are managed, Dr Graham noted. For example, the concept of an Indo-Pacific framework, and its foundation in the Quadrilateral strategic alliance, made up of the United States, Japan, Australia and India, acting to counter China's rise, would not mean much, unless India is bought into the framework and begins to focus eastwards. The Indo-Pacific framework is, therefore, still very much a work in progress for the United States to gain a strategic advantage in the region, Dr Graham contended.

On the countries that are geographically peripheral in the framework, Dr Graham noted that New Zealand has not committed itself to the Indo-Pacific framework. On Singapore, Dr Graham suggested that the founding of Singapore reflected the historical reality of the Indo-Pacific framework. While originally established for commercial reasons, Singapore eventually acquired a strategic logic since its location made it a critical factor in determining whether a "locked gate" or "open gate" strategy prevailed in the Indo-Pacific.

Turning his attention to Australia, Dr Graham noted that it is an island-continent and a coastal frontage with two oceans. But the geographical reality is that Australia's major population centres are located along the South Pacific. Australia is a "victim of the tyranny of distance", being geographically located far away from its closest allies, Dr Graham added. Therefore, there is a sense of vulnerability that inevitably compels Canberra to pursue alliances with whosoever is the prevailing maritime power, and to continue to remain deeply plugged into the global trading system. At the moment, Canberra is not predisposed to move away from its alliance with the United States, which allows for minimal defence expenditure. With its army of 60,000 troops, Canberra is currently experiencing a generational moment where it debates the direction of its future defence spending amid the salient great power rivalry within the region. Australia is also increasing its interactions with ASEAN while improving its capability to project power. Dr Graham suggested that it was important for Australia to evolve from being the sole diplomatic actor in the region into a strategic one. While Australia's options may be limited, the debate has come alive, and there is a growing sense that there is a strategic imperative for it to step up to, Dr Graham concluded.

Mr Jusuf Wanandi

Co-Founder, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia

Mr Jusuf Wanandi made several observations on the geopolitical situation in Southeast Asia. He noted that it would take time before the debate on the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific frameworks have an impact on this part of the world. At the moment, it is simply too early to tell which framework would prevail. Under former US President Obama, there was an attempt to shift power towards the region but this ultimately failed. Under President Trump, the idea of the Indo-Pacific has been raised but this has been mainly focused on security matters. The gap between US spending in the region and China's investment in the Belt and Road Initiative is notably vast in favour of the Chinese, Mr Wanandi noted. Furthermore, the US-conceived Indo-Pacific framework is ultimately founded on the Quadrilateral strategic alliance between the United States, Japan, India and Australia, which is a concept that differs from ASEAN's envisioned framework. Yet, even within the Quadrilateral alliance, there are differing ideas of what the region should be, Mr Wanandi noted. Japan envisions an inclusive Southeast Asia and Africa while India views ASEAN as the base of regional focus.

Mr Wanandi thought China had exerted itself a little too vigorously in the region, ignoring the late Deng Xiaoping's dictum that its foreign interests should be pursued in a subtle manner. By exerting itself too early in the South China Sea, China is facing a setback in its relations with Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines, he said. China has little experience in the building of international alliances, and, more importantly, its present interactions with the world are coloured by its largely negative experiences some 100 to 150 years ago with Western colonial powers. Today, China is a big country with little knowledge of how to properly interact with Southeast Asian countries, Mr Wanandi commented.

ASEAN member countries share the idea that the Indo-Pacific is a region where everyone is free to work but within the framework of ASEAN centrality, said Mr Wanandi. However, he added, ASEAN member countries would need to proactively work towards this idea of centrality, which requires unity and the development of relevant capabilities. For example, the East Asian Summit may have to be enhanced and other institutions strengthened. Also, the Heads of State of the respective ASEAN member countries and non-governmental bodies such as local think tanks all have important roles to play. The future of ASEAN will be influenced by its expectations of the US role in the region, suggested Mr Wanandi. He believed that President Trump was genuine about implementing the Indo-Pacific framework, but added that the US President's capricious demeanour makes him a difficult leader to

trust. This inability to trust him has a potential to affect security and other issues.

Mr Wanandi noted that the US-conceived Indo-Pacific framework, or Quadrilateral alliance, was likely meant to encircle China but warned that it may turn out to be a bad idea because China is simply too big to be encircled. Instead, he suggested, it may be better to include China as part of the Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific frameworks. Mr Wanandi pointed out that President Trump had increased US defence spending and was taking steps to strengthen relations with traditional allies like France, Britain, Japan, South Korea and possibly Australia. However, these measures may be inadequate and greater US attention to the region may not be forthcoming since the United States has other important agendas, such as its complicated involvement in the Middle East. The United States is paying a lot more attention to trade but this is hampered by its ongoing trade war with China. Mr Wanandi commented that it is a trade war that the United States cannot afford because China had contributed a lot more to maintaining the peace on the Korean peninsula than commonly believed. There is also the issue of Taiwan, which has the potential to flare up into a big crisis if the United States leaves it unresolved, Mr Wanandi cautioned.

Associate Professor Li Mingjiang

*Coordinator, China Programme, IDSS
RSIS*

As RSIS's resident China expert, **Associate Professor Li Mingjiang**, the panel chair, was invited to talk about China's understanding of how the world perceives it, and China's vision of a regional order. Assoc Prof Li acknowledged that some of China's strategic moves like the BRI were indeed aimed at the United States, but suggested that they were more a response to what China perceived as a deliberate US attempt at containment or encirclement. America's alliances with South Korea, Thailand, Japan, the Philippines and Australia clearly limit China, keeping China's influence within its first island chain. This is a situation that no Chinese leader would be comfortable with, Assoc Prof Li said.

China's regional interests reflect its increased growth and power, noted Assoc Prof Li. Many Chinese policy analysts believe that China's actual influence in the region, in terms of making other regional states do what they otherwise would not do, has been quite limited. They complain that Beijing has had significant difficulties in securing its security and economic interests even in the cases of North Korea and Myanmar, a situation which does not

reflect China's status as a rising power. The list of such complaints among Chinese policy circles is long. For example, China is still unable to resolve its longstanding issue with Taiwan, and China-funded infrastructure projects in Malaysia have been suspended.

As to China's vision of a regional order, Assoc Prof Li noted that this is something that is still being contested within China. There are currently a number of big proposals being put forward but he is sceptical that China's leaders have developed a clear vision of what the future regional order in Asia should look like.

PANEL VI

BUILDING REGIONAL DEFENCE COOPERATION AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES



From left to right: CAPT (Dr) Gurpreet S Khurana, Dr Li Nan, Prof Tan See Seng, Prof Kim Young Ho, and Prof Ralf Emmers (chair)

Professor Kim Young Ho

*Director-General, Research Institute for National Security Affairs
Korean National Defence University, Republic of Korea*

Professor Kim Young Ho noted that the region's security order is shaped by the overwhelming presence of bilateral rather than multilateral alliances. It appears that the centrality of the hub and spokes system led by the United States has prevailed since the end of the Cold War despite repeated calls and attempts to build a regional multilateral security architecture, he said. Highlighting ASEAN as one exception, Prof Kim then qualified that ASEAN, in fact, operates as a loose alliance and takes very few decisive actions. He noted that while multilateral security cooperation exists within the region, its effectiveness is hampered by something called the "Asian Paradox", a situation where the growing economic interdependence among the countries of the region has failed to reduce existing security tensions. On the contrary, he added, economic prosperity has led to the rise in military expenditure as countries continue to pursue independent rather than collective defence strategies. This has inevitably resulted in a de facto arms race in the region.

Using South Korea as an example, Prof Kim noted that Seoul under the Park Geun-hye administration used three diplomatic initiatives aimed at building and expanding trust through cooperation. The first is the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NACPI) to combat the "Asian Paradox" and foster greater trust using incremental cooperation between a group of seven Northeast Asian countries that includes North Korea and Mongolia. The second diplomatic initiative is the "Seoul Process", which is aimed at

building peace on the Korean peninsula. The third diplomatic initiative is the Eurasian Initiative, which seeks to expand cooperation to Europe through China and Russia. Prof Kim assessed that these initiatives have achieved some success but added that their potential is limited by the differences in the way participating countries view the use of national military strategy. There are also other major challenges and obstacles. The first is a lack of a common concept and assessment of threats. For example, countries in Northeast Asia regard North Korea as the region's threat and source of conventional terror while countries in Southeast Asia are more concerned about non-traditional and transnational threats such as piracy. As a result, there are different senses of urgency towards the handling of various threats in different regions. These differences can also be seen in the different stances taken towards a rising and increasingly more assertive China. The second challenge is that there is a lack of strong regional leadership and, as a result, the great powers prefer bilateral, as opposed to multilateral, solutions. In Prof Kim's view, bilateral solutions have intensified instability because they fuel and exacerbate great power rivalry. The third challenge involves the lingering tensions between countries, which limit the potential for cooperation. Finally, the huge asymmetries in military capabilities among countries in the region make it difficult to apply principles of strict reciprocity and equivalent action in terms of arms control and reduction.

To address some of these challenges and obstacles, Prof Kim suggested that countries in the region work together to develop regional defence cooperation. To start off, they could publish clear and concise defence white papers. This would encourage transparency about the countries' military capabilities. Prof Kim noted that such publications are easy and not intrusive to start off with. Immediately creating a new regional umbrella organisation would almost be impossible; instead, small steps towards the building of more multilateral security arrangements could be undertaken, starting with "mini-lateral" cooperation involving a few founding members. Prof Kim suggested These mini-lateral cooperative efforts would lead to the accumulation of trust between countries, which may lead them down the path of greater cooperation with more members. Prof Kim suggested that the region should build on existing efforts rather than seek to create new ones. Current networks and past experiences should be utilised and then pushed for spill-over effects, he said in conclusion.

Professor Tan See Seng

*Deputy Director and Head of Research, IDSS
RSIS*

Professor Tan See Seng sought to address the issue of building regional defence cooperation by comparing the achievements of two regional security mechanisms, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus). The ARF, he noted, had been described as a frustrating exercise and with good reason. While it was celebrated at its inception, it has now become the poster boy for everything that is bad with the Asia-Pacific region, such as disunity and great power rivalry. It has come under Chinese pressure and has not been able to progress beyond informal confidence building, failing to develop since its early success during the 1996 Taiwan Strait crisis, when it served as a platform for discussion between the United States and China. Given the long time that it took to develop Preventive Diplomacy (PD) mechanisms, the ARF subsequently shifted its emphasis to non-traditional security issues such as disaster relief and in so doing has unwittingly recused itself as a security institution of significance, Prof Tan commented. Lacking operational capability, the ARF has since been outstripped by the ADMM-Plus as the premier mechanism for regional security cooperation.

However, the ADMM-Plus has its own set of problems, noted Prof Tan. The ADMM-Plus has begun looking more like a “workshop”, as opposed to the ARF’s “talk-shop”. Its members currently cooperate in seven areas, including Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and cybersecurity. But Prof Tan conceded that its meetings have grown in terms of frequency and complexity, with the scale and scope of some of its activities being by no means trivial. For example, Singapore in its role as current ASEAN chair has advocated pushing for a Code of Conduct agreement with China for the South China Sea. Counter-terror cooperation will also intensify and deepen in the coming months in the wake of the Marawi incident in the Philippines. At the same time, “3Cs” — counter-terrorism, confidence building measures, and Chemical, Biological (and) Radiological (CBR) — programmes have been proposed in order to build resilience and enhance the ADMM-Plus’s relevance. As part of these programmes, a “3Rs” framework — Resilience, Response, Recovery — is being envisaged to put together regional counter-terrorism initiatives to strengthen ASEAN’s regional centrality, as well as improve coordination and synergy. A virtual ASEAN network of CBR defence experts will also be established to strengthen regional capabilities against CBR threats by terrorists and rogue states.

In Prof Tan’s overall assessment, the ADMM-Plus presents a stripped down but workable enterprise that has come to be of interest to a number external

partners such as the European Union, Canada and Chile. The worry though is over who should be welcomed into its membership as the ADMM-Plus does not need free-riders, Prof Tan commented. In closing, he argued that the ADMM-Plus has gone into areas that the ARF feared to thread and today is developing capacity in PD. He believed that even though the ADMM-Plus has not publicly stated its intent on becoming a PD actor, it has the potential and capacity to do so. However, the ADMM-Plus needs to be cautious in striking a balance between security and freedom, represented by how it approaches the issue of civil liberties. It also has to manage its high operational tempo so as to avoid fatigue, Prof Tan suggested.

Dr Li Nan

*Visiting Senior Research Fellow, East Asian Institute
National University of Singapore
Singapore*

Discussing naval incidents, **Dr Li Nan** noted that while there have been far fewer incidents in recent years, some serious ones had still occurred, the most serious one being the EP-3 incident in 2001. In this incident, a US navy EP-3E ARIES II signals intelligence aircraft operating within the vicinity of Hainan Island was forced to make an emergency landing on the island after it collided with one of two Chinese J-8II fighter jets sent to intercept it. This incident highlighted the need for a framework and rules to prevent future accidents, especially naval accidents, because they have the potential to lead to larger conflicts.

Dr Li did a comparison of the prevention of naval incidents between the Cold War and today. According to his research, there were as many as some 100 incidents in peak years involving the intentional shouldering and bumping of ships, close passes of ships by low-flying aircraft, and mock air and surface attacks during the Cold War. The Incidents at Sea Agreement (INCSEA) signed by the United States and Soviet Union in 1972 set up a kind of “rules of the road” and it became the most successful treaty of its type during the Cold War. In contrast, a Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA) signed by the United States and China in 1998 contains no detailed “rules of the road” provisions and has been more successful as a discussion forum that addresses HADR and counter-terrorism than as a mechanism for preventing naval incidents. A later multilateral Code of Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES), signed in Qingdao in 2014, falls somewhere in between. It has specific provisions to prevent naval incidents and their escalation but it is a voluntary agreement that has no arbitration mechanism. The agreement is also narrowly restricted to military ships and aircraft. The

United States and China have been adhering to it more in the Gulf of Aden than in the South China Sea.

Dr Li noted that, compared with the agreements signed in recent years, those signed during the Cold War had achieved different levels of success owing to three reasons. The first was the heightened concerns over the risk of escalation shared by both the United States and the Soviet Union. In comparison, incidents today have been fewer and less severe, sometimes involving non-naval ships. The second reason is that the United States and Soviet Union had no disagreement over the interpretation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) regarding military survey and surveillance in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ). However, the United States and China today have different interpretations of whether such activities belong to marine scientific research and should be regulated by coastal states. The final reason is that there was a symmetry of intentions and capabilities between the United States and Soviet Union but between the United States and China today there exists an asymmetry of intentions and capabilities.

Dr Li suggested that a solution may be found in CUES, which can be a good start to develop a legally binding agreement between the United States and China. Since China aspires to become a maritime power, it would inevitably want more manoeuvring space to secure vital sea lanes and to protect its growing maritime and overseas interests. China's interpretation of UNCLOS is constantly evolving and may eventually approach the US interpretation. For example, China's interpretation of UNCLOS as it relates to the Arctic is different from its interpretation in regard to the South China Sea. Dr Li suggested that China could possibly reconsider its restrictive interpretation of UNCLOS regarding military activities in the EEZ in order to prevent naval incidents at sea and secure more manoeuvring space.

Captain (Dr) Gurpreet Khurana

*Executive Director, National Maritime Foundation (NMF)
India*

Captain (Dr) Gurpreet Khurana reflected on the “Indo-Pacific” concept, which, in the contemporary geopolitical context premised on the security linkage between the Indian and Pacific oceans, had first been used in his academic writing in January 2007. Going back to the basics of geopolitics, he felt that the “strategic geography” of a country was determined by where and how it positioned its “real” geography upon the spatial boundaries of its own national interests. Using China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a

case in point, he highlighted that the initiative was part of China's greater geopolitical approach to meet both its geo-economic and non-geo-economic objectives within the region, including a favourable balance of power and influence. Therefore, he said, military strategy is important only to the extent that it provides assurance and insurance in support of these broader goals. In essence, military strategy is subordinate to the other strategies of the state.

The rationale behind the Indo-Pacific concept is that a maritime-oriented region necessitates maritime solutions to its problems, CAPT Khurana noted. While the term was conceptualised long ago to meet geo-economic ends and achieve shared prosperity, in the contemporary context beginning 2007, it seeks to promote a common interest in maritime order, maritime security and strategic stability, and to restrain disruptive forces, both state and non-state. CAPT Khurana acknowledged, however, that this concept would continue to evolve over the coming years and even decades. Nonetheless, it is important to note that while the Indian and Pacific oceans are functionally connected in geo-economic and security terms, what the geographical scope of the Indo-Pacific region is will differ from country to country, based on each country's own national strategic geography.

CAPT Khurana pointed out that India's vision of the Indo-Pacific is that it is a region which is free, open and inclusive; follows a common rules-based order; respects the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the equality of all nations; and where Southeast Asia is considered its centre. This vision is linked with India's 2014 Act East Policy and 2015 Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) Concept. India's original "Indo-Pacific" idea was developed in 2006–07, in consonance with its current approach to moderating China's behaviour through the application of subtle persuasive and dissuasive pressures on Beijing. However, America's vision of the Indo-Pacific, underpinned by its Quadrilateral strategic alliance against China, may lead to a polarisation of the region, warned CAPT Khurana. Therefore, the Quadrilateral strategic alliance could be problematic. When seen as a pure security construct, it could lead to the marginalisation of important regional actors such as China and ASEAN.

CAPT Khurana noted that ASEAN itself does not collectively endorse the Indo-Pacific concept, believing that it would force smaller countries to take sides. Likewise, the European Union believes that the Indo-Pacific Quad is a quasi-military alliance that runs counter to its approach of strengthening regional solutions and cooperation. However, CAPT Khurana noted that, despite their public disapproval, some key members of ASEAN and the European Union, such as Indonesia, Vietnam, France and the United Kingdom individually support the concept.

With regard to China, CAPT Khurana observed that Beijing initially resented the concept of an Indo-Pacific region, but avoided any official reaction to it. However, the US approach to the Indo-Pacific eventually led to adverse reactions among Chinese think-tanks. China then went the other way by ignoring the origins and intent of the Indo-Pacific framework, and instead seeking to capitalise on it by interpreting the Indo-Pacific as the “maritime silk road with Chinese characteristics”. China’s vision of the Indo-Pacific region mirrors the Chinese Maritime Silk Road, and, in today’s context, it begins with the Hainan Free Trade Zone and port planned for completion between 2025 and 2035. This may grant more legitimacy for a larger Chinese military presence in the Indian Ocean region.

CAPT Khurana felt that moderating China’s behaviour should be only a waypoint and not the end-state. The core objective of the Indo-Pacific is freedom and prosperity. In order to achieve that objective, it is vital to maintain ASEAN’s centrality within the Indo-Pacific, where multilateralism should prevail. Maintaining ASEAN centrality should be a responsibility for both ASEAN and members of the Quadrilateral strategic alliance, CAPT Khurana said. However, he noted that ASEAN and the Quad are driven by the divergent geostrategic interests of their respective members, and China could potentially exploit these fault-lines. Moreover, the United States focuses on its military to preserve its global interests, which presents a major problem when dealing with China. America’s continual disengagement with China, such as “disinviting” the PLA Navy from its RIMPAC exercises, is also not helping the situation. China, on the other hand, appears to be winning the game of regional influence against the United States

CAPT Khurana concluded by recommending a prioritised approach while fleshing out the Indo-Pacific architecture. The first priority is geo-economics, maritime safety, security and confidence building. This could be achieved by building greater economic connectivity and trade, ensuring the sustainable development of marine resources, promoting multilateral cooperation to handle HADR and transnational terrorism and crime, and conducting more multilateral agreements, exercises and interactions such as CUES and APPSMO. The second priority is maintaining good maritime order in accordance with international law. This can be done by developing a congruence on the interpretation of law with regard to freedom of navigation and use of international arbitration to resolve outstanding disputes. Such an approach will also lead to persuasive and dissuasive pressures upon China to respect the established legal order and norms of conduct. The third priority involves ensuring a stable balance of power through coordination of capacity and capability building of smaller regional countries, which will narrow down their existing military asymmetries vis-à-vis China. The last priority would be developing military preparedness to cater for worst-case scenarios, which

would range from logistic and information-sharing agreements to combined naval exercises to develop operational compatibility. This approach is an acknowledgement that hard military security cannot be neglected, and remains essential to deter potential aggressors, while providing assurance and insurance to the home country.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Day 1: 5 August 2018 (Sunday)

1100 hrs **Arrival and Registration of Participants**

1600 hrs **Ice-breaker**

1900 hrs **Welcome Dinner**



Day 2: 6 August 2018 (Monday)

0930 hrs **Welcome Remarks**

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong
Executive Deputy Chairman, RSIS
and Director, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, RSIS

0940 hrs **Keynote Address**

Dr Ng Eng Hen
Minister for Defence, Singapore

1020 hrs **Group Photo-taking & Tea Break**

1100 hrs **Panel I**

Challenges and Trends in Regional Security Order

Speakers

Dr Amy Searight
Senior Advisor and Director, Southeast Asia Program
Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), USA

Professor Evelyn Goh
Shedden Professor of Strategic Policy Studies and Director of Research
Strategic and Defence Studies Centre
Australian National University, Australia

Vice Admiral (Retd) Yoji Koda
Advisor, Japan Marine United Corporation, Japan

Chairperson

Ambassador Ong Keng Yong

1500 hrs Visit to Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) and Tour of a Republic of Singapore Navy Frigate at Changi Naval Base

1845 hrs Opening Dinner

Guest of Honour

Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam
Former President, Republic of Singapore
and Chairman, RSIS Board of Governors

Host

Lieutenant-General Melvyn Ong
Chief of Defence Force, Singapore Armed Forces



Day 3: 7 August 2018 (Tuesday)

0830 hrs Introduction by participants

0945 hrs Panel II
Future of War and Strategy: Impact on the Asia-Pacific

Speakers

Professor Anthony King
Chair of War Studies, University of Warwick, UK

Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi
Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, India

Professor Pascal Vennesson
Professor of Political Science, Military Studies Programme, RSIS

Chairperson

Associate Professor Ahmed Salah Hashim
Military Studies Programme, RSIS

1215 hrs Syndicated Discussion

1500 hrs Visit to 2PDF/IDTI, Clementi Camp

1930 hrs Distinguished Lecture
ASEAN's Role in the Changing Asia-Pacific Security Order

Speakers

Mr Bilahari Kausikan
Chairman, Middle East Institute, National University of
Singapore, Singapore

Chairperson

Professor Joseph Liow
Professor of Comparative and International Politics, and Dean,
RSIS

**Day 4: 8 August 2017 (Wednesday)**

0830 hrs Introduction by participants

0945 hrs Panel III
Terrorism and Southeast Asia: Challenges and Opportunities

Speakers

Professor Rohan Gunaratna
Professor of Security Studies and Head of International Centre
for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, RSIS

Ms Maria A Ressa
Chief Executive Officer, Rappler, Inc,
The Philippines

Associate Professor Kumar Ramakrishna
Head of Policy Studies and Head of National Security Studies
Programme, RSIS

Chairperson

Professor Ralf Emmers

Professor of International Relations, Associate Dean and Head
of Centre for Multilateralism Studies, RSIS

1215 hrs Syndicated Discussion

1445 hrs Visit to Microsoft



Day 5: 9 August 2018 (Thursday)

0830 hrs Introduction by participants

0945 hrs Panel IV

***Cyber and Information Threats: Challenges and
Opportunities***

Speakers

Mr Matthias Yeo

Chief Information Officer, Fund Singapore

Dr Michael Sulmeyer

Director, Cyber Security Project, Belfer Center for Science and
International Affairs Harvard Kennedy School, USA

Dr Shashi Jayakumar

Head, Centre of Excellence for National Security
and Executive Coordinator, Future Issues and Technology, RSIS

Chairperson

Mr Eddie Lim

Senior Fellow and Head, Military Studies Programme, RSIS

1215 hrs Syndicated Discussion

1730 hrs Viewing of Singapore's **National Day Parade**



Day 6: 10 August 2018 (Friday)

0830 hrs Introduction by participants

0945 hrs **Panel V**

Shifting Geopolitical Landscape and its Implications for the Asia-Pacific Security Order

Speakers

Dr Manoj Kumar Joshi

Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, India

Dr Euan Graham

Senior Fellow, Lowy Institute, Australia

Mr Jusuf Wanandi

Co-founder, Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Indonesia

Chairperson

Associate Professor Li Mingjiang

Coordinator, China Programme

Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, RSIS

1215 hrs **Syndicated Discussion**

1430 hrs **Military Heritage Tour at Fort Siloso, Sentosa, and Former Ford Factory**



Day 7: 11 August 2018 (Saturday)

0830 hrs Introduction by participants

0945 hrs Panel VI
Building Regional Defence Cooperation and Confidence
Building Measures

Speakers

Professor Kim Young Ho

Director-General, Research Institute for National Security Affairs
Korean National Defence University, Republic of Korea

Professor Tan See Seng

Professor of International Relations, Deputy Director and
Head of Research, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies,
RSIS

Dr Li Nan

Visiting Senior Research Fellow, East Asian Institute National
University of Singapore, Singapore

Captain (Dr) Gurpreet S Khurana

Executive Director, National Maritime Foundation, India

Chairperson

Professor Ralf Emmers

Professor of International Relations, Associate Dean, and Head
of Centre for Multilateralism Studies, RSIS

1130 hrs Presentation of Certificates followed by Farewell Lunch

1330 hrs End of formal programme



SPEAKERS

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Shedden Professor of Strategic Policy Studies and Director of Research,
Strategic and Defence Studies Centre
Australian National University, Australia

Dr Euan Graham

Director, International Security Programme, Lowy Institute, Australia

Professor Rohan Gunaratna

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