

34TH ASIA-PACIFIC ROUNDTABLE

Disruption Redux

17-18 August 2021
Online via (*link to be provided*)
Time Zone: Kuala Lumpur, UTC+8

PROGRAMME
(As of 16 June 2021)

Day 1

TUESDAY, 17 AUGUST 2021
(All times in UTC+8)

- 0900-0920 **REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS AND ROLE-PLAYERS ADMITTED TO
“NETWORKING/WAITING ROOM”**
- 0920-0930 **WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE CHAIR OF THE ASEAN-ISIS NETWORK**
- 0920-0930 **WELCOMING REMARKS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ISIS MALAYSIA**
- 0930-0955 **KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND OFFICIAL OPENING BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF
MALAYSIA**
- 0955-1000 **BREAK**
- 1000-1100 **SESSION 1 - THE PANDEMIC AND GLOBAL REALIGNMENT**
The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the world to confront issues of governance competency, economic resilience and adaptability, and socio-cultural cohesion. While its effects are global, different systems have responded in their own ways and with longstanding repercussions. Instead of tempering major power competition between the United States and China, the pandemic has instead become yet another avenue of rivalry. Could a faster recovery rate lead to greater enthusiasm in Asia-Pacific for more regionalism? How will RCEP, the world’s biggest free-trade agreement, facilitate recovery and realignment? What role will a more formal Quadrilateral Security Dialogue have in this evolving order? How has the pandemic impacted the ongoing global realignment of power and influence? Has it changed the Asia Pacific’s influence in framing and the conduct of multilateral mechanisms and organisations?

Instigator

Dr Thitinan Pongsudhirak

Director

Institute of Security and International Studies (ISIS) Thailand
Thailand

Speakers

Mr Richard Maude

Executive Director of Policy

Asia Society Australia;

Senior Fellow

Asia Society Policy Institute
Australia

Professor Tosh Minohara
Graduate School of Law and Politics
Kobe University
Japan

Speaker 3 to be confirmed

1100-1105 **BREAK**

1105-1205 **SESSION 2 – THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL COSTS OF THE PANDEMIC IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

The closure of borders was among the most significant impact of the pandemic on Southeast Asia. These shutdowns challenged the interdependence among ASEAN member states, ranging from labour and supply chains, to services and capital, and human mobility. Citizens stranded in neighbouring countries faced significant socio-economic, human and political pressures on top of the difficulties brought about by the pandemic. Beyond economics, what are the human and political costs of border shutdowns in Southeast Asia? How has ASEAN moved to address these challenges? As vaccinations pick up in 2021 and 2022, will the region allow travel for the vaccinated?

Instigator

Mr Herman Joseph S Kraft
Professor, Department of Political Science
University of the Philippines-Diliman;
Fellow, Asia Pacific Pathways to Progress Foundation (APPF)
The Philippines

Speakers

Associate Professor Simon Tay
Chairman
Singapore Institute of International Affairs
Singapore

Dr David Capie
Director, Centre for Strategic Studies;
Professor, School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations
Victoria University of Wellington
New Zealand

Speaker 3 to be confirmed

1205-1210 **BREAK**

1210-1310 **SESSION 3 – DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY: CONTESTING IDEAS, SINGULAR OBJECTIVES**

In recent years, approaches to digital sovereignty have been coloured by technological nationalism, innovation mercantilism and development gaps. In an environment where the data economy and innovation are dependent on public policies and private sector progress, the need to develop responsible and responsive data governance regimes is clear. Considerations range from policies that widen development gaps by ensuring data collection remain concentrated in the hands of a few to the increasing role of the private sector as arbiters and protectors of the digital domain. How does the evolving environment impact regulations on data retention within borders? What are the policies needed for the private sector and governments to make digital sovereignty feasible? Are there avenues and platforms in Southeast Asia for collaboration between

the private sector and governments to develop practices for a safe and stable cyberspace? How do these companies (including telecommunication companies) balance their domestic operations with an interconnected global environment?

Instigator

Ms Briony Daley Whitworth

Assistant Director

Cyber Affairs and Critical Technology Branch

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Australia

Speakers

Dr Xu Longdi

Associate Research Fellow

China Institute of International Studies

People's Republic of China

Mr Nick Bauer

Public Policy Manager

Google

Singapore

Speaker 3 to be confirmed

1310-1340 **AMBASSADORIAL SESSION 1**

Day 2

WEDNESDAY, 18 AUGUST 2021

(All times in UTC+8)

0900-0930 **REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS AND ROLE-PLAYERS ADMITTED TO
"NETWORKING/WAITING ROOM"**

0930-1030 **SESSION 4 - SIMMERING WATERS AND UNSETTLING UNDERCURRENTS:
THE NEW NORMAL OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE**

The Code of Conduct for the South China Sea was supposed to be ready by 2021 but has been delayed by the pandemic. At the same time, 2020 saw rising tensions in territorial dispute with reports of harassment of fishing and hydrocarbon exploration activities. This in turn has further aggravated the risk of the dispute being subsumed under the US-China competitive dynamics. Beyond the strategic and territorial disputes, the maritime ecosystem of the South China Sea also continues to suffer from sustained degradation. What is the impact of these developments on ASEAN and its claimant states? How close China and ASEAN to the Code of Conduct, and what are the main points of progress and hurdles? What are the impacts of these developments on coastal communities and how can they be mitigated?

Instigator

Dr Asyura Salleh

Co-Founder

Global Awareness & Impact Alliance

Brunei Darussalam

Speakers

Mr Gregory B Poling

Senior Fellow for Southeast Asia
Director, Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative
Centre for Strategic & International Studies
United States of America

Dr Wu Shicun

President
National Institute for South China Sea Studies
People's Republic of China

Speaker 3 to be confirmed

1030-1035

BREAK

1035-1135

SESSION 5 - RECOVERY DISRUPTED: THE CHALLENGE OF VACCINE DISTRIBUTION AND DIPLOMACY

The availability of COVID-19 vaccines adds a new dimension to managing the pandemic – their acquisition and distribution. With demand fast outstripping supply in Southeast Asia, governments are racing not just to secure vaccines but also to administer them. At the same time, vaccine diplomacy adds a significant new dimension in regional strategic calculations. Initially led by China, individual efforts by members of the Quad have now coalesced under a combined effort to ramp up vaccine production and distribution to countries in the Indo-Pacific and beyond. What are some of the challenges that different states still face in acquiring as well as distributing vaccines? Have internal safeguards hindered, rather than helped, this process? How does vaccine diplomacy outreach by regional powers impact the tough decisions faced by developing countries?

Instigator

Dr Khor Swee Kheng

Visiting Fellow
Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia;
Associate Fellow, Chatham House
The United Kingdom

Speakers

Dr Jerome H Kim

Director General
International Vaccine Institute
Republic of Korea

Dr Mely Caballero-Anthony

Professor of International Relations
Head of Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies;
President's Chair in International Relations and Security Studies
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)
Nanyang Technological University
Singapore

Speaker from the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung

1135-1140

BREAK

1140-1210 **AMBASSADORIAL SESSION 2**

1210-1215 **BREAK**

1215-1315 **SESSION 6 – MYANMAR IN TURMOIL: NATIONAL AND REGIONAL REPERCUSSIONS**

The struggle for state power and recognition between competing factions in the aftermath of Myanmar's February 1 coup continues amidst worsening social unrest across the country. ASEAN is under pressure to take the lead in persuading the multiple factions to resolve their difference peacefully, but itself remains divided on its course of action. This session aims to unpack the following: What are the prospects for realistic conditions necessary for all stakeholders to negotiate their way out of the crisis? Does ASEAN have the capacity to bring these factions together? What are the humanitarian costs of the ongoing violence to those in the country and the large number of Myanmar refugees abroad? How likely is the domestic deterioration in Myanmar to impact ASEAN as a regional organisation, its centrality and relations with Dialogue Partners? How is ASEAN's action, or inaction, viewed among its own people?

Instigator

Ambassador Pou Sothirak

Executive Director

Cambodian Centre for Cooperation and Peace (CICP)

Cambodia

Speakers

Ambassador Rizal Sukma

Senior Researcher

Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Indonesia

Speaker from the International Committee of the Red Cross

Speaker 3 to be confirmed

1315-1330 **CLOSING REMARKS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ISIS MALAYSIA**

END