

# Think Tank

NEWS FROM IDSS



## IDSS launches its Newsletter Message from the Director



It gives me great pleasure to welcome this, the inaugural issue of the IDSS newsletter *Think Tank*. *Think Tank* has been created to highlight and further

our achievements in the fields of regional security and diplomacy within our three main capacities of research, teaching and networking.

Beginning with research, as one of newest think tanks in the region (founded in 1996), IDSS has proven itself to be flexible and relevant, adapting to the new geopolitical realities in traditional and non-traditional security. The quality and timeliness of our research is demonstrated with the establishment of our Political Violence and Terrorism Programme, the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) Programme and our Maritime and Port Security Programme, all of which correspond to a rapidly changing security environment. These new research capacities have flourished in tandem with an influx of specialist staff.

We are also honoured to have distinguished organisations like the Ford Foundation and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation support our programmes on "Non-Traditional Security" and "Evolving Approaches to Security in the Asia Pacific Region".

In teaching, our Master of Science (MSc) Programmes in Strategic Studies and in International Relations continue to thrive. The year 2004 will also see the introduction of our new Master of Science Programme in International Political Economy.

Most importantly, IDSS has become a significant player in regional networking having co-hosted conferences with a number of internationally respected research organizations such as the Royal United Services Institute, *Institut Francais des Relations Internationales*, the Japan Institute of International Affairs and the Center For Strategic & International Studies. We are also privileged to participate in Track Two diplomacy with the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP).

New joint fora such as the Asia Political and International Studies Association (APISA) balance our own initiatives such as the annual Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO) Summit. On a more frequent basis, our many public lectures, colloquia and seminars provide opportunities for academics and policy makers from around the region, and further afield, to discuss pressing contemporary issues. IDSS has thus become a unique hub for the articulation, analysis and interpretation of the new security era.

It is only fitting that *Think Tank* should be the vehicle to share these exciting developments with our alumnus, patrons and the wider IDSS community.

Barry Desker

# IDSS creates *Terrorism Database* for UN

At the invitation of the United Nations Monitoring Group in New York, the IDSS terrorism analysts and IT specialist Tng Eng Cheong, designed and built the United Nations Database on Al Qaeda, Taliban and their Associates. The state-of-the-art database focuses on the mobility of terrorists, their banking and financial networks and weapon procurement. The specialised database will be used by the UN agencies to reduce the threat posed by contemporary terrorist organizations

## About the IDSS International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research

The Centre works at the cutting edge of terrorism research. It focuses on the Asia-Pacific region with special emphasis on South East Asia.

## Aims of the Centre:

- 1) Develop and maintain a state-of-the-art database that lists domestic and international terrorist incidents, group, personality and attack profiles.
- 2) Train both the specialised branches of governments especially in ASEAN countries to strengthen and enhance their counter- and anti-terrorism capabilities and capacities.
- 3) Provide informal and formal public education to increase public awareness of the terrorist threat as well as to build an ethic and norm against the use of violence as a form of political expression.

## First Conference Dedicated to Asian Scholars and Regional Scholarship

The First Congress of the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA) on 28-30 November 2003 was the first ever conference dedicated entirely to the advancement of Asian-based academics and institutes in political and international studies. With the theme "Asia in the New Millennium: Development, Democracy and Security", the conference attracted 161 participants internationally with about 70 percent of them from around Asia.

### Highlights of the Conference:

- > Dr. Surin Pitsuwan's (former Foreign Minister of Thailand and Member of the Commission for Human Security) opening address focused on the need to pursue prominence in Asian scholarship.
- > A first of its kind, the Think Tanks and Research Institutes panel brought together the movers and shakers of the Asian academic circuit. The panelists included Barry Desker (Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies), Anthony Reid (Asia Research Institute, Singapore), V.A. Pai Panandiker (formerly from the Centre for Policy Research, India), P.R. Chari (Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi).

APISA is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organization. It aims to: promote research, teaching and publication of political and international studies in and on Asia; disseminate research findings, institutional skills and syllabi; promote cooperation and exchanges between individuals and institutions; promote regional and sub-regional peace through epistemic communities.

The Co-Chairs of APISA are Prof. Amitav Acharya (Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies) and Associate Prof. Lee Lai To (Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore).



From left: Dr Kamalrulnizam (Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia), Prof. Acharya (IDSS) and Dr Pitsuwan (Thailand)

# Sasakawa Conference held in Washington



The Conference on "Reassessing Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region" organized by the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) in conjunction with the Mortara Center for International Studies was held in Washington at Georgetown University on 20-21 November 2003. Participants were asked to reassess the issue of security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific from a thematic and theoretical perspective and to press for ways forward in thinking about regional security cooperation.

The final one in a series of four conferences and workshops on "Evolving Security Approaches in the Asia-Pacific", the conference was generously supported by the Sasakawa Peace Foundations of Japan and USA. Segments of the project included a conference on country-specific approaches to security, in addition to workshops on peacekeeping, globalization and economic security.

IDSS Deputy Director Amitav Acharya, who has conceptualized and coordinated the two-year project, pointed out that it is the only research project to have examined cooperation in Asian security in such a systematic fashion. In particular, the project has succeeded in creating what could be the most exciting and important network of scholars working on regional security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific. Acharya stressed that the project has thrived thanks to the contribution of all the participants involved in the four conferences and the scholars who visited IDSS under the auspices of the Sasakawa Visiting Scholar Programme.

## Sasakawa Fellowship Programme at IDSS

### Visiting Fellows

#### Dr Tang Shiping

*Affiliated Institution* : Institute of Asia Pacific Studies,  
Chinese Academy of Social Science, China

*Period of Fellowship* : 15 Sept - 12 Oct 02

*Project Title* : A Sytematic Theory of Security Environment  
in East Asia"

#### Dr Pham Cao Phong

*Affiliated Institution* : Institute for International Relations, Vietnam

*Period of Fellowship* : 3 Dec - 26 Jan 03

*Project Title* : Vietnam's Economic Security in the Regional Context

#### Prof Wang Zhenyi

*Affiliated Institution* : Centre for International Political Economy, China

*Period of Fellowship* : 25 Jan - 2 Mar 03

*Project Title* : China & East Asian Regionalism

#### Dr Shin Wha-Lee

*Affiliated Institution* : Dept of Political Science and  
International Relations, Korea University

*Period of Fellowship* : 12 Jan - 14 Feb 04

*Project Title* : Regional Cooperation on Non-Traditional  
Security in East Asia

#### Dr Oba Mie

*Affiliated Institution* : Dept of Engineering, section of Liberal Arts,  
Tokyo University of Science, Japan

*Period of Fellowship* : 6 Mar - 5 Apr 04

*Project Title* : Perceptions of ASEAN Countries towards  
Regionalism in East Asia

### IDSS' Current Sasakawa Post-Doctoral Fellow

#### Dr. Hiro Katsumata

*Period of Fellowship*: 2 May 03 - 1 May 04

*Research Focus*:

- > Regionalism & Security in Post-Sept 11 East Asia
- > Multilateral Security Cooperation, the ASEAN Regional Forum
- > ASEAN's Diplomatic Culture
- > Japanese Diplomacy in Southeast Asia
- > Constructivism



*From left:  
Dr Katsumata with  
President S. R. Nathan*



# Professor Stephen M. Walt gives Colloquium

IDSS' first S. Rajaratnam Professor in Strategic Studies Professor Stephen M. Walt was in Singapore again to give a colloquium on "The Global Response to American Primacy" at NTU on 14 January 2004. Professor Walt is also the Academic Dean at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, where he holds the Robert and Renee Professorship in International Affairs.

**"Although Americans see their country as a benevolent power, such a view is not necessarily shared by those in other countries".**

Professor Walt asserted that US power often makes others nervous, given its ability to act unilaterally. Professor Walt offered two strategies: accommodation and resistance. First, a country may choose to accommodate Washington, by taking a policy of "bandwagoning", which deflects the latter's power through appeasement. A country can also take the strategy of accommodation for other purposes, such as the utilization of the US clout for the sake of a balance of power at the local level. Second, some countries may choose to resist the US power. They may, for example, align with others in order to balance themselves against Washington, or "blackmail" the latter by threatening to take unwanted actions, such as the covert development of nuclear weapons.

In his concluding remarks, Professor Walt maintained that to win support for Washington's actions, the US should strive to become more persuasive, self-restrained and considerate to others.

## IDSS Book tackles "real world challenges"

Professor Walt launched *After Bali: The Threat of Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, a timely publication edited by IDSS' Drs. Kumar Ramakrishna and See Seng Tan. According to the editors, the book attempts to shed new light on issues such as the role of US policies in shaping the political climate inhabited by Southeast Asian governments, and the role of the global media in shaping perceptions of the region. It offers the first real "bottom-up" analysis of the radical Islamic terrorist threat in Southeast Asia.



From left: Dr Tan, Prof. Walt and Dr Ramakrishna

## New books from IDSS published by Routledge

Dr. Ralf Emmers' book on *Cooperative Security and the Balance of Power in ASEAN and the ARF* studies "the role of the balance of power in ASEAN and the ARF and reveals how this factor has co-existed with a cooperative security approach within the two institutions".

Dr. Helen Nesadurai's *Globalisation, Domestic Politics and Regionalism* uses the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) as a case study, and emphasises that "economic regionalism can only be fully explained by taking into account the interaction between globalisation and the domestic political economy of participating states, including the socio-political role of domestic-owned capital".

(All books are available at major book stores worldwide, including online shops).