

DIPLOMATIC VOICE

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IDFR's Royal Address 2017



IDFR was deeply honoured when His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah Ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah, its Royal Patron, consented at the beginning of the year to deliver a Royal Address at the Institute.

The Royal Address with the theme *21st Century Diplomacy* was held on Wednesday, 12 July 2017 at the Auditorium. The event saw the atten-


dance of approximately 200 guests from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies, the Foreign Missions, think tanks, universities, and various IDFR collaborators. The occasion was also attended by Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr. Zambry Abdul Kadir, the Menteri Besar of Perak and other dignitaries from the state.

In his address titled *Transformation for 21st Century Diplomats*, His Royal

Highness Sultan Nazrin began by stating that the new demands of the 21st century require diplomatic services everywhere and their training arms to assess and adjust to them. His Royal Highness emphasised that the need to transform and adapt is nothing new in diplomacy, and the geopolitics, geoeconomics and geo-technology of the day have been its primary drivers. Communication technology also exerts an especially

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powerful influence upon the conduct of diplomacy. Several landmark developments that have had a profound influence in transforming the diplomatic practices of their day include the Peace of Westphalia in the 17th century, which laid the foundation of the present state-based international order; the Concert of Europe in the 19th century, which ushered in the era of multilateral diplomacy; and the legal framework for modern international diplomatic and consular relations, which was laid down in the 20th century and produced the documents of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and the United Nations Convention on Consular Relations of 1963.

His Royal Highness added that changes in the environment for diplomacy are already impacting upon the world of diplomacy and becoming the new norm. Even though some fundamentals remain the same – for example, governments are still the official references among states – diplomats operate in a much more complex world today. There are now many more actors in international affairs, many more forums to operate in and a variety of issues to address. Some may consider these as constriction of the space traditionally enjoyed by the Foreign Ministries and their Missions

but His Royal Highness sees the emerging playing field as exciting and full of possibilities. However, it calls for a more dexterous and engaged foreign policy establishment which can explore new areas where the various players may be able to help serve the wider interest and advance national goals. Even though working together may not always be easy, especially on the domestic scene, His Royal Highness recommended for diplomats to work together with civil societies and long established and reputable NGOs such as Amnesty International, Doctors without Borders and Mercy Malaysia in order to advance shared interests. Multinational companies are also prominent actors that should be included in the collaboration, especially with regards to economic diplomacy.

The 21st century, according to His Royal Highness, is also witnessing a proliferation of issue areas, which include the environment and climate change; human rights; poverty and development; aviation; maritime safety and piracy; territorial disputes; refugees and displaced persons; and terrorism.

His Royal Highness added that the diversity and complexities of the various issues call for a diplomatic

service that is much more knowledgeable and literate in many areas. The government may mobilize expertise from their other agencies or from outside the government. However, diplomats must have a good understanding of the issues themselves, including their nuances and implications. They must also have sharp insights into the politics of the diverse issues and their impact on the interests of the country. Training institutes can assist in this task by devising appropriate learning programmes that draw on innovative material and approaches. But diplomats themselves must also engage in a life-long learning process.

His Royal Highness also highlighted the importance of modern media. With its instant global penetration, it is a powerful force in international politics. Social media is a defining feature in 21st century landscape. It becomes even more relevant in relaying information and opinion that the Western mainstream media prefers not to carry or fails to portray impartially.

However, in order for diplomacy and diplomats to be truly transformed, His Royal Highness indicated that “something more remarkable has to take place” and proposed a full-scale research project. The project will assess



the contribution that the realist paradigm has made to the management of global peace and security, and will consider whether there can be an alternative model that could be more relevant to the current strategic environment, and yield better results. It could be a new model, founded on different assumptions and principles or a significant modification of existing realist principles. The realist model is currently accepted as the most pragmatic and practical model for the ordering of relations among states, and among its pioneers were Sun Tzu of 6th century BC China, Thucydides of 5th century BC Greece, and Machiavelli of 5th to 6th century AD Italy. Later advocates include Hans Morgenthau and George F. Kennan.



His Royal Highness expanded that the project will involve mobilizing some of the best strategic minds to scrutinize available literature, touch base with leading experts in the field, and consult policy makers and practitioners among some of the major, middle and smaller powers. He added

that if the project is well received, it could lead to a difference in the diplomacy of 21st century. And unless there is a radical shift in the way the international order functions, the 21st century may not be any different from the centuries before – where global diplomacy “will still serve and bend

its knees to the same petty god: power”.

His Royal Highness summed up his idea by stating that “we can choose to continue to endure such a brutish situation. Or we can elect to make a difference”.

His Royal Highness' Keynote Address can be accessed from IDFR's website, under Speeches.

IDFR wishes to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved – directly and indirectly – in contributing to the success of the Royal Address.

“His Royal Highness' address was both thoughtful and thought-provoking. It provides a fresh and new perspective on the topic; different in significant ways from that typically held by diplomats. His Royal Highness' ideas certainly has generated interest and discussions in Wisma Putra and will be food for thought and inspiration to action in the times to come.”

YM Ambassador Raja Nushirwan Zainal Abidin
Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**What
they
say**

“His Royal Highness' innovative insight into the past, current and future practices of international diplomacy is most thought-provoking. As diplomats and practitioners of diplomacy, we should all work hand in glove to serve and advance our shared national interests. IDFR, as the training arm of the Ministry, is committed to His Royal Highness' advice and will work hard towards supporting the Ministry and our diplomats by planning and offering training programmes which draw on innovative material and approaches, as well as working on research projects.”

Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany
Director General, IDFR

"I am intrigued by His Highness' treatment of this most interesting of topics. It is obvious to me that much thought went into the preparation of this address. It is refreshingly different from the cynical take normally associated with international diplomacy where the interests of nation states take precedence. His Highness' understanding of the intricacies and nuances of 21st century diplomacy and call for a more humanistic diplomatic approach should be heeded by our present-day diplomats."

Professor Dr. Awang Bulgiba Awang Mahmud
Acting Vice Chancellor, University of Malaya

"The royal address is profoundly thought-provoking. It highlights how an amoral international order that privileges strong states, acknowledges military power and condones adversarial approaches to security has brought great suffering and disaster to much of humanity. It makes an eloquent case for a better global order focused upon the well-being of the people rather than the interests of the state, and based on peaceful cooperation to achieve mutual peace in a highly interdependent world."

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan
IDFR's Distinguished Fellow

"His Royal Highness had fundamentally and structurally struck a key chord for the 'Transformation of 21st Century Diplomats'. Differential solutions are demanded in the current diversity and complexity of issues and Tuanku skillfully outlined the prerequisite in understanding the situation – greater and richer knowledge, and wide-ranging literacy. His suggestion that Malaysia can affect these changes at least at the ASEAN regional level should be seriously looked into and provide a demonstration effect of how a new international order should place the welfare of the human person above power of the state."

Madam Hajah Norani Ibrahim
Director of Special Projects, IDFR

"His Royal Highness' assertion on the transformation of the 21st century diplomats cannot be taken as rhetoric. Even though it will be a colossal challenge, the foundation of transformation must be laid down now."

Associate Professor Dr. Norraihan Zakaria
Principal Researcher, IDFR

"His Royal Highness' emphasis on the need to transform the way diplomacy works by stressing the importance of non-state actors such as civil society and the media to meet 21st century demand is ambitious but important and realistic."

Muhammad Kamarul Setapa
2016/2017 Master Programme Participant

"As a future diplomat, I agree with what His Royal Highness said. Diplomats in the 21st century must embrace and be part of the change, by engaging with the NGOs, media and the public to put the welfare of the human person above the state."

Aadela Melati Ahmad Termizi
DiD 2017 Participant

Diplomat perlu jalin hubungan erat dengan r

KUALA LUMPUR 12 Julai - Sultan Perak, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah menegaskan para diplomat mentaliti hubungan lebih erat dengan masyarakat dan pentadbiran kerajaan (NGO) bagi memberi perkhidmatan yang terbaik kepada negara.

Sugenda beritahu, masyarakat dan NGO merupakan pihak yang banyak memberi sumbangan berbilang dalam memperkukuh berbilang dalam masyarakat selain berbilang.

Work with NGOs, Ruler urges diplomats

Sultan Nazrin: Effective cooperation between all parties will advance national interests

By KAZIM AHMAD
kzim@bernama.com.my

KUALA LUMPUR - Diplomats must work effectively with civil societies and NGOs to advance national interests.

This is because three organisations have become key players in the international realm, said the Sultan of Perak.

Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah said diplomats now have to share the international stage with many more actors, including civil society organisations.

"National interest is best served when diplomats work together with civil society and NGOs to advance national interests," Sultan Nazrin said in a keynote address at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations here yesterday.

In his speech titled "Transformation for 21st Century Diplomats", the Sultan said long-established and

reputable cause and issue oriented international NGOs make invaluable contributions to alleviating human suffering.

They include Amnesty International, Care International, Oxfam, Borders and Mercy Malaysia.

Sultan Nazrin said Malaysia's foreign policy should continue to strive for a better regional and world order that places the welfare of the Malaysian people, not the state, at the centre.

"This can be done in concert with like-minded friends in ASEAN and beyond. Some of the elements are already in place," he said.

He said this order must be one that placed the welfare of man, not the state, at the centre.

"The state is a vehicle and instrument for that purpose. The order must be based on the principle of peace, prosperity and justice for all, according to the enforceable rule of international law."

"It must be an order that effectively criminalises war and the threat of war, unless manifestly and demonstrably for defence."

"In such a system, states cannot merely proclaim the existence of an imminent and serious threat. They must prove it."

He added that this complete order premised on the principles of cooperative security and common

security, not the zero-sum principle of the realist paradigm.

"Such an order must seek to fully honour and enforce the provisions of International Humanitarian Law to protect innocent civilian populations."

"This requires, in particular, the scrupulous observance of the law's principle of distinction and the principles of necessity and proportionality."

"This better regional and global order does not call for the complete re-invention or overhaul of

existing international institutions and instruments. It merely entails selective reform to empower them further," he said.

Sultan Nazrin also said such an order must rest on a strong moral and ethical foundation.

"This is already reflected to a large extent in the basic principles of the United Nations Charter and the ASEAN Charter."

"But they need to be strengthened. And they need the moral force that the voices of noble men and women can give," he said.

Uluu Negel malam ini, Menteri Kanan Seri Dr D. Radir, Menteri Kanan Ransan h Kemu HIR dan adic

ron yang juga rala HIR le ini mualah penerangan

dan ancaman perang dengan berkesan melancarkan nyata untuk tujuan pertahanan.

Menurut kagamba, ia juga mesti didasarkan kepada prinsip kesetiaan bersama dan berusaha menginformasi terus mengenai kuasa perundangan

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Nations that do so can leverage more effectively, says Sultan Nazrin

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TRANSFORMATION in diplomacy is needed to keep up with the demands of the 21st century, said Sultan of Perak Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah.

It was not something new but which countries and peoples which responded accurately to diplomatic changes could leverage more effectively to the new environment, he said.

"Communication technology, especially the technology with which countries and peoples communicate with one another, exerts an especially powerful influence upon the conduct of diplomacy," he said.

Sultan Nazrin said this in his royal address titled Transformation for 21st Century Diplomats at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations here yesterday.

Diplomacy has faced challenges throughout history, ever

since organised political entities began interacting with one another, said Sultan Nazrin, who is the royal patron of the Institute.

"Then, as now, the geopolitics, geoeconomics and geotechnology of the day have been the primary drivers of transformation."

He added that the changes occurring in the environment for diplomacy were extremely important and had been gaining momentum since the end of the last century.

"It is impossible to ignore them. The changes are already impacting the world of diplomacy and becoming the new norm."

"This will entail making appropriate adjustments to the ways in which states formulate foreign policy and conduct diplomacy," he said.

Sultan Nazrin said Malaysian foreign policy and diplomacy continued to strive for a better regional and world order.

"This can be done in concert with like-minded friends in ASEAN and beyond. Some of the elements are already in place," he said.

He said this order must be one that placed the welfare of man, not the state, at the centre.

"The state is a vehicle and instrument for that purpose. The order must be based on the principle of peace, prosperity and justice for all, according to the enforceable rule of international law."

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Sultan Nazrin also said such an order must rest on a strong moral and ethical foundation.

"This is already reflected to a large extent in the basic principles of the United Nations Charter and the ASEAN Charter."

"But they need to be strengthened. And they need the moral force that the voices of noble men and women can give," he said.

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Menurut kagamba, ia

Dato' Dr. Mohd. Yusof Ahmad

IDFR's Distinguished Fellow and Former Director General

1. When IDFR was established in 1991, it was under the purview of the Prime Minister's Department. Can you share the background which led to the Institute being put under the ambit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 2004 onwards?

I must emphasise that I was not privy to the precise reasons behind the decision to place IDFR under the purview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 2004. I am aware, however, of a recommendation from a study conducted by MFA before IDFR's establishment to put it under its ambit.

From my personal point of view, the organisational transfer to MFA when it came was most logical and appropriate. Given IDFR's intended role as a Foreign Service institute tasked with the primary responsibility of conducting practitioner-oriented training programmes for the MFA and other related agencies, it allows the institute greater focus in programme content and direction consistent with the MFA's human resource development needs, longer-term training priorities and professionalization objectives.

2. You were also the Director of the Institute of ASEAN Studies and Global Affairs, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). Over the years, many of the Institute's students have attended and benefitted from IDFR's various discourse. What is the main function of the Institute?

The Institute of ASEAN Studies and Global Affairs (INSPAG) is formerly known as the Centre for ASEAN Studies. Its primary aim as the Centre for ASEAN Studies was to support and provide academic input to MFA on ASEAN matters at the academic and people levels. It was renamed to INSPAG to widen its focus to include broader global issues which may affect ASEAN. INSPAG's ASEAN-related programmes focus on, among others, conducting academic courses, studies and research, seminars and

colloquiums; networking with other local and regional ASEAN study institutions; and producing publications on ASEAN.

On the academic side, UiTM students and faculty members have gained much from the INSPAG-IDFR-MFA collaborative exchanges. The institutional cooperation had provided 'value add' elements to UiTM's academic curricula and courses on ASEAN, enhanced awareness on ASEAN amongst UiTM students, opened new opportunities for UiTM students' active participation in IDFR's seminars and colloquiums, and offered unique exposure to the practical aspects of foreign policy works to students through regular visits and dialogues at MFA and IDFR. Institutional collaborations with IDFR, among others, also saw MoUs signed with IDFR and SEARCCCT, the joint-holding of regular annual ASEAN anniversary forum with IDFR, UiTM's active participation in regular foreign policy dialogues and the appointment of INSPAG representatives to attend ASEAN Track Two meetings on several occasions.

3. ASEAN celebrated the 50th anniversary of its establishment on 8 August this year. Can you share with us your view on how ASEAN has progressed thus far, and what we can expect from the regional body in the near future?

A quick scan through the structural, organisational, institutional, legal and other functional development of ASEAN at the political, economic, social, cultural and, in more recent years, also defence-security levels, would clearly reveal the milestone progress achieved by the regional organisation.

To be sure, ASEAN is far from perfect. Much work still needs to be done despite its much touted 'successes' at the regional and international levels. A fair assessment of its performance should not ignore the following facts, which, it may be argued,

could not have been realizable without the sustained contributions and hard work of its officials over the last four decades.

First is the continuing atmosphere of relative peace and stability in the sub-regional environment spanning more than four decades, and counting. The feat is by no means unimpressive given the extreme odds confronting it at birth in the form of a highly turbulent regional environment fuelled by Cold War pressures, a full blown war in Indo China, nascent nation-building experience among member states, the presence of multiple political, economic, security, territorial and other potential conflict flash-points among regional states and the high degree of doubts among scholars and experts regarding its survival. The fact however, is that ASEAN has not only survived but also thrived. It has remained an active regional player with expanded member states, is highly confident of the future prospects for greater economic, social, cultural and political growth, and community integration, enjoys a high degree of international confidence and respect from major powers on regional matters and is on track and ready to deal with the next level of challenges as part of the future Indo-Pacific growth area.

The evidences are thus clear that member states have gained substantial political, security, economic, social-cultural and other benefits from the hard work of organisation officials to promote and preserve regional peace and stability through the principles of peaceful dialogue, consensus building and non-use of force among member states. More remarkably, despite the continuing existence of numerous yet unresolved territorial, historical and other disputes among member states, the region's peace and stability have remained intact. The half-century of regional peace and stability at the political-security levels, marked on 8 August 2017 as ASEAN celebrated its 50th



anniversary, has provided member states with valuable space, opportunity and precious time to pursue their respective national and regional growth strategies in peace. The ASEAN member states' impressive record at the economic, development and growth levels over the last four decades speaks volume of ASEAN's proven track record, credibility and future growth potentials.

Viewed in this context, the gift of peace, it may be argued, is perhaps the single-most important contribution ASEAN has offered to the region since its establishment in 1967. Its prospects to replicate past success, to be sure, would thus depend on its ability to sustain the current peaceful regional environment to enable member states to move to the next level of achievement consistent with its stated vision of the future.

Another significant progress takes the form of the successful transfer of ASEAN's stewardship to second generation leaders ready and willing to continue the good work and shared regional vision laid down by first generation pioneers. Their commitment towards regional integrative impulse, focus on people-centred and rules-based community as envisaged in the ASEAN Community (AC) Vision 2025 and Charter documents, albeit still at an early stage, represent other important targeted milestones in the institutional development of the regional organisation.

The continued adoption of key guiding principles such as the 'ASEAN Way', peaceful dispute settlement through dialogue and non-use of force, non-interference and consensus building among members have also gained wide acceptance among ASEAN and non-ASEAN regional states. The inculcation of these positive habits of thoughts and important regional norms, nurtured through ASEAN over time, has contributed much towards rejecting the proclivity among member

states to resort to force in regional conflict resolution.

In terms of future expectations, the likely scenarios would include member states' continued robust push to implement the agreed measures under the AC Vision 2025 agenda at the national and regional levels; more active efforts to preserve and sustain ASEAN centrality, unity and growth amidst new regional challenges; further strengthening of intra and inter-regional connectivity and the ASEAN integrative community impulse, continuation of commitment to enhance regional trust through new confidence building measures through the ARF and other mechanisms; continuing respect for the norms of regional conflict resolution through peaceful means; rejection of use of force in regional dispute settlement; accelerated drive to conclude the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea negotiations with China and fostering the common values of a rules-based people-centred community in the ASEAN region and beyond. On the economic front, ASEAN's active promotion of regional, cross-regional and global free trade arrangements through initiatives such as AFTA, RCEP, revised TPP, OBOR, APEC, WTO and other FTAs would most likely remain high on its agenda to ensure the region's current economic performance is not disrupted. Success in these endeavours would however, be critically dependent on ASEAN's deft ability to ensure the continued sustainability of peace and stability in the immediate regional environment.

4. You are on the panel of IDFR's Distinguished Fellows. How do you see this panel contributing to IDFR's vision to become a centre of excellence in the long term?

Contributions to promote IDFR as a centre of excellence can come in many forms depending, among others, on the varied individual ability, expertise, resources and expectations of the institute. Generally speak-

ing, contributions in the following areas seem to me the most practical and easily accommodated in the pursuit of that objective: playing a more robust role in strategic level reviews of IDFR's training curricula to ensure its competitive ranking remain at par with the world's best Foreign Service training institutions; contribute qualitative input as resource persons in the areas of one's special expertise; role as teacher-mentor to trainees, students and researchers to enhance the quality and value of IDFR's training and research programmes; role as valuable networkers to enhance IDFR's institutional, academic and research profile and linkages to a wider regional and global audience; and donate or solicit donations, whether financial or materials such as historical texts, wherever possible to further enrich the historical legacy of Malaysia's diplomatic history for posterity.

It is also my personal view that after a quarter of century of existence, it is perhaps timely for IDFR to seriously consider upgrading its original institutional mandate from being merely a training institution to that of a university given its already widely acknowledged international profile. The expanded mandate should emphasise serious post-graduate level academic works and policy-oriented research in addition to ongoing practitioner-oriented programmes in diplomacy and international relations for both local and international participants. The Beijing University of Foreign Affairs and other similar institutions could perhaps serve as possible models for the purpose.

Dato' Dr. Mohd. Yusof Ahmad was IDFR's Director General from 2001 to 2004. He also served in various capacities at Malaysian Missions in Iran, Sweden, the Malaysian Friendship and Trade Centre, Republic of China, and as High Commissioner of Malaysia to Bangladesh, Malaysian Ambassador to Spain and a member of the ASEAN-Russia Eminent Person Group (AREPG).

ASEAN Charter: Time for Review?

Tan Sri Dato' Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak

As ASEAN celebrates its 50th anniversary, seasoned observers, including critics of ASEAN, are revisiting with interest the prospect of a review of the ASEAN Charter. The Charter, adopted on 15 December 2008, is now nine years old. Even when the ASEAN High Level Task Force (HLTF) was drafting the ASEAN Charter, it was envisaged that a review would take place within five years (Article 50 of the ASEAN Charter).

Compared to the EU Constitution then negotiated in Europe, critics charge that the Charter is wanting. However, in drafting the Charter, the HLTF never deemed it necessary to look at the EU as the benchmark. They were not even excited about drafting a Charter comparable to the EU Constitution, which in any case was never ratified and subsequently replaced by the Treaty of Lisbon.

It is interesting to hear voices within ASEAN reflect on the effectiveness of the Charter and to urge for initiatives to be taken to incrementally “streamline ASEAN’s institutions and current practices.”

One thing is clear – ASEAN cannot remain static. It must continue to demonstrate evolving maturity, growth and development. Indeed, ASEAN should learn its lesson from Brexit and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

The Charter was a milestone because it provides “a legal personality for ASEAN...codifying ASEAN’s norms, rules and values and serving as a legally binding contract for ASEAN Member States”. But the time to continue to gloat over this achievement is perhaps over.

ASEAN is currently facing formidable challenges. The geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea; the lack of a common voice to engage external powers; the Rohingya problems in Myanmar; the slow pace of achieving ASEAN’s “deeper community building and integration aspirations”; the need “to move towards rules-based me-

chanisms in resolving differences and disputes”; the need “to make ASEAN bodies more efficient, effective and better coordinated, including creating a new funding formula” and the need “to narrow the differing views on Human Rights” make it imperative to strengthen ASEAN through a review of the Charter, to reflect the coming of age of ASEAN.

Without proper and judicious review, the Charter would be less than adequate in meeting the overall needs and interests of ASEAN Member States.

The current status quo vis-à-vis the Charter is no longer feasible. We need to take a more realistic approach in addressing ASEAN’s inherent ‘weaknesses’.

Proponents of the status quo argue that we should continue to recognise ongoing sensitivities and not push issues within ASEAN that lack consensus and that would create unnecessary tensions and conflict. In short we should continue “to strike a balance between the principles of community building and the ASEAN way of non-interference”, presumably in the interest of preserving the general harmony within ASEAN.

But in reflecting on the Charter now, I am personally more inclined to argue that maintaining the status quo would amount to opting for “a do-nothing policy”.

ASEAN has now reached a sufficient degree of maturity for it to take a more realistically proactive position. It is time that we change the prism through which we look at the Charter. We need to fully capitalise on ASEAN’s potentials for greater cohesion and integration by undertaking an appropriate review of the Charter.

The overall benefits and what they mean to the Southeast Asia region as a whole can be huge. Working together on this review would symbolise

another important milestone in the development of ASEAN.

Reviewing the Charter would signal an evolution of ASEAN towards becoming more functional and people-oriented; providing greater clarity in the conduct of relations between states and in resolving issues. It would also allow ASEAN to address power projections in the region and to adapt faster to new and emerging challenges.

The challenge before us then is how to enable the review process of the Charter to take place in a comprehensive, orderly and systematic way, including devising an appropriate Road Map that is acceptable to all Member States.

In 2011, the ASEAN Integration Monitoring Office was established to ensure informed decision-making, especially on the Economic Community goals. In 2017, the ASEAN Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) began to start looking at updating those Articles and Annexes including the ASEAN anthem and the frequency of Summits. All these could be the early harvests towards a more comprehensive review.

Article 50 was deliberately drafted to enable the Charter to be reviewed “five years after its entry into force or as otherwise determined by the Summit”. The Leaders were thus given a clear mandate on the review period.

The challenge is to be bold enough to condition minds into creating a “new and reformed ASEAN” by agreeing to forge a new consensus on those Articles considered sensitive in the Charter, relating in particular to ASEAN’s principles of non-interference, decision-making, settlement of disputes, human rights and the contribution of Member States to the ASEAN Secretariat.

In this regard, I recall vividly how long it took us to even come to a consensus to begin the process of ne-

gotiations on the Charter itself. For a long time, there was hardly any progress until a few like-minded ASEAN Senior Officials – Malaysia included – managed to persuade colleagues during the ASEAN SOM in October 2003 to agree to begin the ASEAN Charter drafting process. This was historically a major turning point that started the whole process rolling until the Charter was finally agreed to and came into force.

Perhaps the time has come for the ASEAN SOM, with the mandate and blessings of the Ministers and Leaders, to again adopt a similar approach in seriously reviewing the Charter in its various dimensions.

This will rightfully symbolise the coming of age of the regional organisation.

Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi was Malaysia's repre-

sentative to the ASEAN High Level Task Force on the Drafting of the ASEAN Charter, and to the High Level Panel on the Drafting of the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Human Rights Body. Formerly the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi is currently the Secretary General of the World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF). This article also appeared in *The Star* on 8 August 2017.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Malaysia's Commitment and Progress

Wan Hazwani Wan Hamed and Noraini Nong

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
The Brundtland Commission

Introduction

This article provides an overview of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Sustainable Development Goals. It also shares the actions and steps that Malaysia has taken since the Prime Minister pledged the country's commitment to the active implementation of the Agenda in 2015. The article also outlines some of the programmes that have been planned by Malaysia as reported in the country's Sustainable Development Goals Voluntary National Review 2017, and proposes for Malaysia to share its progress, especially with other smaller ASEAN Member States, to move the Agenda forward.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

It has been close to two years since the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by world leaders at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York. The Agenda was launched on 25 September 2015 and came into force on 1 January 2016, and the term Sustain-

able Development Goals came to the fore. Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs are part of a global anti-poverty movement and consist of 17 global goals which are universal in nature and comprehensive in its range of issues (Refer to Figure 1 below).

But first, in order to understand the SDGs, there is a need to learn about its predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals.

Millennium Development Goals: An Overview

The Millennium Development Goals or MDGs were a 15-year commitment by member countries to work together to free the world population from abject poverty. The MDGs were adopted by world leaders in 2000 and were packaged into eight goals with 21 targets: Goal 1: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Goal 2: achieve universal primary education; Goal 3: promote gender equality and empower women; Goal 4: reduce child mortality; Goal 5: improve maternal health; Goal 6: combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; Goal 7:



Figure 1: 17 Global Goals
(Source: un.org)

ensure environmental sustainability; and Goal 8: develop a global partnership for development.

Although the practical steps implemented under the various goals enabled millions to improve their lives – more than 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty since 1990; child mortality dropped by more than half since 1990 – the progress achieved were seen as uneven across the globe. There were also reports of shortfalls and crucial gaps. Among others, the MDGs were seen as failing certain people and countries in certain areas. For example, Target 1.C under Goal 1 was to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. Even though the target was achieved in countries such as Eastern Asia, Latin America and Southeastern Asia, the decrease in proportion of undernourished people in sub-Saharan Africa was only approximately ten per cent. More than 40 per cent of the people still live in extreme poverty. Another example is Target 7.D under Goal 7 was by 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. Even though up to 2015 the lives of more than 320 million people were considered to have improved considerably due to improved facilities such as water and sanitation and the target was viewed as met, more than 880 million people are estimated to still live in slum conditions due to factors such as increasing urbanization and population growth. Since the MDGs expired in 2015, there was an urgent need to follow through and ensure that the global vision to eradicate poverty continues. This is where the SDGs come in.

Moving Forward: Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs follows in the 'path' of the MDGs but are broader in scope and include new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption,

peace and justice. The 17 global goals have a combined 169 targets which can pave the way for a sustainable and consistent path. The SDGs also go further than the MDGs by addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development, which is in accord with the Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development. Hence, the use of the term sustainable development. The SDGs cover the three facets of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection, and provides equal focus to the five important dimensions of People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships. Under the principle of "leaving no one behind", the SDGs integrate human rights and development in a balanced, inclusive and sustainable way. The goals provide a common plan and a more comprehensive framework in addressing some of the pressing challenges.

Even though the SDGs are not legally binding, all member countries are expected to take ownership and establish a national framework for achieving the agenda. Each country's private sector, civil society and citizens, and other stakeholders are also expected to contribute to its realisation in a collaborative partnership. Each country is to implement the agenda within their own country, with systematic follow-up and review under the High Level Political Forum under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council. The 2017 meeting under the Forum was held recently from 10 to 17 July in New York, and Malaysia was one of 44 countries which submitted a voluntary progress report.

Malaysia and the 2030 Agenda: Past, Present and Future

Malaysia endorsed the agenda when Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak made an open pledge in New York in 2015 for the SDGs' effective implementation in Malaysia. He declared that, "Malaysia

is absolutely committed to the Post 2015 agenda – the Sustainable Development Goals and our aspirations to transform the world by 2030."

In line with the commitment, Malaysia has to date, established a multi-stakeholder, participatory governance structure; held two national SDGs symposiums to promote participation of stakeholders; conducted studies on data readiness and gap analysis; undertaken a mapping exercise involving non-government and civil society organisations and the private sector to align SDGs with the Eleventh Malaysia Plan initiatives; and established a National SDGs Roadmap to guide implementation of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, et cetera. Malaysia also set up the Professor Jeffrey Sachs Centre on Sustainable Development Goals at Sunway University, which focuses on the education of SDGs and their implementation in Asia and around the world.

At the beginning of the year, Malaysia also embarked on an initiative called National Transformation 2050, an engagement process to gain ideas from youths and to get them involved in planning for their future. Known as TN50, it was launched on 19 January and is an initiative to plan Malaysia's future from 2020 to 2050. Its objectives is for Malaysia to become a top 20 nation in economic development, social advancement and innovation. The first phase of TN50 saw more than 60000 ideas being compiled, and grouped into several categories: economy and jobs; well being; governance; lifestyle; and society. Phase Two saw the first TN50 Ideation Lab being organised from 13 to 14 August, where the participants discussed and refined the above ideas. The ideas will later be presented to the Government for consideration.

With regards to environmental protection, Malaysia was one of 159 parties to ratify the Paris Agreement on Climate Action which entered into force on 4 November 2016. The agreement allows Malaysia to parti-

participate in the reduction of global carbon emissions and combat climate change. Malaysia's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on 27 November 2015 indicates that the country aims to decrease its greenhouse gas emissions intensity (per unit of GDP) by 45 per cent by 2030 relative to the emissions intensity in 2005, which was at 0.531 tons CO₂ eq per RM1000.

Other steps to be taken by Malaysia, as reported in the country's Sustainable Development Goals Voluntary National Review 2017, include localising SDGs at sub-national levels by duplicating the national multi-stakeholder governance structure at state levels; mobilising resources and funding through partnerships, social entrepreneurship, corporate social responsibility programmes, assistance and financing from international sources; and bolstering data readiness and filling data gaps to develop a comprehensive dataset for SDG implementation.

Moving Forward: Engaging Smaller ASEAN Member States

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN. As one of the regional body's more advanced member states, Malaysia can be a role model to engage and encourage smaller ASEAN member states to commit further to the SDGs by sharing ideas and best practices. Even though each member state has its own national framework, support from other member states can be an opportunity for each member state to promote and work towards the SDGs' realisation nationally and regionally. This is in line with Item 80 of the Agenda, which indicates that follow-ups and reviews at regional and sub-regional levels can provide opportunities for peer learning.

Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and Chair of the United

Nations Development Group said on 19 October 2015 during her public lecture at IDFR, "the whole of UN development system is committed to working with ASEAN member countries to implement the 2030 agenda through the MAPS approach – Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support." This approach, according to Ms. Clark, seeks to build and facilitate partnerships, improves data and deepens accountability. Hence, ASEAN member states should grasp the given opportunity to move forward individually and as one regional body.

Conclusion

The SDGs can help to move Malaysia and the whole world to a sustainable track. It is a massive effort that requires each and every one of us, in Malaysia and everywhere around the world, to do our part as much as we can to contribute to its success. To quote Ms. Clark, the 2030 agenda "is a big agenda. It will take a lot of political capital and will to achieve, but if we achieve it, there is no doubt the world will be a better place".

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Reflections on Malaysia's Membership of the UN Security Council (2015-2016)



Since its admission as the 82nd member of the United Nations on 5 September 1957, Malaysia has been elected as a Non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) four times: in 1965 (sharing the term with then Czechoslovakia which served in 1964), 1989-1990, 1999-2000 and on 16 October 2014, Malaysia was elected for the fourth time for 2015-2016. Malaysia's latest membership in the UNSC was led by His Excellency Dato' Ramlan Ibrahim, Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and under his leadership, Malaysia continued to contribute greatly to the international body.

On 19 July 2017, IDFR played host for a discourse titled *Reflections on Malaysia's Membership of the UN Security Council (2015-2016)* with Dato' Ramlan, who is now Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs. The aim of the discourse was to share Malaysia's latest experience at the UNSC from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2016, and it was attended by government officials from various ministries and agencies, former diplomats, prominent scholars and academicians, and university students.

In his Welcoming Remarks, Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, IDFR's Director General, briefly highlighted Malaysia's crucial involvement in the UN and in the UNSC. He added that the discourse was the first time that a former Permanent Representative to the UN had shared Malaysia's experience at the UNSC with scholars and academicians, and other practitioners of international relations.

Dato' Ramlan began the discourse by highlighting that Malaysia's campaign for the UNSC was under the theme

Peace and Security through Moderation and Malaysia pursued the following priorities: promoting moderation as an approach and mediation as a tool for peaceful settlement of disputes; promoting the enhancement of UN peacekeeping operations; supporting peace building in countries emerging from conflict; and encouraging continued discussion on the comprehensive UNSC reform.

Among Malaysia's numerous contributions and achievements during the two-year term were on the issue of Palestine, which culminated in the adoption of Resolution 2334 in December 2016; the issue of children and armed conflict, which saw the adoption of Resolution 2225 in June 2015; the issue of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, where Malaysia hosted a High-Level Open Debate in August 2016; and on the issue of humanitarian, Malaysia consistently advocated actions and supported efforts aimed at alleviating the humanitarian sufferings of the people affected.

The discourse received many positive response and comments from the guests during the Question and Answer session. The session ended with a presentation of memento by Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany to Dato' Ramlan as a token of appreciation.

IDFR Lecture Series 1/2017

On 14 June 2017, IDFR had the privilege to welcome Professor Timothy J. Colton, who is Morris and Anna Feldberg Professor of Government and Russian Studies at Harvard University as guest speaker at IDFR's Lecture Series 1/2017. The title of Professor Colton's lecture was *A Trump 'Reset' with Russia? Implications for East Asia*.

Professor Colton commenced the

lecture by deliberating on President Trump's foreign policy. According to Professor Colton, one of the few foreign policy changes Trump consistently advocated when he was running for the presidency of the United States was towards an improved relationship with Russia. However, not much change has taken place since his inauguration – there were several telephone conversations but no meetings yet. However, Professor Colton

stressed that his lecture is based on current events and things could change in the future. Professor Colton's lecture offered explanation for this puzzling situation: among others, President Trump's limited knowledge and experience on foreign policy, internal resistance to President Trump's initiatives, and allegations of meddling by Russian officials during the election.

With regards to implications for East Asia, Professor Colton stated that there was not much focus on East Asia at that point in time. President Trump did not have a team in place; for example, he still did not have an Assistant Secretary for Asia in June.

Professor Colton mentioned that if US-Russia relations do not improve or if it deteriorates, it may lead to an even larger enthusiasm for Moscow to move towards China's position on a wide range of issues. Another conse-

quence is Russia will have more incentive than ever to deepen its relations with Japan. He argued that strong economic interest is among the driver that will draw Russia to reaffirm its partnership with the two countries. Professor Colton also stated that based on his experience, many Russians have reservations about the possibility of being forced into a 'younger brother' role, which is not one that they would be comfortable with. However, he said that this is a foggy zone where complete informa-

tion is unavailable and he summed up by saying that it is important that the situation be monitored closely, as "the fog may develop into a storm or it may leave".

The discourse was attended by officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, IDFR's Distinguished Fellows, representatives from think tanks and research institutes, and lecturers and students from universities.

Diploma in Diplomacy 2017

On 4 July 2017, IDFR welcomed 18 young officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to undergo a six-month Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) programme. The programme provides them with in-depth exposure to administrative and substantive matters as part of their professional preparation to perform their duties and responsibilities at Malaysia's Missions abroad.

To date, the officers have completed the first eight weeks of the programme. Among the modules covered thus far were ICT; Financial Management; Inspectorate Matters; Human Resource; Security; and Foreign Languages.

The officers were privileged to have had the opportunity to interact with His Royal Highness Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah, the Sultan of Perak and the Institute's Royal Patron, when His Royal Highness consented to mingle with IDFR's course participants after delivering a Keynote Address titled *Transformation for 21st Century Diplomats* on 12 July 2017. The officers also had the opportunity to attend a knowledge-sharing session with Dato' Ramlan Ibrahim, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who shared Malay-

sia's experience and contributions as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for 2015-2016.

The modules, the various discourse and other complementary substantive activities to be organised in the near future, such as the regional and international affairs module, the UNSC simulation exercises and the sessions on defending national interests, will enable the young officers to embrace a wide-range of topics in contemporary issues at the national, regional and international level.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs' *Diplomacy@60: Then and Now* Exhibition

The year 2017 marks 60 years of Malaysia's independence and the birth of Malaysia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In celebration of its 60th year, the Ministry organised its inaugural full-scale exhibition at the National Museum from 8 May to 15 July 2017. It was officiated by Dato' Sri Anifah Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs on 23 May 2017. In his speech, Dato' Sri Anifah Aman stated that diplomacy is normally conducted behind closed doors but it was time that the Ministry's story be told to the general public through the exhibition.

The exhibition also saw the participation of 18 other countries: Australia, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States, who have been Malaysia's bilateral partners for 60 years.

Next is the behind the scene experience shared by Mimi Kaur Ramday, an officer with the Ministry who was part of the team involved in organising the exhibition.

Flash back

Several years back, I was tasked to find and collect obsolete and unused telecommunication and technical machines at the Ministry. I made colleagues, at the Ministry and at Missions, aware that I was on the lookout for such machines. Soon enough, I started receiving leads which took me to the various nooks and corners of Wisma Putra. Slowly but steadily, I began to amass a number of archaic machines which have seen better days and were way past their prime.

I also received machines which were due for disposal from Missions. An aspiring knick-knack collector myself, I was extremely proud of my growing collection.

Mind you, this was no ordinary collection as I was on a special mission to help set up a Wisma Putra Gallery.

Sadly, the grand idea by Dato' Than Tai Hing, then Undersecretary of the Information and Public Diplomacy Division, did not materialise due to factors beyond his control. Over time, the idea of a gallery was reduced to a thematic exhibition, and the first exhibition in the pipeline then was on Tun Muhammad Ghazali Shafie (King Ghaz). In full support of the intended exhibition, the family of the late King Ghaz presented a significant number of memorabilia to the Ministry but the exhibition never took place. And the machines I managed to accumulate were left in a storeroom and eventually forgotten.

Full circle

Years passed and it was karma that I would once again revisit the project; this time under the Division of Communications and Public Diplomacy. Fully determined to lift the project off the ground, the newly-appointed Undersecretary wasted no time in assigning tasks to officers in the Division. While others were given wide-ranging tasks, Dr Shazelina Zainul Abidin personally undertook the colossal task of drafting the storyboard to chart the Ministry's journey from 1956 to present year.

My own task was to find momentous photos to be included in the almost one hundred panels. The first thing my colleagues and I did was browse through hundreds of albums kept in the Division's resource room; the oldest were from the mid-70s. Then, the tedious process began; to catalogue all albums, loose photos collected from various sources as well as photos adorning the walls of IDFR. This was aside from drafting biographies of selected prominent individuals with special links to the Ministry.

As much as I would like to take full credit for all the photos used in the storyboard, it would be an injustice not to credit three special interns; Farah Alia, Syasha and Anurah for their valuable assistance. The Ministry's photographer, Huzaini Mat Hussin, was instrumental in retaking photos for the "Guess Who" segment in the exhibition. Huzaini and his colleagues at IDFR creatively set up a make-shift studio to retake photos in the frames hanging on the wall of the

Institute. We also sourced some of the older photos from the archive of the *New Straits Times* and the National Archives.

When we could not find photos to correspond with the storyboard, I would seek assistance from colleagues in the Ministry and abroad whose contributions are no less significant. Several replicas were also specifically made for the exhibition which include the UN gavel and plaque of Wisma Putra; thanks to Delfina Jane in New York and Haris Syarwani in IDFR. Amidst all that, the most memorable item on display would be the copy of King Ghaz's old identity card; found while browsing old files looking for documents worthy of display.

Sleepless Nights

Though nine years in the making, the project only took off in early 2017 and was due for opening in mid-February. However, the opening date was twice postponed due to technical faults faced by the venue provider. In mid-April, the momentum picked up and the sleepless nights began upon receiving news that the opening was possible for early May 2017. From then on, we literally moved office and worked hand in hand with the designers' team for almost three weeks prior to the opening of the exhibition.

Every day without fail, we would work until past midnight. Eddy, the designer, and his hardworking team worked so well under pressure and remained calm despite the fact that they were also working on another exhibition. I sometimes have unexpressed doubts in ever finishing the panels in time for the opening. All doubts were cast aside when the first panel was printed and handed to us; what a sight to behold and never did I realise that the smell of fresh ink could bring so much joy!

After more panels were completed ahead of time, we were more eager and determined than ever to complete the task at hand. Dr. Shazelina even had a checklist of to-do-list and would not let us leave the office until it was all checked! To take a break from the monotonous work, we would take a breather and frequent a local restaurant, *Nenda*. Coming back to work at the Ministry after the long hiatus, I sometimes could not believe the fact that the exhibition was finally a reality.

Official Launch

The exhibition was officially launched by Dato' Sri Anifah Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the afternoon of Tuesday, 23 May 2017. The launch was attended by members of the diplomatic fraternity, former Malaysian Ambassadors, senior officials from various ministries, local and foreign media as well as Wisma Putra officers.

The fact that Dato' Sri Anifah Aman and Datin Sri Siti Rubiah Abdul Samad spent almost two hours looking at the exhibits proved that the time, money and effort put into the exhibition was all worthwhile. Credit also goes to Dato' Jamaiyah Yusof and the hardworking committee members, whose names deserved a special mention on the exhibition wall, in ensuring the smooth running of the official launch. Even the expected noon rain waited until after the event to pour, much to the relief of the organising committee.

Self-Reflection

The launch brought back bittersweet memories of the obstacles faced in realising the long-awaited exhibition. The initial discussions, brainstorming and drafting sessions were tedious and took up more time than we anticipated. Surprisingly, the most difficult part of the process was not in preparing the content but of standing strong and positive amidst doubts and lack of confidence by some. This whole process, nonetheless, tested not only one's resilience in the face of adversity but was a good testing ground for leadership and camaraderie.

Thus, it is only natural to take this golden opportunity to thank my immediate superior, who taught me by example, in staying strong against the current and to remain steadfast to the end. I would want to believe that I made a significant contribution to the completion of this inaugural exhibition but I cannot deny the fact that it was she who believed that I could be part of greater things.

Stefano Gabbana, an Italian fashion designer, described most accurately the realities of my journey in making this exhibition a reality when he said, "you have to work very hard behind the scenes, to make a message clear enough for a lot of people to understand".

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