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Young Diplomats Forum 2018



When IDFR was approached to co-host the eleventh edition of the Young Diplomats Forum with Global Diplomatic Forum (GDF), a London-based independent, not-for-profit organisation, Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, the Director General, without any hesitation, agreed to the collaboration. He strongly felt that the involvement of IDFR, the diplomatic academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia, will help to project Malaysia's image to the global diplomatic community. At the same

time, the forum will assist to benefit Malaysia's junior Foreign Service officers as a platform to establish social network with foreign junior diplomats.

The GDF fosters sustainable partnerships with diplomatic services, government agencies, thought leaders, media, academics and the private sector, among others. Previous forums were held in Ankara, Turkey in 2013; Querétaro, Mexico and London, United Kingdom in 2014; Athens, Greece and London in 2015; Zagreb, Croatia and

London in 2016; Riga, Latvia and London in 2017; and London in 2018, prior to Kuala Lumpur recently.

The Young Diplomats Forum in Kuala Lumpur was held from 3 to 7 September 2018. It was attended by 60 international participants from Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Fiji, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, India, Italy, Ivory Coast, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, Netherlands, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Philippines,

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Romania, Senegal, South Africa, Taiwan, UK and USA. The 16 Malaysia's Foreign Service officers who were then participants of the Diploma in Diplomacy programme here at IDFR also took part in the five-day forum.

The Opening Ceremony was officiated by The Honourable Dato' Marzuki Yahya, Deputy Foreign Minister of Malaysia, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prior to the Deputy Foreign Minister's speech, Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany delivered a welcoming remarks, where he echoed similar aspiration with that of GDF's – to provide a platform for young people from various backgrounds to gain further insights, tools and opportunities to engage with key stakeholders and broaden their connections to influence global leaders in key issues of international concern. The role of youth and the fact that youth should be at the forefront of global change and innovation were among the key points stressed by Datuk Mohamad Sadik. He also stated that when they are empowered, the youth can be key agents for development and peace.

In his opening remarks, Dato' Marzuki Yahya said that he was very pleased with the close collaboration between IDFR and GDF. As the forum is a platform to nurture and enhance the skills of future leaders in the pursuit of a more peaceful and prosperous world, he added that he was also delighted that this programme was planned and designed to give further insights into Malaysia's foreign policy and its contribution towards making the region and the world at large a better place to live.

The Opening Ceremony was followed by lectures on *Malaysia's Foreign Policy* and *Malaysia and ASEAN* by officials from the Department of Policy Planning and Coordination and the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat respectively. Following a lunch hosted by the Deputy Foreign Minister, the participants were



taken on a tour of Putrajaya, the administrative capital of Malaysia, followed by a cruise on the Putrajaya Lake. Later that evening, they were feted to a reception by His Excellency Pascal Grégoire, Ambassador of Belgium in Kuala Lumpur, at his residence.

The participants also had the opportunity to visit the National Monument, Parliament of Malaysia, the Islamic Arts Museum and the Malaysian Craft Centre. At the Parliament, the participants were briefed on *The Role of Parliament* by a Parliament official, and had the opportunity to visit Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives). At the Malaysian Craft Centre, the participants tested their artistic skills at *batik* painting.

The participants later had engaging sessions on issues including *Peace and Security: Address Tensions in the South and East China Seas*; *Prosperity: Meeting the Challenges of Rapid Urbanisation and Demographic Change*; *Institution: Creating a Regional Trade Bloc – The REP vs. The APP*; and *Technology: The Political Impact of the New Technologies and Social Transformation*. His Excellency Dag Anders Matts Juhlin-Dannfelt, Ambassador of Sweden in Kuala Lumpur; His Excellency Pascal Grégoire, Ambassador of Belgium in Kuala Lumpur; His Excellency Makio Miyagawa, Ambassador of Japan in Kuala Lumpur; Mr. Younes El-Ghazi, Chief Executive of GDF; and Mr. Jonathan Paris, Senior Adviser of the

Chertoff Group were among the expert speakers who shared their knowledge and expertise with the participants.

A Smart Diplomacy Workshop, which saw the participants actively engaging in discussions, was held on Thursday morning. This was followed by Policy Development Group Meetings, and group presentations on topics such as *United Nations Reforms*; *Climate Change and Transition to Clean Energy*; *The Right of Indigenous People in the World*; *Post ISIS Middle East*; *1Belt-1Road*; and *Regional Integration in South East Asia (ASEAN)*.

The YDF 2018 culminated with a Closing and Certificate Presentation Ceremony. It was officiated by Raja Dato' Nushirwan Zainal Abidin, Deputy Secretary General (Bilateral Affairs) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In his closing remarks, Raja Dato' Nushirwan congratulated the participants on the successful completion of the forum. He added that in the successful conduct of diplomacy, it is important for diplomats to establish good personal rapport and friendship with one another.

IDFR was indeed honoured to have played a partner role in this year's Young Diplomats Forum, the first ever in Asia. The Institute looks forward to greater collaboration with GDF and other like-minded organisations in the future, in the pursuit of excellence for greater global peace and security.



Feedback from the Participants

The Young Diplomats Forum was an engagement between nations, perspectives, ideas and ideologies whilst facilitating an enriching cultural experience in Kuala Lumpur. It was truly an honour and an enriching intellectual experience to be a part of highlights such as the various addresses and engagement with ambassadors, ministers and diplomats in the world's leading event for young diplomats.

Anthony Martin Andrews

Student Parliament Chair

Stellenbosch University, South Africa

The networking at the Forum was phenomenal. The intercultural dialogue was eye-opening and both years at YDF – Malaysia and Latvia – I met people who have legitimately expanded my world-view and perspective on international relations and the world. All the sessions were beneficial in so many ways but the ones I enjoyed the most was learning about Malaysia's Foreign Policy at the Foreign Ministry. I also enjoyed the policy recommendation group work.

Brock Mays

Master of International Affairs and Global Enterprise

University of Utah, United States of America

Being able to learn from experts on topics such as Diplomacy in the 21st Century and China's Foreign Policy has greatly benefitted me. I have also

benefitted from meeting and connecting with many interesting people from across the world – not just the other young people attending the Forum but also those who are already established in their careers and fields, and were able to give an inside perspective.

Elen Lloyd

Politics, Philosophy and Economics Student

University of Oxford, United Kingdom

It was an amazing opportunity to meet with like-minded people from around the world discussing global issues and finding solutions. The lectures from the different ambassadors and members of Malaysia's Foreign Service were great. It opened doors for discussions between the participants and engaged us in informative ways. It was a very interesting cultural and learning experience which is very rare to find, and I was glad to be part of it.

Jehan Salim

Architecture Project and Facility Management, United Nations Development Programme, Iraq

My recent participation as an Australian delegate was incredibly developmental in both personal and professional capacities. The Forum was an engaging and interactive programme aimed at equipping future diplomatic leaders with relevant skills, particularly in a rapidly changing global world. As a young Australian who aspires to work

in our foreign affairs department, the conference was a unique and valuable opportunity to engage with critical Asia-Pacific issues and opportunities. I found the panel discussion and speech programmes hosted at both IDFR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be most enjoyable, due to their relevant and thought-provoking nature. I am deeply grateful for the sincere hospitality shown by all the organisations involved with the Forum and look forward to developing the relationships created for many years to come.

MacCallum Johnson

Strategic and Defence Studies Centre Australian National University, Australia

This forum has given me the chance to meet young future leaders whom I share similar aspirations and passion for diplomacy and statecraft with. I will certainly take back good memories and lasting friendship that was forged during the Forum. I will also miss the generosity of the Malaysian people.

Naoufal El Lamrani

Protection Officer

International Committee of the Red Cross, Jordan

The Forum was great in bringing together aspiring youth leaders from across the globe eager to make a positive influence to their community and the world. On top of the wonderful lectures, I especially enjoyed the group exercise where we had to develop policies concerning a broad array of issues such as reforms of the United Nations, climate change and rights of the indigenous people. The diverse background of participants in each group accorded a golden opportunity for us to learn from each other's experience and come together to find a common solution.

Sarah Zahirah Ruhama

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia



Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series 1: *Strengthening Democracy through Cultural Diplomacy*

IDFR was deeply honoured when Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz, President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs, consented to present a lecture under the Institute's Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series. The Lecture Series was initiated by the Institute to instil awareness and enhance understanding among diplomacy practitioners on the approaches of cultural diplomacy in helping to promote global peace, stability and prosperity. Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin's lecture, titled *Strengthening Democracy through Cultural Diplomacy*, was held at IDFR on 4 October 2018. Below is the text of his lecture.

My lecture this morning will be in three parts. First, I will first talk about some experiences of cultural diplomacy as I have experienced it over the years in my various roles. Second, I will explore the interplay between culture and democracy around the world today. And third, I will share my thoughts about how Malaysia's democracy can be strengthened both by stepping up our efforts at cultural diplomacy, as well as being more open-minded in how other countries engage with Malaysia.

My experience of cultural diplomacy

Alongside writing this lecture over the last two days I was playing a computer game: the sixth iteration of *Civilization*. Following its predecessors the overall concept is essentially the same: you start with a hunter-gatherer tribe which builds its first village, and over thousands of years this evolves to a metropolis capital of your civilisation. Every turn you need to make decisions about how to spend resources either to pursue a scientific victory with a space race, a military victory by conquering the world, or alternatively a cultural victory. This involves building theatres and museums, attracting great artists,

writers and musicians whose works then attract tourists, a certain number meaning you win the game.

Of course in the real world things are a bit more complex. As much as UNESCO sites are celebrated by many, there is no single arbiter of what constitutes "culture", and accordingly "cultural diplomacy" can have a very wide definition. It can simply mean any interaction between two or more parties in which aspects of culture are exchanged, resulting at least in greater mutual understanding, if not the formation of new relationships.

Perhaps the most common manifestation of cultural diplomacy in KL are the numerous receptions that diplomatic missions host: whether for their national days, visits of senior dignitaries and so forth. These deliberate showcases of soft power invariably will have a cultural component. Some embassies, working with autonomous organisations such as the British Council, Alliance Francaise or Goethe Institut and in partnership with local sponsors, host specific events to celebrate film, music, food or fashion. It is even rumoured that there is an informal Ambassadors' Dinner Club that goes by the mysterious initials of "BNO".

International sporting events provide opportunities for host nations to practise cultural diplomacy, too, even though sometimes the lines between sports and politics come perilously blurred. On a more positive note, sports events can force politicians and bureaucrats to embrace these elements of popular culture even if they are not personally invested in them. As an example – and I hope His Excellency does not mind my saying – the French Ambassador to Malaysia, like me, has no interest in football, but when his country reached the Finals of the World Cup, he had to invoke his country's sporting achievements in his diplomatic work. Indeed, football is deeply ingrained in the popular culture of many countries.

I too have had the privilege of participating in other, perhaps less obvious forms of

cultural diplomacy. Let me share some examples.

Every two years, the British Royal Navy Squash Team comes on a worldwide tour that passes through KL; specifically the Royal Lake Club. This might be termed sports diplomacy, but the matches and the dinner afterwards affirm a shared love of the game, a respect for playing by the same rules, and the creation of new friendships that are steeped in a culture of sportsmanship.

A more obvious example of military diplomacy is exhibited by defence exhibitions or visits to armed forces assets, such as when the USS Theodore Roosevelt was in the Straits of Malacca earlier this year. Taking a C-2 Greyhound from Subang, I and the other Malaysians were able to glimpse the proud traditions of the US Navy and experience the G forces to match. There was undoubtedly a cultural aspect to it.

Being involved in several musical organisations including the Euroasia Association of Performing Arts and the Chopin Society of Malaysia, I've seen how works of European classical composers have been performed by Malaysians to such a high degree that they get invited to play in Europe and win prizes there too: surely proof that scales and arpeggios are not confined to a single cultural milieu.

Similarly, in numerous educational capacities I've seen Malaysians from rural areas making new friends from around the world at international robotics competitions, or public speaking and debating tournaments, or ASEAN volunteer programmes. These are ostensibly about STEM, the English language and volunteerism, but in truth they are equally about cultural exchange. The same could be said about the Design Thinking initiatives led by Genovasi Malaysia.

At Carcosa I was involved in the Jalan Merdeka Exhibition and there are further plans to showcase the heritage of the

region at a proposed peace museum there. While government-funded museums pursue their traditional role to educate Malaysians and foreigners, other independent museums have proved to be outstanding ambassadors in their own right: from the Islamic Arts Museum which has done so much to educate non-Muslims on the diverse beauty of the Muslim world, to the galleries of the Brooke Heritage Trust, punching above their weight, that re-affirm Sarawak's unique history at a time when the future of the state is being widely discussed.

I could spend the rest of the lecture giving further examples of where I've witnessed various forms of cultural diplomacy, but I think my point is made. You can find examples of cultural diplomacy in almost every aspect of public life.

But what does this got to do with democracy?

The interplay between culture and democracy

Well, one of the things I realised about the earlier examples I gave at the beginning of my speech is the propensity of non-state actors to be involved in cultural diplomacy. And, naturally, it is only in democracies where citizens, civil society organisations, businesses, and other voluntary associations have the freedom to engage with others. Indeed, in a dictatorship, citizens are much more constrained in being able to establish these organisations in the first place, let alone engage with counterparts from around the world and contribute to Track II diplomacy. Certainly, as Royal Patron of the Rotaract Clubs in this Rotary District, I'm often struck by how numerous and active the Rotaractors of Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau are, compared to those of mainland China, despite the latter's massive population.

But it's really when we cross into the realm of mass popular culture that the interplay with democracy really emerges. Millions of Malaysians, as with people anywhere else in the world, enjoy watching movies, listening to music, and to a lesser extent reading novels. Invariably, the movies, music and books we

consume are the products of other democracies: from Hollywood to Bollywood, from Britpop to K-Pop. And the messages contained in these products undoubtedly influence the thinking of large swathes of the population.

The silver screen portrayals of societies, of relationships, of the role of superheroes, of the potential future of humanity all contribute to inculcating certain attitudes, and potentially triggering hostility to other attitudes. This dynamic can spill into the public policy arena, ultimately resulting in political debate and legislative change. In Malaysia, as we discuss the role of women, the treatment of ethnic and other minorities, or the practice of child marriage, it is undeniable that our opinions are shaped by the sheer pervasiveness of popular culture that originated beyond our shores. This may also include certain ideas that we might find alien. For example, the concept of cultural appropriation, in which cultural elements of a minority group are supposedly exploited by a powerful majority, has developed from a particularly American sociological narrative, whereas many Malaysians have grown up deliberately adopting the cuisine and dress of communities other than their own to pursue cultural appreciation and understanding.

With the rise of YouTube stars and Instagram influencers, cultural exchange is occurring on a daily, if not hourly basis between people of different backgrounds without regard to physical geography, and with a few prominent exceptions, without the knowledge or control of the state. In particular, when these personalities come from closed societies, they perform a hugely important cultural diplomatic role: one example would be the Instafamous women of Saudi Arabia.

Of course, not everyone consumes the same popular culture, leading to the echo chamber effect in which people choose the narratives that they already believe in. It is precisely this phenomenon that has led to what some call the post-truth world, in which facts are secondary to the confirmation of biases. This in turn can have devastating effects on democratic institutions as populists appeal to groups of voters with such biases. Worse still, this

incentivises practices harmful to democracy such as gerrymandering of electoral constituencies, increasingly partisan media coverage following the biases of proprietors and, as we can see in the United States, increased politicisation of the judiciary.

While such challenges occur in many countries at a domestic level, it is reflective of an international culture of increasing distrust in institutions, catalysing the rise of populists and spawning copycats in other parts of the world when it is proven that populism can lead to electoral success. This, in turn, disincentivises the promotion of democracy in international relations.

And as it is abundantly clear today, not every government views the promotion of democracy as central to its foreign policy objectives. Some regimes actively clamp down on their citizens seeking to strengthen democracy through forming external alliances. Even countries which are themselves democracies are sometimes happy to abandon its principles in favour of overriding objectives like national security, securing favourable trade arrangements or acquiring goodwill from other nations that can be redeemed in the future.

Indeed, in the age of Donald Trump, we can see how transactional diplomacy has become, replacing an era when, in appearance at least, diplomacy was peppered with appeals to shared ideological beliefs. And so today, free trade deals might no longer be signed because of a belief that prosperity is achieved through enabling an easier exchange of goods and services, but rather because an FTA – or inversely, an escalation of tariffs and protectionist barriers – are simply tools to achieve wider geopolitical goals.

But because the United States is an established democracy with many different institutions, the President alone does not exemplify its democratic credentials. And thus there is much engagement between congressmen and other institutions apart from civil society more widely. The recent death of Senator John McCain provided a pow-

erful reminder of American democratic culture even within political parties.

Having said that, the first US president to visit Malaysia, Lyndon Baines Johnson, spoke about shared democratic values amid the context of the Cold War: a sentiment repeated by Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman on many occasions. President Barack Obama made it a point to engage with civil society organisations while here, even though there were many other diplomatic objectives, and notably in the face of disapproval from the government of Prime Minister Najib Razak.

And as much as both US Presidents in Malaysia were Democrats, is it a coincidence that the only British Prime Ministers who have visited Malaysia are all from the Conservative Party? Is there possibly a cultural reason for this, rooted in a certain perspective of the Commonwealth, or a certain attitude towards institutions? I know that the Australian High Commissioner likes to point out that there are only two middle powers in the world that are simultaneously federations, parliamentary democracies and constitutional monarchies. The insinuation is that having similar institutions somehow foster a mutually understandable cultural grounding.

But diversity in institutions also enables opportunities for diversity in diplomacy. The recent visit of the President of Singapore was a great success partly not only because of her many merits and qualities, but also because it raised awareness that a Malay woman could become head of state of a country where Malays are in the minority. That surely has a special effect in a country where Malays are in the majority.

In Malaysia, the existence of constitutional monarchies also enables powerful messages to be delivered from the throne, an institution occupying a unique cultural position. Recently the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, while opening the State Legislative Assembly, condemned the abuse of power and misappropriation of funds that previously occurred and is now being exposed. Echoing the strong beliefs in democracy and constitutionalism held

by the first Yang di-Pertuan Agong, His Royal Highness reminded all assemblymen, enforcement agencies and civil servants to carry out their duties with integrity and accountability. Of course, state visits involving monarchs also bring a touch of history, pomp and pageantry that provide a unique cultural context.

Malaysia's opportunities

Indeed, Malaysia today has new diplomatic opportunities enabled by the recent general election and peaceful transition of power. Last week, when Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir spoke at the United Nations General Assembly and spoke on BBC HARDtalk – a programme that could not conceivably exist in Malaysia under his first premiership – he invoked the vocabulary of human rights and asserted Malaysia's return to a democratic path, even if there were also elements that some found contentious.

But ultimately, and notwithstanding deliberate misinterpretations of the language of “democracy” and “freedom”, with greater transparency and the vigilance of citizens and the media, there will hopefully be considerable pressure for such vocabulary to be matched with actions if trust in institutions is to be restored and maintained.

Now, one of the things I have stated many times since our fourteenth general election is that Malaysia's own democracy is continuing to evolve. The government coalition's manifesto contained promises to abolish oppressive legislation and empower the institutions created by our Federal Constitution and other laws. Crucially, civil society organisations such as my own Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) are now a permanent part of Malaysian public life and we will continue engaging with all sides while promoting what we believe to be the true vision that our founding fathers had of Malaysia: a country “upholding liberty and justice and maintaining a just peace among all nations” and espousing rule of law, individual liberty, free markets and limited government constrained both by checks and balances and our federal system.

Over the years, IDEAS and other CSOs have increasingly engaged with local politicians and bureaucrats, students and

sectoral stakeholders, but also with diplomats and foreign heads of government. Through this engagement it is clear to me that there are a number of things that Malaysia can do to strengthen its own democracy through cultural diplomacy.

Central to this is the government upholding the promises to democratisation made in the election manifesto. When there is a culture of freedom, citizens, businesses and civil society organisations are far more likely to be established, and far more likely to engage in partnerships and initiatives with others. There are growing communities of Malaysians involved in voluntary movements and their power to collaborate internationally is significant. But this will only flourish if the government recognises that diplomacy is not a monopoly of the government. And this is where civil society must play its part to show how non-governmental interactions: whether in public policy, sports, music and the arts can contribute to nation-building.

We already have Tan Sri Michelle Yeoh captaining the USS *Shenzhou* in *Star Trek: Discovery*, and her mention of Langkawi must have caused an increase in tourism there. Together with Henry Golding, she has brought a glimpse of the lifestyle of *Crazy Rich Asians*, too.

The more I think about it, the more I'm convinced that cultural diplomacy is the most honest form of diplomacy: for there is no ulterior motive apart from the expression of humanity's finest qualities. Even if others attach sinister objectives to cultural diplomacy, at the very least, some people-to-people connections will have been made upon which further voluntary exchanges can be built.

That, to me, lies at the heart of strengthening democracy in the long term, and I was glad to learn that all junior diplomats trained at the IDFR are encouraged to learn a foreign language: for language is the key to unlock the soul of a culture. I hope with support from Wisma Putra and Putrajaya, much more can be done to catalyse cultural diplomacy for the benefit of all Malaysians. Certainly, I think the “Putra” in question – Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, would agree.

Demise of the 'Here-Us-Now' Civilisation

Anis H. Bajrektarevic

The major new report from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), released in Korea on 8 October (2018), is nearly 800 pages long and includes more than 6,000 scientific references. However, it can be summarised in just a few sentences with absolutely horrific implications:

The average global temperature is now 1.0°C above its pre-industrial levels. That increase is already causing more extreme weather, rising sea levels and diminishing Arctic sea ice, and is damaging untold number of land and sea ecosystems.

A 1.5°C increase, likely by 2040, would make things worse. A 2.0°C increase will be far worse than that. Only radical socio-economic and politico-diplomatic change can stop the catastrophe. The world's leading climate scientists have warned that only a dozen years are left for global warming to be kept to a maximum increase of 1.5°C. Beyond that an irreversibility effect would be set in motion: even half a degree increase will significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat, hence poverty for hundreds of millions of people.

To avoid the most serious damage requires transforming the world economy within just a few years, said the authors, who estimate that the damage would come at a cost of a fantastic, and rather fracturing, \$54 trillion. This transformation goes – of course – beyond what we usually label as 'economy'. It will require a change of entire human dynamics; modes and preference of how we extract, manufacture, distribute, consume, spend, live, travel, power all that, think of and teach about it.

Reactions are unfolding: "Limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels would be a herculean task, involving rapid, dramatic changes in the way

that governments, industries and societies function" – says the *Nature* magazine. *Science Daily* predicts: "Limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society ... With clear benefits to people and natural ecosystems, limiting global warming to 1.5°C compared to 2°C could go hand in hand with ensuring a more sustainable and equitable society".

Ecological Footprint of 'Here-Us-Now' Civilisation

Nevertheless, for the informed and willing, all was clear already with the Rio summit. Back then, I was quick to react: it was me being among the very first in Europe to conceptualise and introduce (and set as obligatory) the subject of Sustainable Development (along with Environment Ethics) in the universities of Europe. Thus, for the past two decades, I have been teaching my students that: "Currently, the amount of crops, animals and other bio matter we all extract from the earth each year exceeds what such a small planet can replace by an estimated 20 per cent – meaning it takes almost 14.4 months to replenish what we use per *annum* – in consecutive 12 months – deficit spending of the worst kind."

Lecture after lecture, generation after generation, decade by decade, I have sought to educate my students that: "Though pollution and global warming are legacies of products, processes and systems designed without thought to the environmental consequences, cohesion of international community along with rapid introduction of new international policies and strategies in a form of clean practices and technologies holds the solutions (e.g. promoting greater coherence between energy, research and environmental policies). Since the environmental degradation (including the accelerated speed of ex-

tingtion of living species – loss of biodiversity) knows no borders – the SD (Sustainable Development) is a matrix of truly global and timeless dimensions."

In the meantime, the Climate Change (CC) nihilists and prepaid lobbyists dominated media and our entire social narratives by accusing this sort of constructivism and predictive education as an environmental alarmism and scientific sensationalism. This is how we lost almost three decades from Rio over Johannesburg, Copenhagen, Kyoto and Paris to come to our current draw: an abyss of "only 12 years left" diagnosis.

How shall we – here and now – reconcile our past optimism about the possibilities and the current pessimism about our probabilities? How to register our future claims rapidly and effectively on preservation of overall human vertical when we systematically ridiculed and dismissed every science short of quick profit (or defensive modernization), when we pauperized and disfranchised so many people on this planet in the past few decades like never before in history?

Hence, rapid and far-reaching changes to almost every facet of society are needed to avoid catastrophic climate change, reforms far beyond anything governments are currently either doing or planning to do. Additionally, it requires complete reversion of our life styles and socio-economic fashions, passions and drives – e.g. elimination of "here-us-now" over-consumerism of everything tangible and non-tangible.

Planet Devastated by Anti-Intellectualism

Are we able to mobilise our socially fractured and anti-intellectualised globe that fast and that solid?

The world must invest \$2.4 trillion in clean energy every year through 2035

and cut the use of coal-fired power to almost nothing by 2050 to avoid catastrophic damage from climate change, according to scientists convened by the United Nations. That, of course, includes elimination of oil and gas from our Primary Energy Mix (PEM) as well as total eradication of the ICE-powered cars (both diesel and petrol). All that is required within the following decade.

Which kind of existential stress this new “Cambrian explosion” will cause on adaptive and non-adaptive inorganic clusters and systems of our biota, and its group dynamics? What impact will it have on the traditionally automotive-industry leaning regions, and what in aviation industry – which, at least when comes to continental Europe, could have been grounded decades ago – since even at our current technological level, railroad transportation would be cheaper, faster, and safer than using planes? What implication does it bring to the extremely crude-export dependent Middle East, which is situated in the centre of our planet but at the periphery of human progress?

Finally, who will invest to such a change? The insurance and RE (reinsurance) industries are on a brink of ‘impossibility

to perform’ clauses – as the severity and frequency of (the so-called) ‘natural occurrences’ (such as floodings, hurricanes, wet monsoons, conveyor belt currents and temperature shifts, glacier retreat, etc) makes the insured case incalculable and unpredictable. The link between Climate Change and global financial crisis triggered by the insolvency of major investors is thereby established. This is to name but a few numerous implications and unanswered dilemmas yet even unasked question¹.

No doubt, our crisis is real, but neither sudden nor recent. Our environmental, financial and politico-economic policies and practices have created the global stress for us and all life forms of this planet. Simply, our much-celebrated globalisation deprived from environmental and social concerns, as well as from a mutual and fair cooperation (instead of induced confrontation and perpetuated exclusion) caged us into the ecological *globalistan* and *political terroristan*. (Acidifying of oceans and brutalization of our human interactions are just two sides of a same coin. What is the social sphere for society that is the biosphere for the very life on earth, since what we euphemistically call anthropogenic Climate Change is actually a brutal war against nature.)

The world based on agreed principles that – besides businesses and governments – involves all other societal stakeholders, re-captured global cohesion and commonly willing actions is not a better place. It is the only way for the human race to survive.

Deep and structural, this must be a crisis of our cognitivity. Thus, the latest Climate Change Report is only seemingly on Climate. It is actually a behaviouristic study on (the developmental dead end of) our other ‘CC’ – competition and confrontation, instead of cooperation and (all-included) consensus.

Simply, it is the report on our continued global *Jihad* against the cognitive mind.

Endnote

¹Still today, sustainability is lacking an operational definition: There is a controversy whether to consider a human-made capital combined with a natural capital (weak sustainability) or separately (strong sustainability). Central to this question is to which extent a human capital or rather technology can substitute the loss of natural resources.

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Diplomatic Training: Recent Developments

Kishan S Rana

For foreign ministries optimizing career-long training for its only real resource – i.e. the personnel in its diplomatic service – is a major challenge, now sharper than ever before. Recent trends in international affairs have multiplied the demands on foreign ministry personnel. These can be briefly summarised as: a much widened range of needed work skillsets; heightened public expectations; a need to engage with new subjects and new actors; expand-

ed multitasking requirements; and as a final blow, shrinking financial resources. Each of these can be expanded into an article. One example is the impact of information and communications (ICT) technology that expands the work domains and immediacy of diplomatic work.

This article focuses mainly on entry-level and early career training, with some references to other related challenges.

By way of background one should also note the expansion in diplomatic academies and virtual training entities across the world. Rare is the foreign ministry that does not now have its own infrastructure, or a nucleus establishment, to manage and deliver training, including participation in training courses offered by other countries, which is vital for small states, which organise their own training programmes infrequently, only on an ad hoc basis.

Two training models

The two principal training models for new entrants are: 'pure training', with intense full-time training for a year or more, as practised in most of Latin America, China, India, Japan, Germany, and elsewhere (recently India has curtailed the duration of its entry-level training). The second method, 'work-and-train', involves initial briefing of new recruits, followed by apprenticeship and fulltime work in the foreign ministry, practised by Australia, Canada, the UK and the US, among others. Further, new entrants are pulled out for short courses as needed. Malaysia practises a variation of this, in that immediately prior to their first posting abroad, officials undergo a six-month intensive course, which caps their first two or three years of foreign ministry work.

Which of these two models, initial intensive training or on-job learning, is superior? **I opt for the second variant, supplemented with the Malaysian method of an intensive 'pre-posting' course that contextualizes and grounds all that young officials have learnt on the job.** It is interesting that the UK, which managed for very long without a formal training mechanism, has now broadly adopted this model of pre-posting training. Consider the following reasons. First, new entrants are keen to come to grips with their work. If they have joined the diplomatic service directly after academic studies, they are jaded and thus unreceptive to more book learning. That is also probably true of others with work experience, who too are anxious to start their new tasks. Second, it is impossible to grasp the non-theoretical, practical dimensions of training, without direct work experience that gives context. For example, the right way to prepare a record of discussion, one of the staples of the profession, and the needed listening skill, can only be grappled if one has observed diplomatic discussions, and then tried to reproduce its content. That also applies to the preparation of subject briefs,

speaking points, aide memoires, and many of the other kinds of diplomatic documents. Third, those that have not studied international relations can enlist in distance education courses, especially of the e-learning kind, to make up for this. But at the core, diplomacy is a practical art that consists of skillsets that are not amenable to classroom learning. This is where UK's experience with its Diplomatic Academy, which partly operates through e-learning, is very relevant.

The UK Diplomatic Academy

The UK Diplomatic Academy, established in 2015, offers training at three levels; foundation, practitioner and expert. It has astutely utilised its late-comer's advantage by looking around and borrowing from the best examples available. Its two strong points are career-long training and full exploitation of digital distance methods.

The 'foundation' courses are mainly offered through eight digital modules made available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) intranet, which can be completed from anywhere, by all categories of staff. They are intended to teach the basics to all personnel, including new entrants, also to staff from other departments that deal with external issues. The second 'practitioner' level is aimed at FCO staff, typically at desk-officer levels, and is built around the Academy's 11 faculties. It includes some digital material and some involving classroom work, including seminars and guest speakers. Language training is part of the offering, though many have noted that in the past 15 years or so, the FCO has weakened its language and area expertise, and needs to make up for this major deficiency. Some of these masterclasses are held at embassies. Some of the learning involves teamwork, again facilitated by its intranet. Completing such courses will become a requirement for promotion into the FCO's 'Senior Management Structure'. The third 'ex-

pert' level is tailored to individual needs and involves joining institutions for advanced study, or secondments outside of Government. The Academy also offers 'Leadership Training' through a mix of different kinds of courses and secondments. This includes 'Leading under Pressure' and 'Engagement and Communication for Leadership', aimed at newly-appointed heads and deputy heads of mission and other senior appointments.

A Variation

There exists an interesting variation on diplomatic training that has emerged in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which has not attracted much notice. The UAE, which opened its Emirates Diplomatic Academy in 2016, has taken a new path. Each year it takes about 50 graduates for a one-year diploma course; the best among them are appointed to the foreign ministry. This is astute; it gives ample opportunity to identify the best among the course cohort. The remainder go on jobs in the corporate world, having gained exposure to international affairs and diplomatic practices, which is surely an asset in our globalising world. Foreign Ministry officials in Abu Dhabi and others can also enroll at this Academy for a one-year MA course, conducted outside office hours. It broadens their horizon and makes good use of the Academy's training resources, also adding to the country's range of education options.

Armenia is another country that uses a similar model, providing about eight months of training to 25 selected graduate candidates, of whom around half are appointed to the foreign ministry. In essence, this method both selects and trains new entrants; the two processes are telescoped.

A question comes up: should diplomatic training be entrusted to universities? Would that not combine academic and practical training? In the 1990s, Switzerland, through its international coop-

eration programme, helped to set up training facilities in Kenya, Malta and West Africa; in each instance, after a decade or so these diplomatic institutes implanted in universities became increasingly academia-oriented, and the concerned foreign ministry lost interest. In Nairobi, around 2007 the Foreign Ministry went to the extent of setting up its own Foreign Service Institute, directly under the Ministry. In 2014 several Caribbean foreign ministries joined hands to create the Diplomatic Academy of the Caribbean, at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. That experiment will be watched with interest, not the least because it is a joint effort, and therefore likely to be costly for neighbouring countries that have to bring in their trainees to this location.

Digital Distance Learning

Canada, Mexico, the UK and the US are among the countries that use advanced information and communications technology (ICT) for diplomatic training. This method overcomes a major barrier that all foreign ministries face, in that at any point of time half or more of their personnel are stationed abroad, and it is expensive to bring them home for classroom training. Distance learning relies on ICT tools such as 'hypertext' (which enables a group or class to work jointly on a lecture text, making comments and counter-comments, visible to all, for what becomes a class conversation). Other methods include 'webinars' and video conferencing.

Developing one's own distance learning modules is expensive, but by its nature, some course materials developed in another country are not directly usable by other foreign ministries. That applies to materials such as case studies, though simulation exercises and lecture notes

are much easier to share among different countries, with some adaptation.

DiploFoundation

DiploFoundation, with offices in Malta, Geneva, and Belgrade, annually offers more than 20 ten-week post-graduate level certificate online learning courses that draw several hundred participants, from foreign ministries, international organisations, companies, NGOs, faculties of international affairs, and others. A particular strength is the compendium of four courses that cover ICT and internet issues, which can be combined to obtain an advanced diploma in internet governance. The remaining courses cover a wide range of diplomacy issues, essentially from a practical practitioner perspective. Most of DiploFoundation's courses are accredited by the University of Malta, and on the basis of fulfilling the University requirements, they can be sequenced to gain a post-graduate diploma or a Master's degree in contemporary diplomacy (with the option of 'internet governance' specialisation). In addition, DiploFoundation also runs on-site training courses, and also distance courses, for different foreign ministries, as per their requirements.

DiploFoundation's courses have evolved over the past 20 years, and each draws around 15 to 25 participants, guided by either a single lecturer, or by teams of two or three. Because the participants belong to different nationalities and foreign ministries, a special strength is that a great deal of mutual learning occurs among classmates. That is a distinct advantage in comparison with training programmes run for a single country. The foreign ministries of Argentina, Mexico, Serbia and the UAE, as well as some Caribbean countries sponsor their diplomats to join Diplo's courses.

For instance, the Mexican foreign ministry annually assigns about 70 diplomats to different courses. Incidentally, most of this lecture material is placed under 'Global Commons' copyright, and is widely used by other training entities, adapted to their own needs.

Conclusion

The palette of diplomatic training options is now more varied and richer than ever before. Three broad trends are visible. First, a majority of foreign ministries have their fulltime or virtual diplomatic training institutions, more than before. Second, a shift is visible from intensive entry-level training to on-job learning, blended with selective training, though countries that practise intensive entry training remain convinced of the strength of their methods. Third, distance learning through the internet is increasingly used as an option.

The best foreign ministries treat training as a core function and devote top management attention to it, examining their options, the best practices of other countries, and ideas from the corporate world. Mid-career and senior level training, not addressed in this article are at least as important as the programmes for new recruits and junior officials. Yet, some foreign ministries still view training as a routine task that needs only to follow a set pattern: 'That is how we were trained in the past, and that's worked well'. Failing to recognise its cardinal role in shaping its human assets handicaps diplomatic service, limiting foreign ministry's capacity to deliver on national objectives.

Ambassador Kishan Rana is a former Indian ambassador. He is currently Professor Emeritus at DiploFoundation and Emeritus Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in the Forum section are entirely the authors' own and not those of the Institute

Foreign Minister of Malaysia's Town Hall Session with Public and Private Universities



IDFR hosted the Town Hall Session between The Honourable Foreign Minister, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah with the academia on 29 October 2018. The session was moderated by the Foreign Minister himself. Several Vice Chancellors and high level representatives from both the public and private universities attended the session. It was well attended by over 100 guests which augurs well with the Foreign Ministry's aspiration to heighten closer engagement with the academia.

Foreign Policy Framework under the 11 Areas of Focus in Malaysia Baharu

The Town Hall Session deliberated on the 11 areas of focus as stipulated in the Foreign Policy Framework of Malaysia Baharu, which was passed by the Dewan Rakyat recently. The 11 focus areas are listed in the image below.

The interactive session with the Foreign Minister was very engaging, focusing

on Malaysia's foreign policy and international affairs. Some of the pertinent points raised by the participants were the Foreign Ministry's readiness to consider the proposals and suggestions from the academia into national policy framework developments, and to explore the ways in which the academia could involve in the foreign policy framework. The Foreign Minister urged the academicians to work closely together with the Foreign Ministry. This will enable more academic research to be conducted on subject matters which have relevance to international relations and diplomacy.

The Foreign Minister was receptive to all the points raised from the floor. He gave his assurance that he would study all the proposals raised and will have the Foreign Ministry take cognisance and the necessary follow-up action.

Other questions raised ranging from the level of commitment and research the universities can work on, as well as the areas of cooperation, including setting-up a committee to conduct intellectual discourse and research and industrial trainings.

In conclusion, the Foreign Minister reiterated that he looks forward to future engagements, perhaps deliberations on more specific issues.



Working Visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to IDFR

His Excellency Adel Bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was on a working visit to Kuala Lumpur from 24 to 26 October 2018.

Accompanied by six officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Adel Bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir met with Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia to discuss strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries and exchange views on various international issues of mutual interest. He also paid a courtesy call on Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, in the latter's office in Putrajaya.

To learn more about the programmes and best practices of Malaysia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' training arm, His Excellency Adel Bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir and his delegation visited IDFR on 25 October 2018. Also accompanying the Foreign Minister



was His Excellency Mahmoud Hussien Saeed Qattan, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Malaysia. Upon arrival, they were greeted warmly by Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, the Director General of IDFR, and other senior officials of the Institute. They were then briefed on the roles and functions as well as the programmes offered by the Institute.

In March of 2017, IDFR conducted a five-day Diplomatic Training Course for Saudi Young Diplomats for nine officials from IDFR's counterpart, the Prince Saud Al-Faisal Institute for Diplomatic Studies. This visit by the Foreign Minister will definitely enhance the relationship between the two institutes to a higher level.

Lecture on *International Economics and Implication on National Economic Management*

On 18 July 2018, IDFR was honoured to host Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob, Chairman of the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research and also Telekom Malaysia Berhad for a lecture titled *International Economics and Implication on National Economic Management*.

At the outset of his lecture, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman gave an overview of Malaysia's experience vis-à-vis global economy. Since pre-independence era, foreign investments have been imperative to Malaysia's economy especially in rubber and tin industries. Subsequently, Malaysia's export market grew, mainly driven by palm oil and electronic industries. The globalisation pace and trends reinforced the influence and impact of external factors on domestic demand and supply and standards of living. International trade has been the major instrument in bringing about com-

petition and market opportunities for wealth creation processes. As a result, international price movements impacted Malaysia's export earnings and also the causing factor for Malaysia's economic crises in 1973, 1985/1986, 1997/1998 and 2008/2009.

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman also highlighted that current features of Malaysia's economy rely heavily on foreign direct investments, strong foreign ownership and control in manufacturing sector which have caused a constant and persistent outflow of profit and dividend. Large outflows depreciate the currency and impact the stock market and they can also increase the domestic liquidity and encourage domestic lending. Hence, there is a need to assess Malaysia's balance of payment to avoid deficits that would bring loss for the country in the long term.

Against the backdrop of the breakdown in multilateral trade negotiation under the World Trade Organisation and increasing economic protectionism which manifested through the tariff war between the US and China, there is a need to have a policy framework for exchange rates which reflect the market and is supportive of economic stability of the country.

The lecture was attended by approximately 90 officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, SME Corporation Malaysia, Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute, ISIS Malaysia, Universiti Sains Malaysia as well as Ambassadors and representatives from the Embassies of Cambodia, the European Union, Ghana, Indonesia, Laos and Mexico.

Cultural Appreciation Day 2018



The much awaited Cultural Appreciation Day for the year was held on 21 September 2018. Organised annually since 2016 to promote cultural diplomacy and multiculturalism, the one-day event was officiated by The Honourable Dato' Marzuki Yahya, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia.

In his speech, Dato' Marzuki stated that in order to establish meaningful relationships, we need to understand and appreciate other cultures. He added that more and more states nowadays are opting for cultural diplomacy as part of their soft power approach.

More than 150 participants – from Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cambodia, Croatia, Georgia, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, Oman, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Peru, Paraguay and Vietnam – took part in the planned activities, which include exhibitions of cultural items and paraphernalia, performances and food tasting. The main participants were those who were attending the MTCP: Economic Diplomacy for International Participants programme; Diplomatic Training Course for ASEAN Attachment Officers 2018; and the Diploma in Diplomacy programme at the Institute

then. The foreign participants donned their respective country's outstanding and unique traditional costumes. The Diploma in Diplomacy participants wore traditional costumes representing the country of the language that they were learning: Arabic, French, German, Spanish and Mandarin.

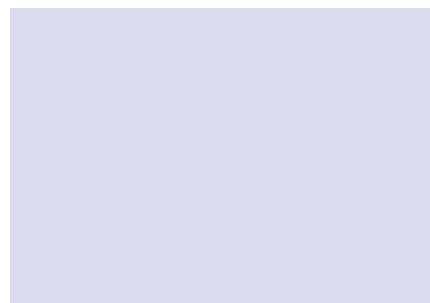
Among the performances were indigenous dance from Sabah, performed by students from Universiti Malaysia Sabah, one of IDFR's collaborators. Others were traditional dances by the arts and cultural troupe from the Selangor State Government and a *silat* (Malaysian martial arts) demonstration.

The event attracted the attendance of more than 500 people including Heads of Mission from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Egypt, Ghana, Jordan, Yemen and Venezuela, and other foreign mission representatives; officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies; representatives of think-tanks and the media, academicians and university students.

To round up the event, five awards were given away towards the end of the afternoon. Best Dressed (Male) was awarded to Mr. Muhd Muhaimin Rasidi of the

Diploma in Diplomacy programme who looked outstanding in his Bavarian *lederhosen*; Best Dressed (Female) went to Ms. Aye Thinzar Aung from Myanmar who looked lovely in her *thummy*; Best Booth went to the Diploma in Diplomacy's French language participants; Best Performance went to the Selangor State Government's arts and cultural troupe; and last but not least, a Special Appreciation Award was presented to Universiti Malaysia Sabah for their unstinting support and participation.

IDFR would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support in the organisation of this year's Cultural Appreciation Day, especially The Honourable Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Given the overwhelming support for this year's event, IDFR has plans to invite greater participation from the foreign embassies based in Kuala Lumpur next year.



MTCP: Economic Diplomacy for International Participants 2018

Organised under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, a two-week course on Economic Diplomacy for International Participants was held from 13 to 27 September 2018. The course saw the participation of 15 participants: from Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Croatia, Georgia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Oman, Paraguay, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

The main objectives of the course are to enhance the participants' knowledge on economic planning and policies, negotiations, investment and trade; and to expose them to the changing geo-political, economic and strategic global environment. The course also encompasses an overview of Malaysia's efforts in transforming and improving its economic growth, governance and social development.

During the two-week programme, the participants were involved in various interactive sessions, group discussions, simulation exercises and study visits. The interactive sessions covered topics such as *ASEAN Economic*



Community; Introduction to Economic Diplomacy; Islamic Finance and the Sustainable Development Goals; Case Study of Economic Diplomacy for an Inclusive Development - The Malaysia's Experience; Role of Private Sector in Economic Diplomacy; International Trade Policy; Halal as a New Source of Economic Growth; and Bilateral and Multilateral Trade Agreement and Process. They also went through the conceptual framework of international negotiation, followed by simulation exercises.

The participants were also introduced to Malaysia's history and experienced some of its cultural elements during a three-day study visit to Melaka, one of Malaysia's UNESCO heritage cities.

The course concluded with a presentation of the Certificate of Completion by Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, Director General of IDFR. The class' vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Hamid Yangibayev of Uzbekistan.

Diplomatic Training Course for ASEAN Attachment Officers

Recently, IDFR played host to 12 officers who are on a one-year attachment to the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, for the Diplomatic Training Course for ASEAN Attachment Officers. They comprised of three officers each from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam.

Held from 18 to 29 September 2018, the course was designed to enhance the officers' knowledge in various aspects of theories, practices and ele-

ments of diplomacy and international affairs. They were also exposed to Malaysia's experience in managing its foreign policy, economy and development, as well as its involvement in multilateral platforms. These were achieved through the officers' participation in lectures on *Malaysia's Foreign Policy, Public Diplomacy, International Trade, International Negotiations, Human Rights Diplomacy, Crisis Management and Media Relations and Media Skills*, among others.

The officers also had the opportunity to visit several government agencies, including the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation where they were briefed on Malaysia's trade and industries, and were provided with some insights into Malaysia's trade abroad especially with its ASEAN neighbours. They also visited the Malaysian Global Innovation and Creativity Centre in Cyberjaya for a briefing on capacity-building programmes especially for



ing remarks and presented the officers with their certificates of completion. Mr. Tin Myo Aung, the Class Representative, delivered their vote of thanks on behalf of the officers.

IDFR looks forward to welcoming more officers from ASEAN member countries in the spirit of 'Prosper Thy Neighbour'.

young entrepreneurs. Last but not least, the officers were introduced to the rich history and culture of Malaysia by visiting the city of Melaka and some of its historical landmarks.

The Closing and Certificate Presentation Ceremony for the course was held on Friday, 28 September 2018. Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, the Director General of IDFR, delivered the clos-

I look forward to more of Malaysia's sharing of experience with CLMV countries with regards to its tools for development

Dr. Huy Meng Hut
Cambodia

Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills

On 16 October 2018, IDFR organised the second Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills for the year. The three-day workshop was attended by 17 officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, Customs Department, Immigration Department and Income Tax Department.

The workshop aims to enhance the officers' knowledge and awareness on the importance of public diplomacy; and enhance their skills in effective social media handling. Among the modules covered during the workshop were *Malaysia's Public Diplomacy*; *Introduction to Social Media and its Importance*; *Publicity through Social Media*; *Effective Social Media Use*; and a case study on

MH370's Crisis Situation from the Social Media's Perspective.

The workshop concluded with a Closing and Certificate Presentation ceremony on 18 October 2018. Encik Aiyub Omar, Head of the Centre for Leadership, Negotiation and Public Diplomacy delivered his closing remarks and pre-

sented the Certificate of Attendance to the participants.

Several participants proposed for the course to be held more often, as they found the social media components to be useful in their understanding of how to enhance their day-to-day tasks at work.



The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme 2018

IDFR was recently invited to be involved with The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme (SSEAYP) 2018. SSEAYP is an annual youth exchange programme organised by the Government of Japan through its Office for International Youth Exchange of the Cabinet Office and the Governments of the ten Southeast Asian countries. To date, more than 1,000 Malaysian youth have benefitted from SSEAYP since its inception in 1974.

The objectives of the exchange programme are to promote friendship and mutual understanding among the youths of those countries, to broaden their perspective of the world, and to strengthen their spirit of international cooperation and practical skills for international collaboration. The main components of SSYEAP will be *On-board Ship Programme*, where the youth will exchange ideas, and present and discuss current issues; and *Country Programme*, where they will attend receptions, visits and courtesy calls, and experience homestay programmes, among others.



This year's programme will see the involvement of 28 Malaysian youth, ranging from the ages of 18 to 29, and led by a National Leader. As part of their pre-departure preparation, SSYEAP's local focal point – the Youth Development Division of the Department of Youth and Sports – had requested IDFR's support in organising lecture sessions on several topics of relevance to international relations. The lecture sessions were held on 16 October 2018 and the topics were *ASEAN-Japan*

Cooperation, Information and Media, and Soft Power and Youth Diplomacy, delivered by officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and IDFR.

The participants will be among more than 300 youth from the 11 countries on board the *Nippon Maru* ship from 22 October to 15 December 2018. They will embark on the ship in Tokyo, Japan and are expected to make stops in Brunei, Thailand, The Philippines and Vietnam.



Malaysians want a new Malaysia that upholds the principles of fairness, good governance, integrity and the rule of law. They want a Malaysia that is a friend to all and enemy of none. A Malaysia that remains neutral and non-aligned. A Malaysia that detests and abhors wars and violence. They also want a Malaysia that will speak its mind on what is right and wrong, without fear or favour. A new Malaysia that believes in cooperation based on mutual respect, for mutual gain. The new Malaysia that offers a partnership based on our philosophy of 'prosper thy neighbour'. We believe in the goodness of cooperation, that a prosperous and stable neighbour would contribute to our own prosperity and stability.

Excerpt from the Statement by The Honourable Prime Minister of Malaysia Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 28 September 2018

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Majlis Forum Perdana Bersama Tokoh Ma'al Hijrah 2018, 23 October



Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister's Visit to IDFR, 25 October



Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin, President of IDEAS, at Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series, 4 October



Foreign Minister's Town Hall Session with the Academia, 29 October



Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin with a DiD participant, Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series



Deputy Foreign Minister at the Young Diplomats Forum, 3 September



IDFR-UUM MoU Signing Ceremony, 10 August



Deputy Foreign Minister at the Cultural Appreciation Day, 21 September



Among the VIP Guests at the Cultural Appreciation Day



Best Dressed (Male), Cultural Appreciation Day



DiD Participants, Cultural Appreciation Day



Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob, Economic Diplomacy Series, 18 July



The DiD Participants with the Deputy Foreign Minister, Cultural Appreciation Day



Visit from the Royal Malaysian Customs Department, 30 July



IDFR-UKM Master Students' Orientation Day, 5 September



DiD Participant, Defending National Interests Module, 3 September



Culture Diplomacy Lecture Series, 4 October



Professor Anis H. Bajrektarevic, IDFR Lecture Series, 2 August



DiD Participants' Attachment Programme, Bangkok, Thailand, 11 September



Economic Diplomacy for International Participants, 13 September



Courtesy Call by HE Olexander Nechytaylo, Ambassador of Ukraine to Malaysia, 19 October