

DIPLOMATIC VOICE

A TRIANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE
INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN
RELATIONS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
MALAYSIA

ISSN 2289-1277

Diploma in Diplomacy 2019's Graduation Ceremony



In line with the aspiration to train and produce high quality diplomats, IDFR once again hosted the Diploma in Diplomacy 2019's Graduation Ceremony on 11 October 2019 at Le Meridien Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. Twenty-one junior officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister's Office celebrated the end of their six-month journey at the completion of the Diploma in Diplomacy programme. The DiD programme, held from 11 February to 23 August 2019, aims to develop holistic diplomats by enhancing the participants' skills and knowledge in the field of diplomacy and international relations. In addition, the programme also creates a learning platform to

inculcate the right attitude, mindset as well as values in the participants to better equip themselves on matters pertaining to the roles, responsibilities, and dynamics of Foreign Service in the new era.

The ceremony commenced with welcoming remarks by the newly-appointed Director General of IDFR, Dato' Mohd Zamruni Khalid. In his Remarks, Dato' Mohd Zamruni congratulated the DiD participants upon completion of the six-month programme and expressed his hope that the graduates, through the trainings and exposures in IDFR, will become high quality diplomats and

competitive representatives of the country in international fora and no matter where they are posted to. At the end of his remarks, Dato' Mohd Zamruni stressed the importance of a lifelong learning process, as diplomacy is a knowledge-intensive profession and further stated that the pursuit of knowledge, however, should also be complemented with the right values and character.

The guest of honour at the ceremony was The Honourable Dato' Marzuki Hj. Yahya, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. In his Address, Dato' Marzuki congratulated the graduates for completing the programme and

Continued on page 17

CONTENTS

1	DiD 2019's Graduation Ceremony
2-8	Forum
9-17	News
18-20	In and Around IDFR

Follow us on
Facebook and Twitter
@IDFRMalaysia

We Are All in This Together: An ASEAN Approach to Climate Change

Norraihan Zakaria

Imran Hakim Mohamedsha

Introduction

The consequences of climate change continue to impact our daily lives. Extreme irregularities in climate patterns have negative multiplier effects on socioeconomic well-being, public health, and economic growth. For instance, prolonged and extreme heatwaves in Europe – with a record-breaking 45.9 C in Southern France this summer – have posed substantial health risks to the public, especially among elderly and children. From Florida to Fiji, more frequent and severe flooding due to the rising sea levels have interrupted economic activities and displaced coastal communities. Disruption in rainfall trends has threatened the agricultural yield in major food producers, leading to potential global food shortages. While climate change does not discriminate among countries, its effects are inherently disproportionate given the stark differences in climate resilience. That is, the high financial costs of both combating and recovering from climate change would amplify its effects on poorer countries. Therefore, considering how climate-induced political and economic instabilities (e.g. environmental refugees) can spillover beyond national boundaries, a multilateral approach towards climate change is indeed necessary.

On April 22, 2016, the world came together in New York City to sign a landmark agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to combat the looming threat of climate change. This agreement, also known as the Paris Agreement, intends to limit the increase in global average temperature within this century to 1.5 degrees Celsius, mainly through reducing the amount of man-made greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. However, there have been ideological and practical differences on

the best strategy to tackle this credible threat. On one hand, climate mitigation is arguably a more optimistic approach as it assumes that changes in current practices can prevent, or at least, slow down, rising temperatures. In contrast, the rather practical perspective would arguably prefer climate adaptation given that climate change is already here, as illustrated by extreme changes in global climate patterns. But, judging from the instantaneous and gradual effects of climate change, a multiple-pronged strategy that combines both climate mitigation and adaptation is essentially required.

Climate Mitigation

Climate mitigation has been at the heart of most climate change policies. As the undisputed science behind climate change can be traced back to unnatural and rapid increases in GHG emissions, climate mitigation involves either reductions in manmade emissions or increases in carbon absorption efficiencies. For instance, its scale can be observed with the worldwide trends in phasing out fossil fuels in energy generation (e.g., announced closures of coal-fired power plants in Germany) and transportation (e.g., future bans of vehicles with internal combustion engines), and major reforestation efforts in India and Pakistan. In the Malaysian context, recent government policies involving the environment also incorporate climate mitigation to directly and indirectly reduce GHG emissions. More specifically, the 2010 National Renewable Energy Policy and Action Plan, 2011 Renewable Energy Act, 2011 New Energy Policy, and 2015 National Energy Efficiency Action Plan reflected the Government's aspirations to develop and enhance renewable energy initiatives. This approach is somewhat unsurprising, given that the energy sector was the largest contributor of

GHG emissions in 2014 at 80% of total emissions. Therefore, this act of institutionalising climate-related policies essentially places the issue of climate change central of policy- and decision-making processes throughout national policies. Moreover, climate mitigation can also have positive socioeconomic spillovers as efforts to reduce GHG emissions would often rely on investments in alternative technologies and economic approaches. While mitigation might be perceived as at odds with private transportation, the prospects of a low or zero emission car can hypothetically expand the production capacity and innovation of a car manufacturing nation.

Climate Adaptation

However, the alarming rate of climate change has turned a threat deemed for the distant tomorrow to the inevitable reality of today. Consequently, individuals, communities, and nations are forced to enhance their adaptive capacity – in concurrence with climate mitigation policies – to offset the lagging consequences of climate change. That is, even if the international community managed to reduce GHG emissions as stipulated in the Paris Agreement, the extent of climate vulnerability will plausibly persist as the Earth gradually reconfigures its biological systems to the pre-heating period. Hence, with extreme temperatures, rising sea levels, and irregular rainfall patterns, governments all over the world are scrambling to mitigate the extent of climate-induced damages to both individuals and vital infrastructure. For instance, Netherlands has constructed a kilometre-long dike underneath a new waterfront boulevard in The Hague to enhance its flood defences due to the greater occurrences of rising sea level and violent storms¹ while Bangladeshi rice farmers have altered their crop options

in the light of salt water spillover into their irrigation canals². In fact, according to the World Bank, cities have transformed their approach in new urban planning to integrate disaster risk reduction (DDR) efforts in enhancing climate adaptation towards man-made, climate-induced disasters³. But this approach does not imply that climate mitigation does not work or is too slow to combat the issues of today – instead, this response allows countries to provide immediate and short-term reliefs as society adjusts to the rather bleak future of an ever-changing climate. Yet, the focus on improving infrastructure and individual adaptive capacities unsurprisingly comes at a high cost: the 2016 United Nations Environment (UNEP) report predicted that the cost of climate adaptation in developing countries could reach USD280 and USD500 billion annually by 2050. In other words, considering the level of socioeconomic development in those countries, this projection merely supports the idea of climate change having disproportionate effects on poorer countries. Thus, to ensure that developing countries do not face multi-fold consequences of climate change, major economies should then step up their efforts to provide climate financing and technological assistance to strengthen overall adaptive capacity.

Role of ASEAN in Combating Climate Change

No man is an island, especially on an increasingly warming planet. In other words, despite the commendable efforts of country-level climate policies, a concurrent multilateral approach is possibly more impactful to accelerate reduction in GHG emissions and increase climate resilience. In the context of Malaysia, greater engagements with ASEAN on combating climate change can complement the effects of its domestic climate policies:

Firstly, ASEAN can offer a common platform to streamline and harmonise climate initiatives among its Member States. Malaysia can leverage upon the existing instruments, frameworks, and entities within ASEAN

to bolster the regional effort to combat climate change. For instance, the inaugural ASEAN Climate Change Partnership Conference organised by the ASEAN Working Group on Climate Change (AWGCC) in June 2018 illustrated a regional initiative to enhance cross-sectoral and multi-partner coordination in combating climate change⁴. With a common platform, Malaysia and other member states not only could explore potential avenues for mutual partnership, but also raise awareness of the country-specific climate issues and best practices – in which the extent of information-sharing is arguably more limited in a bilateral platform. Furthermore, the lack of such an avenue could be problematic in cases of cross-border environmental issues (e.g. a neighbouring country affected by the rather lax climate policy) as member states would perhaps be reluctant to bilaterally confront one another. In other words, the presence of a collective pressure could nudge countries without efficient climate mitigation and adaptation policies to streamline upwards to be in line with other member states. This approach essentially amplifies the stance of ASEAN and its member states on the pressing need to combat climate change, relative to a bilateral engagement.

Secondly, ASEAN can form a new multilateral binding convention on climate change, akin to the Paris Agreement. Given the rather universal nature of the Paris Agreement – albeit rather understandably as it attempts to cater to the whole international community – ASEAN could then formulate, sign, and ratify a regional-specific, legally-binding, convention on climate change to magnify multilateral efforts to limit increases in average global temperature beyond the targeted 1.5 degrees Celsius. Fortunately, ASEAN is no stranger to regional treaties and conventions, such as the Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) declaration. From an environmental perspective, ASEAN could also replicate, modify, and incorporate key themes and lessons from the European Union (EU) and its multilateral instruments. For

instance, the European Commission (EC) has outlined its strategic vision for a prosperous yet climate-neutral economy in the EU by 2050. This unanimously binding initiative, launched in November 2018, is a long-term strategy and guiding framework that streamlines almost all EU climate policies in supporting the objectives agreed upon in the Paris Agreement. More specifically, it revolves around investments in realistic technological advancements and renavigations in economic policies whilst ensuring a just and fair socioeconomic transition⁵. For example, the EC has proposed EUR30.6 billion in the 2021-2027 EU Budget to facilitate investments in low- and zero emission vehicles and infrastructure⁶. While ASEAN inherently differs from the EU with regard to its financial status and extent of political-economic integration, it could still arguably benefit from even a much smaller regional partnership in mutually beneficial environmental investments. That is, if ASEAN manages to demonstrate and reinforce its commitments in combating climate change, it can then attract inward flows of climate financing that would further enhance the scale and effectiveness of such investments.

Finally, ASEAN can form a joint task force to implement regional climate strategies. That is, an effective multilateral initiative would require strong implementation and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that State parties do not falter in their commitments or free-ride other states. The Bamako Convention, a treaty signed by 27 African nations in 1991, is an example of a regional policy to ban imports of hazardous waste into the continent. Nonetheless, the absence of a competent authority to enforce strict implementations of the treaty and the lack of regional monitoring or follow-up among signatories have possibly contributed to the rather ineffective deployment and operations of the Convention⁷. Thus, ASEAN can then form a joint task force or an enforcement committee to ensure any adopted regional convention on climate change will be strictly adhered

to among Member States. In this case, ASEAN could emulate the EU on its emissions monitoring and reporting mechanisms whereby the EU and its member states conduct concurrent annual monitoring and reporting of GHG inventories, progress projections, and domestic strategies whilst providing regular progress updates on the regional and individual targets to the UNFCCC⁸. Considering the current role of AWGCC, ASEAN could then either elevate its status or include the environmental ministers from all member states to be the leading task force in the following: 1) formulate effective reporting, monitoring, and implementing mechanisms; 2) conduct frequent and regular cross-checks to ensure compliance; 3) determine the guidelines for reporting rules that could be submitted towards the UNFCCC for transparency and further scrutiny; and 4) delegate duties of policing and prosecutions of entities that fail to comply with the adopted conventions. While the scope of this proposed taskforce may be too ambitious in view of country-specific constraints, this approach is arguably important as a strategy without an efficient implementation would only remain an illusion.

Conclusion

Effective climate policy in Malaysia will require a two-fold strategy: a comprehensive domestic climate mitigation and adoption and regional cooperation. In the light of the adverse

implications of climate change not contained within national boundaries, a collective approach is deemed imperative. Despite substantial limitations in resources and technical capacity, ASEAN Member States can embark on a more entrenched cooperation that is mutually beneficial to ensure greater climate resilience. In fact, a regional commitment towards climate goals could also elevate the status and relevance of ASEAN in international politics, which can then be leveraged to obtain not only greater climate assistance from multilateral agencies and established country donors, but also more favourable geopolitical and geo-economic concessions in other platforms.

Endnotes

¹ Scott, M. (2019). Cities Are on the Front Line of Tackling Climate Change and They Need to Do More. *Forbes*. Retrieved on 5 June 2019 from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/mikescott/2019/06/05/cities-are-on-the-front-line-of-tackling-climate-change-and-they-need-to-do-more/#724fbc7a38fb>

² Ball, J. (2018). With Climate Change No Longer in the Future, Adaptation Speeds Up. *The New York Times*. Retrieved on 3 June 2019 from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/21/climate/climate-change-adaptation.html>

³ World Bank Group. (2011). *Guide to Climate Change Adaptation in Cities*. Washington DC: World Bank.

⁴ ASEAN Secretariat News. (2018). ASEAN hold first Climate Change Partnership Conference. Retrieved on 20 June 2019 from <https://asean.org/asean-hold-first-climate-change-partnership-conference/>

⁵ European Commission. (2018). 2050 long-term strategy. Retrieved on 20 June 2019 from https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2050_en

⁶ European Commission. (2018). *Our Vision*

for A Clean Planet for All: Industrial Transition. Retrieved on 20 June 2019 from https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/docs/pages/vision_2_industrial_en.pdf

⁷ Jeen, A.Y. (2019). What Asean can do about waste. Retrieved on 1 July 2019 from <https://www.thestar.com.my/opinion/letters/2019/07/01/what-asean-can-do-about-waste/>

⁸ European Commission. (n.d.) Emission monitoring & reporting. Retrieved on 20 June 2019 from https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/progress/monitoring_en

Associate Professor Dr Norraihan Zakaria is Principal Researcher at the Centre for Political Studies and Economic Diplomacy, IDFR. She is on secondment from Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Mr. Imran Hakim Mohamedsha was previously attached to the Centre for Political Studies and Economic Diplomacy, IDFR.

The Indo-Pacific: A Region by Any Other Name will Smell Just as Sweet? ... ¹

Rizal Abdul Kadir

Especially in the world of diplomacy, words shape conversations, can trigger unintended consequences, and, words may therefore define outcomes. Conversations get muddled when the same terms are used to mean different things. Conversations get muddled when concepts lack clarity. Conversations can get amusing when

something expressed verbally means entirely something else - or arguably clearer - when reduced to writing. Take the following example:

The mine is mine. That I mine information for a living has nothing to do with the fact that the mine is mine. The word 'mine' here has been used

in three different ways to bring three different meanings to the term 'mine'. The problem does not end there. Inaccurate diction, pronunciation, and even ordinary syntax can wreak equal havoc: *The mind does not mind whether the mine is mine.* Matters can get pretty serious where - and it is not unusual - for there to be a misunderstanding



between, for example, the words 'sovereignty' and 'sovereign rights'. Context is therefore King. This article is not on English; and the content to follow is certainly not problem free. Instead the reader is invited to see this as an attempt to highlight that in diplomacy, conversations, including those reduced to writing, through the employment and deployment of words mean everything. And cultural variances are not to blame.

Employ the term 'Indo-Pacific' to the entire paragraph above; perhaps then the practical problem becomes clear. Or hopefully clearer. And given this context, some questions that come to mind include 'what is the Indo-Pacific'? 'Where is the Indo-Pacific'? 'What are the principles underpinning the term and idea of Indo-Pacific'? 'Who are the actors in the Indo-Pacific'? In the world of diplomacy, words seek to eschew divisiveness. It is therefore hardly surprising that even developed countries are at odds on whether the term 'Indo-Pacific' is, as expressed by an observer, '...an objective statement of geography or a loaded political term used to signal support for one power over another'.² The Indo-Pacific as a new geo-political theatre was indeed the theme of the conference organised by the Maritime Institute of Malaysia last October 2019.³ This article will highlight various – not all – views expressed in the public domain on the Indo-Pacific. The discussion to follow will, however, focus on how the notion of 'Indo-Pacific' has evolved within ASEAN; and what implications the notion of 'Indo-Pacific' may have for the foreign policy of Malaysia.

Perspectives on the Indo-Pacific: The Problem...

Observers remind us that the idea of 'Indo-Pacific' is neither new nor novel; surfaced as a regional concept, linking the Indian and Pacific Oceans; but that the term 'Indo-Pacific' has taken on a new life under the U.S. Trump administration's adoption of it.⁴ On the face of it, the Indo-Pacific Strategy Report released by the United States on 1 June 2019 should appeal to

contemporary world order; as it aims to ensure that the '... rule of law – not coercion or force – [will] dictat[e] the future of the Indo-Pacific'.⁵ This is especially important considering the United States describes the Indo-Pacific as its priority theatre;⁶ and for which Australia on its part considers the United States has a significant role in the Indo-Pacific as a stabilising influence.⁷ The United States Indo-Pacific Strategy Report defines the Indo-Pacific as that area of the globe from '...the west coast of the United States to the western shores of India'.⁸ India, on the other hand, through its Minister of External Affairs, describes its own strategy on Indo-Pacific not so much on geographical reach but more so as one based on multipolarity, not containing any power, and not aligning with any power against another; effectively, underscoring an inclusive outlook on the Indo-Pacific.⁹ This circumspect approach towards defining the Indo-Pacific may be understandable considering the same Minister also remarked elsewhere that '... the international situation today is under stress'.¹⁰ For Japan, its 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' emphasises rule of law, pursuit of economic prosperity, and commitment for peace and stability; and states that 'Japan will cooperate with any country that supports this idea'.¹¹ One such country may be Australia – a country ready to pursue active diplomacy and use their development cooperation to promote economic reform and social stability; to advance their own interests in what Australia sees as a changing Indo-Pacific.¹²

Clearly therefore, with such noble ideals concerning the Indo-Pacific surely peace and stability will prevail; or will it not?

China on its part has taken a more cautious, if not also candid, approach. Foreign Minister Wang Yi has expressed that there must be '... a focus on cooperation and consensus, without engaging in geographic confrontation and games; [and a] focus on openness and inclusiveness, without forming

factions or seeking small cliques'.¹³

France, as early as 2018, declared in Sydney that France saw itself an inclusive and stabilising mediating power for the Indo-Pacific region;¹⁴ and interestingly considers the Indo-Pacific in terms of space ... covering 'maritime and land geographical area, [comprising] the Indian, Pacific, and Southern oceans and forms a security continuum spreading from the East African coastline to the Western American seaboard';¹⁵ a perspective that has been met with either cautious optimism,¹⁶ or outright scepticism.¹⁷

A Solution to the Indo-Pacific Impasse: The ASEAN Way?

ASEAN, in spite of its critics, has proven over time that it is a regional grouping that has successfully shaped and navigated relations with major powers. The multilateral platforms of the ARF, EAS, ADMM Plus are some examples of its diplomatic muscle. In conversations on Indo-Pacific, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific is a significant contribution to the discourse on Indo-Pacific;¹⁸ but leaves much to be desired in as much as it holds sound promise. To be fair to ASEAN however, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, released in June 2019, may perhaps be described as an instrumental work-in-progress which sets out the framework for how interests in the Indo-Pacific – of any country interested in the Indo-Pacific – may best be pursued. Indeed, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific talks about '...generating momentum for building strategic trust and win-win cooperation in the region' – signalling the all-important need for inclusivity; but a problem with the outlook is the realisation on the need for an appropriate ASEAN document to capture the ASEAN consensus on the Indo-Pacific; understandably however because ASEAN considers the Indo-Pacific is still an evolving regional architecture.¹⁹ In other words, more work is needed to understand, address, and reconcile perspectives on the Indo-Pacific to enable ASEAN to have its traditional

consensus on the matter. Nevertheless to the credit of ASEAN, the very fact that a regional grouping, of ten countries, has managed to release a unified – starting – position on the Indo-Pacific is no mean feat; hitherto strategies and conceptions of the Indo-Pacific have thus far been advocated by individual states. Thus, comments that ASEAN is ambivalent on its outlook towards a Free and Open Indo-Pacific,²⁰ as championed by Japan, are misplaced and fails to appreciate, to borrow the words of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore, that ASEAN is ‘...no stranger to big power dynamics and proxy wars’;²¹ so much so ASEAN made it clear that its recipe for stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, ASEAN’s geographical conception of the Indo-Pacific, ‘...requires avoiding the deepening of mistrust, miscalculation, and patterns of behaviour based on a zero-sum game.’²² Yes, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific underscores ASEAN Centrality;²³ Yes, ASEAN sees it has a central and strategic role for its outlook on the Indo-Pacific;²⁴ because it is hard not to recognise such a need, for roughly one-third of global shipping alone passes through the South China Sea.²⁵ This fact alone underscores the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific that the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions are not ‘...contiguous territorial spaces but [rather] a closely integrated and interconnected region’.²⁶

And thus what can ... should Malaysia do? ...

In June 2019, around the same time frame when the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific was released, the Government of Malaysia released a document entitled ‘the Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia – Change in Continuity’.²⁷ It is significant to highlight that the broad foreign policy goals and fundamental principles in the foreign policy of Malaysia will remain unchanged.²⁸

But Malaysia has signalled that there will be changes in terms of approaches, direction, and emphases.²⁹ What then may be expected from Malaysia, in

the context of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific? Generally however, Malaysia can be expected to be vocal in advocating specific issues of interest; including taking a leadership role in advocating issues of interest.³⁰ In the context of matters concerning the Indo-Pacific, it is noteworthy that Malaysia continues to recognise both ASEAN as the cornerstone of the foreign policy of Malaysia, and the central role of ASEAN as a regional body to promote peace and security in the region.³¹ At the same time, it cannot be denied that Malaysia is a maritime nation with critical access to three strategic waterways: the Straits of Malacca, the South China Sea, and the Sulu and Sulawesi Seas. In this context, it is especially noteworthy that ASEAN identifies the maritime domain as an important element in its outlook on the Indo-Pacific;³² and elaborated at length the envisaged nature and scope of maritime cooperation.³³ All this in turn warrants – as a first step – ascertaining the extent to which matters concerning the Indo-Pacific impact the national interests of Malaysia. Towards that end, Wisma Putra’s Consultative Council on Foreign Policy would be a suitable platform to proactively obtain the relevant inputs and insights impacting the national interests of Malaysia from civil society, stakeholders, and experts alike;³⁴ for which the Maritime Institute of Malaysia being the entity set up by the government to provide policy inputs on maritime affairs remains available to play its role. It would be an honour and privilege for the Maritime Institute of Malaysia to collaborate with the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations Malaysia in an effort to provide a structured and rigorous perspective to the Consultative Council on Foreign Policy on the extent to which the interests of Malaysia are affected by the contemporary conversations on the Indo-Pacific, and propose subsequent steps thereof; because ... on conversations concerning the ‘Indo-Pacific’, what it means and what it entails are both still open to question...

Endnotes

¹Dr Rizal Abdul Kadir, Acting Director-General, Maritime Institute of Malaysia (links cited accessible as of 11 Oct. 2019)

²See Tyler, M.C, The Indo-Pacific is the New Asia, www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/indo-pacific-new-asia

³Held last 24 October 2019 at the DoubleTree Hilton, Kuala Lumpur.

⁴Amitav Acharya, ‘Why ASEAN’s Indo-Pacific outlook matters’, East Asia Forum

⁵See United States, Department of Defense, Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, p54

⁶See Message from Secretary of Defense, United States, Department of Defense, Indo-Pacific Strategy Report.

⁷See Australian Government, 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, Chp.2 Power Shifts in the Indo-Pacific et seq

⁸See United States, Department of Defense, Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, p1

⁹See eg reports in <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/delhis-indo-pacific-strategy-is-not-aimed-at-containment-of-any-power-foreign-minister/articleshow/70886881.cms?from=mdr>;

¹⁰Excerpt of speech at the Inaugural Session of India-Singapore: The Next Phase of Strategic Partnership reported in <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-looks-at-open-balanced-indo-pacific-region-s-jaishankar/articleshow/71048400.cms?from=mdr>

¹¹See <https://www.asean.emb-japan.go.jp/files/000352880.pdf>, slide no.2

¹²See Australian Government, 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, Chp.3 A stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific et seq

¹³See Wang Yi Talks about Indo-Pacific Concept at www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1685652.shtml et seq

¹⁴See <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files/asia-and-oceania/the-indo-pacific-region-a-priority-for-france/> et seq

¹⁵See France and Security in the Indo-Pacific, May 2019, available via <https://www.defense.gouv.fr/english/dgris/international-action/regional-issues/france-unveils-its-defence-policy-in-the-indo-pacific>

¹⁶See eg Ankit Panda, ‘France as an Indo-Pacific Power: Making the Case’, available via <https://thediplomat.com/2019/06/frances-as-an-indo-pacific-power-making-the-case/>; Harsh V. Pant, Vinay Kaura, ‘France Is Looking for New Allies in Asia’, available via <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/18/france-is-looking-for-new-allies-in-asia/>

¹⁷See esp Qi Siang Ng, ‘The limits to French grandeur in the Indo-Pacific’, available via <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/limits-french-ambition-indo-pacific>

¹⁸See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/

¹⁹See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, para.12; see also Chairman’s Statement of the 34th ASEAN Summit at <https://asean.org/chairmans-statement-34th-asean-summit/>, para.56

²⁰See Tomotaka Shoji, ASEAN’s Ambivalence toward the Vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” – Mixture of Anxiety and Expectation at www.spf.org/ina/en/articles/shoji-southeastasia-foips.html

²¹In relation to a parliamentary question concerning the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific - see www.mfa.gov.sg/Newsroom/Press-Statements-Transcripts-and-Photos/2019/08/05-Aug_Min-Written-PQ-Reply

²²See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, para.1

²³See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, para.5

²⁴See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, para.6

²⁵See eg United States, Department of Defense, Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, p1

²⁶See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, para.6

²⁷See Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia – Change in Continuity available on the website of the Prime Minister's Office, <https://www.pmo.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Foreign-Policy-Framework-for-New-Malaysia-min.pdf>

²⁸Ibid, p.16 et seq

²⁹Ibid et seq

³⁰See Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia – Change in Continuity, p.III et seq

³¹See Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia – Change in Continuity, p.19 et seq

³²See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, para.6 et seq

³³See ASEAN Outlook On The Indo-Pacific at www.asean.org/asean-outlook-indo-pacific/, paras.14 & 15

³⁴See In accordance with the role and function of the Council – see See Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia – Change in Continuity, p.17 et seq

Dr Rizal Abdul Kadir is currently the Acting Director-General of the Maritime Institute of Malaysia.

The Convergence of Foreign and Defence Policy

Azmi Hassan

It is interesting to note that Wisma Putra recently came out with a foreign policy document entitled Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia with the central theme titled 'Change in Continuity'. The document can be considered as Malaysia's new foreign policy direction, which in essence is the crux of Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the 73rd United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) held last year. The framework outlines the principles and priorities of foreign affairs matter that will not only guide the government, but also indirectly will act as a bridge of justifications between the government and the general population when the government implement foreign policy decisions.

The change in foreign policy direction is very much expected when Malaysians voted Pakatan Harapan in droves during Malaysia's 14th General Election (GE14). With Tun Dr Mahathir at the helm of the government, he had demonstrated that during his last tenure as the fourth prime minister, foreign affairs matters were very close to his heart. His passion on South-South cooperation and his forthright views on matters related to super powers' behaviour are case in point. There was never a doubt that Tun Dr Mahathir has lost his touch as demonstrated in his recent speech at the just concluded 74th UNGA.

Change in Continuity

With 'Change in Continuity' as the theme of the framework, the document does not offer any drastic change in Malaysia's foreign policy but there is a stark difference in how the government will approach certain related issues. In strategic management parlance, the foreign policy vision and objectives remain intact but the strategies on how to achieve both of the intents will differ compared to what was practised for the last six decades. This is where the term 'change' comes into place.

Rightly so that foreign policy strategies need to change and be adapted to the current geopolitical situations because geopolitical issues are very dynamic in nature. Foreign policy is not the responsibility of Wisma Putra alone since it is very much related to other sectors as well such as education, technology, economy, and social amongst others. Therefore, coordination among ministries and agencies is critical and this is where the framework will come handy.

Just take the example of the South China Sea maritime boundary dispute that involved Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, Philippines, and China. Matters become complicated when other nations such as the United States, Australia, and India

became embroiled in the dispute too. Therefore, policies developed by Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Economic Affairs, for example, that involved parties related to the South China Sea dispute may complicate matters if the policies are not coordinated or in tandem with Wisma Putra's foreign policy strategies.

Defence White Paper

On this note, it is interesting to highlight that the Ministry of Defence is in the midst of finalising the Defence White Paper which will be debated in Parliament when it is ready. By its basic definition alone, it is supposed to be comprehensive and is responsible for the long-term plan of Malaysia's defence posture. Since the South China Sea dispute contributes a major factor towards Malaysia's defence posture, undoubtedly this issue will be dealt with in detail in the white paper. Basic queries that need to be discussed in the white paper include Malaysia's position on various claimants made on our Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ), in particular the Chinese claims which constitute the largest swath of our EEZ compared to other claimants such as Vietnam or Brunei.

The foreign policy framework did discuss the South China Sea dispute in detail and emphasised that Malaysia will continue to cooperate closely with

other ASEAN member states and major powers in ensuring that security and stability can be maintained. The framework also stressed on the dialogue mechanism in searching for solutions and gave the example of the current negotiation of the South China Sea Code of Conduct (CoC). As stated in the framework, Malaysia is looking forward for an early conclusion of CoC under the ASEAN negotiation framework and Wisma Putra has accorded this issue as a priority in our foreign policy agenda. It can be said that from the foreign policy framework document that Malaysia's foreign policy hinges heavily on ASEAN style of framework.

Since the Defence White Paper is in its final stages of preparation or most probably has already been completed and is in queue to be debated in Parliament, the pertinent question is that whether the foreign policy framework is crafted with the white paper in mind. As stated by Wisma Putra, the foreign policy is intended to act as a guidance not only for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also other ministry since foreign affairs cannot be implemented in vacuum without referring to other related sectors.

The Convergence

But again there are quarters who subscribed to the notion that foreign policy should act as the supplier and defence policy as the consumer. It means that whenever a defence policy needs to be crafted, it must refer to the foreign policy. But there are other schools of thought which think otherwise, that is, foreign policy should refer to the defence policy.

In other words as the norm in international relation parlance, local politics can influence the government decision in pursuing its foreign affairs agenda and in this case defence and security issues in fact can provide

directions for foreign affairs strategy. Therefore, there are schools of thought that believed there are no differences between defence policy and foreign policy. They are the same and should be synonymous with each other.

It can also be said that the governance of any government is coloured and influenced by two related policies, that is, foreign and defence. Observing how super powers react to geopolitical situations, foreign and defence policies tend to merge with each other and as always it becomes too difficult to differentiate between the two. Take for example the governance of European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that always interact with each other where the former primarily deals with foreign affairs while the latter supposedly deals with only defence matters. It is true that both organisations comprise of different members but decisions taken by both organisations are always in tandem with each other.

It is interesting to observe if the Defence White Paper that will be out very soon is in tandem with the foreign policy framework that was just released or some would argue the other way round, the foreign policy framework is in agreement with the Defence White Paper.

Conclusion

Sometimes Malaysians tend to see foreign and defence policy in a relatively narrow angle. To some of us, foreign policy is all about the working relationship between the Prime Minister and Wisma Putra with foreign nations. Therefore, foreign policy from this angle is all about when the Prime Minister meets with other foreign leaders or when the minister of foreign affairs trying to resolve a dispute with Singapore for example. This kind of view is very simplistic in nature and may be true few

decades ago.

But with today's globalised world, this kind of restricted view is not applicable anymore and a broader perspective of foreign and defence policy needs to be adopted by our citizens. As stated in the foreign policy framework, our foreign policy is not a single and overarching foreign policy since it consists of multi-dimensional aspects. Rest assured that the upcoming publication of the white paper will portray that defence policies are not limited to strategic plans for the defence of the country per se.

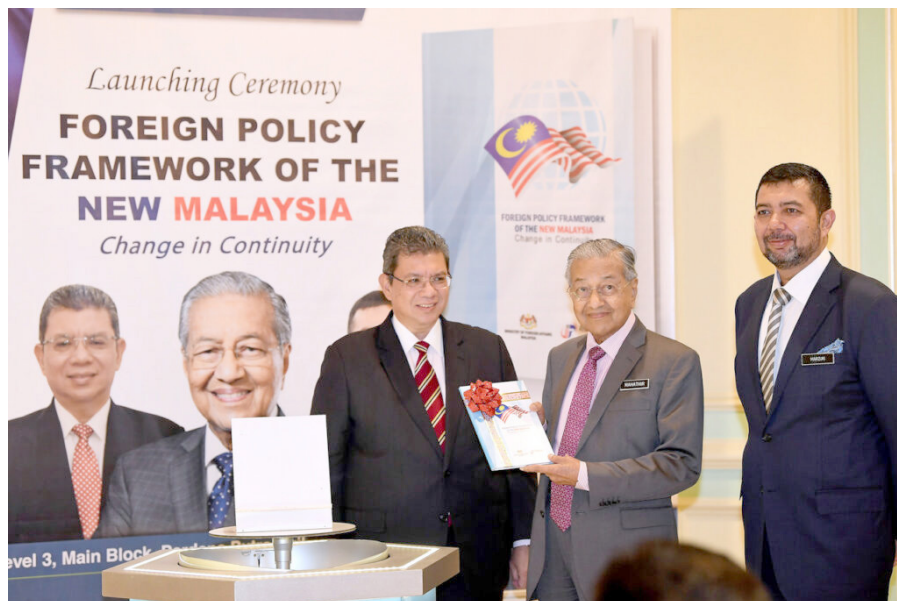
It is a good thing that both the foreign policy framework and the Defence White Paper were formulated about the same time and both of these documents if read in tandem will demonstrate that our foreign and defence policies are as complex as the world they operate in, and they involve many more actors other than those in Prime Minister's Office, Wisma Putra or KEMENTERIAH.

Azmi Hassan is currently GeoStrategist at Institute of GeoSpatial (INSTeG) and Perdana School, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)

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

The Launch of the Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia

On 18 September 2019, the launching ceremony of Malaysia's foreign policy framework took place at the administrative capital of Putrajaya under the banner "*Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia: Change in Continuity*". The event was officiated by the seventh Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. Also present at the launch were Minister of Foreign Affairs Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah; Minister of Economic Affairs Dato' Seri Azmin Ali; Minister of Water, Land and Natural Resources Xavier Jayakumar; Minister of Primary Industries Teresa Kok; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dato' Marzuki Yahya; Attorney-General Tan Sri Tommy Thomas, and Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Bador.



As Tun Dr Mahathir himself noted in his own remarks at the launch, the Foreign Policy Framework (FPF) of the New Malaysia is at once a milestone for Malaysia's foreign policy, a guidepost for the advancement of policy priorities, and a living document for those interested in Malaysia's evolving approach to the world. It will serve as a guide for the country in conducting its foreign policy in a rapidly changing and challenging world. He said that the basic elements of the foreign policy remain unchanged and the difference now is the way Malaysia will approach certain issues affecting its interests under the three approaches outlined by the framework.

In the FPF, Tun Dr Mahathir outlined three approaches that Malaysia's foreign policy would take, which included "participating actively" in discussions at

various international fora where Malaysia is already a member. For international fora that Malaysia is not a member, the country will aim to influence the decision-making processes. He also said that Malaysia would continue to pursue an independent, principled, and pragmatic foreign policy, "founded on the values of peace, humanity, justice, and equality". The country, he said, would continue to maintain friendly relations with all countries and seek peaceful resolution of disputes based on international law and norms.

Describing the framework as a living document, the prime minister said he is confident the 80-page framework will also become a valuable source of reference not just for Malaysian diplomats but all parties interested in Malaysia's foreign policy. In general, the

content of the FPF itself as a document is largely along the lines of what had been suggested earlier. After an introduction and a brief look at the thinking and goals of the PH administration, the framework is divided into four sections that reflect its key priorities: the overall direction of foreign policy; empowering the foreign ministry; enhancing interagency collaboration; and increasing public and civil society participation. The document delves into these priorities from a variety of perspectives, from more general ones such as South-South cooperation and reforming regional and international organisations, to more specific ones such as the Israel-Palestine issue and the South China Sea. In addition to the launching ceremony itself, the FPF was also made publicly available and can be accessed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website.

Ambassador Lecture Series 1/2019

Malaysia was the first country in the region to establish diplomatic ties with China when the second Prime Minister, Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, visited the Republic in 1974. Since then, China-Malaysia friendly relations grew in various

fields including in diplomacy, economy, trade, agriculture, defence, and security. Malaysia was also among the first countries to support and participate in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

This year marks the 45th anniversary of Malaysia-China relations. To commemorate this, IDFR recently organised a lecture titled "*45th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Malaysia and China: Reflecting*

on the Past for a Prosperous Future" on 19 September 2019 at Berjaya Times Square Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. The lecture was the first of the Institute's Ambassador Lecture Series held for 2019.

IDFR was honoured to have His Excellency Bai Tian, China's Ambassador to Malaysia, to inaugurate the lecture series. He began his speech by recalling back the historical ties of the two nations. He then divided the main theme into four subtopics: China's development; China's foreign policy towards neighbouring countries; the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); and China-Malaysia's relations.

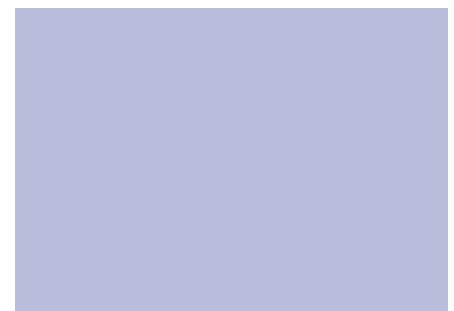
With respect to China's development, H.E. Bai Tian said that it is now the largest trading partner for more than 130 countries and a driving force for world economic growth, contributing more than 30 percent to the global growth annually for more than 10 years, with a GDP of USD 13.6 trillion in 2018. He also explained that Chinese economy will keep a steady, sound, and sustainable growth, playing its part as an engine for the world economy, and the country will stick to the path of peaceful development and the opening-up policy. With regard to China's foreign policy towards neighbouring countries, he pointed out that it was based on four keywords: friendship, good faith, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness. Guided by these keywords, the mutual trust between China and its neighbouring countries has strengthened and deepened the convergence of interest.



As for the BRI, H.E. Bai Tian described it as a platform for all-round cooperation, with the aims of promoting a balanced, sustainable world economy as well as common prosperity for all. In order to achieve that, China is enhancing five connectivity areas: policy, infrastructure, trade, finance, and people-to-people. In terms of China-Malaysia relations, he noted that Beijing-Kuala Lumpur relations have been growing in strength for the past 45 years, featuring equality, mutual respect, and harmonious coexistence and have brought more tangible benefits to the people of the two countries. Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has visited China nine times during his two terms as the Prime Minister of Malaysia. He said that Tun Dr Mahathir's two visits to China in less than 10 months and his recent attendance at the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing attest to the importance of China-Malaysia relations.

H.E. Bai Tian concluded the lecture by proposing that China and Malaysia

should become partners in the following matters: the implementation of BRI, cultural and civilisational exchanges, peaceful settlement of disputes and maintaining regional stability, as well as promotion of Asian values and upholding the international system. He then expressed his heartfelt respect and gratitude to everyone who has committed to China-Malaysia friendship over the past 45 years. In attendance were members of the diplomatic corps, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysian Investment Development Authority, and local academia.



Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 2019

The globalisation of international relations and the rapid development of information and communication technology have greatly influenced trends of interactions in a modern-day diplomacy. While diplomacy in the past focused mainly on the interstate interactions at the bilateral and multilateral levels, diplomacy today involves engagement with the media, the public, the civil society and

the non-government organisations at large, in addition to the application of social and electronic media platforms.

As the main goal of interaction is to influence the public thinking at the international level and promote one's national interest, effective public diplomacy activities and media skills help to promote and contribute towards a

better understanding of Malaysia's foreign policy, and trade and economic policies, both regionally and internationally.

In line with this, IDFR successfully organised *Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 2019* from 27 to 29 August 2019 at Vistana Kuala Lumpur Titiwangsa. The workshop

received encouraging turnout and twenty five officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Royal Malaysia Police, Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources, Forest Research Institute Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysian Palm Oil Board, and IDFR attended it.

The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness among government officials about the role of public diplomacy in promoting and defending national interests. In addition, this workshop also served as an exposure, preparation, and information sharing to middle-level officials (Grades 44-52) in handling questions and answers during press conferences and interview sessions through media simulations and live interviews.

The simulation exercises were conducted by three different speakers, commencing with Mr. Azri Mat Yaacob, Undersecretary of Public Diplomacy and Communication Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia who was



invited to brief on *Malaysia's Public Diplomacy Overview*. Dr. Mohd Khairie Ahmad from Universiti Utara Malaysia, as a second speaker, deliberated on *Social Media and Its Importance*, while Mr. Mohd Razman Faizal Sulaiman from Digital Market Lab elaborated on *Social Media Tools and Techniques*.

Datin Yusanani Yushak, a well-known professional media consultant from Malaysia Press Institute covered the two-day course on *Handling Press Conference and Studio Interviews: Theory and Practice*. She shared her previous experiences and moments while working as a journalist and news

anchor in Malaysian broadcasting industry, as well as demonstrated practicality and instilled self-confidence and presentation skill among the participants in facing and handling tough and pressured questions.

Indeed, this workshop is vital for mid-career and senior officials of any ministries and government agencies whose nature of work involves handling of media and public diplomacy. All participants benefitted from the knowledge and the experiences shared by the speakers in managing media communication with the public, locally and globally.

Diploma in Diplomacy: Attachment Programme

Manila, The Philippines

From 27 July to 3 August 2019, seven Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) participants accompanied by Mr. Hamizan Hashim, Head of Competency Enhancement Centre, IDFR and Miss Fazlina Basiron were in Manila, the Philippines for a study visit. The eight-day programme is part of the DiD module. Overall, the programmes designed for Manila covered the political, cultural, and economic aspects of the Philippines.

The weather in Manila was uncooperative from the start, since we arrived during the rainy season in the Philippines. However, the wet weather did not damper the educational visit since it was the first time all DiD participants visited the Philippines. Upon flying down towards Ninoy Aquino International Airport on

27 July 2019, an assortment of images greeted; from a collection of islands, the density of urban population with its fair share of slums and gated communities, the green lungs of the city, and the infamous Manila traffic jam. Throughout the international attachment, we stayed at Berjaya Makati Hotel, a Malaysian-owned establishment that was also the first deluxe hotel in the Philippines announced as halal certified since 2016.

The group was fortunate to have met with



Mr. Robert Borje, Chief of Presidential Protocol and Foreign Affairs Advisor at Malacañang Palace. The session with Mr. Borje, who is also a diplomat, was an inspiring learning experience for the participants who aspire to serve their country in the foreign service. Aside from engagements with the local government agencies, we also visited Malaysian agencies in Manila such as Tourism Malaysia and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation.

In Manila, we witnessed the cruciality of understanding the local cultures of the host country and establishing good rapport with others. Both elements are after all the crux of diplomacy, where interactions are facilitated by personal relations. We observed the importance of understanding the local sentiments, particularly in charting

Malaysia's next course of action in issues concerning the Philippines.

There are several opportunities which Malaysia should invest upon in the Philippines. We are of the view that Malaysia could tap into the growing halal market in the Philippines by providing advisory and consultancy services similar to our on-going cooperation with Japan. Malaysia should also leverage its current standing in the global halal market and fully utilise first-mover advantage in the halal sector, despite its close competitor, Indonesia coming in behind. Malaysia could also establish

its ground in halal market similar to its internationally recognised expertise in Islamic finance. In addition, as both countries have some similarities and on-going historical and present issues that have yet to be tackled, it is imperative for Malaysia to continue maintaining a good bilateral relations with the Philippines.

In conclusion, the attachment programme was a great learning experience and it should be continued for future DiD participants. We were able to learn new things not only from the briefings but also from the interaction beyond the official



engagements. The time spent there with the team from Malawakil Manila was indeed an unforgettable memory.

New Delhi, India

The one-week attachment programme in New Delhi, India was one of the modules in the 6-month DiD programme, aiming to provide exposure for the participants to the day-to-day operations and prospective job scopes at Mission. This attachment programme included visits to the High Commission of Malaysia, Malaysian Agencies, Foreign Service Institute of India (FSI), Malaysia's One Stop Centre(OSC), and International Labour Organisation(ILO) Decent Work Team for South Asia (DWT) and Country Office for India.

The participants had a briefing session at the High Commission on the operations of a Mission as well as the bilateral and multilateral issues that High Commission officials need to deal with on a regular basis. We also obtained valuable information on the economic, tourism, agriculture, and security aspects of Malaysia-India relations from the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Immigration Department, Prime Minister's Department and Tourism Malaysia. As Wisma Putra officials, it is necessary for us to master the political spectrum of the host country and know the operations of other national agencies operating under the same umbrella.

The High Commission of Malaysia in

New Delhi is a good example of an organisation, which does not operate in silos, whereby every agency is aware of the works of other agencies. We learnt the importance of working closely and maintaining a good interpersonal relationship amongst colleagues to ensure the harmony of working under the same roof. We also had a sharing session with Mr. Muhammad Azfar Abdullah, First Secretary, on how junior diplomats could create and maintain a network with their counterparts from the host country. It provided us with foresight on what to expect as a Malaysian diplomat when we serve abroad.



During the study visit to the Foreign Service Institute of India, we were able to have a discussion on real issues which India is currently tapping into, namely regionalism diplomacy in its foreign policies as well as diplomacy between India and Malaysia. Based on

the discussion, there were similarities and differences between FSI and IDFR, whereby IDFR could emulate the steps that FSI has taken in capitalising the Institute in order to project Malaysia's positive image through Malaysia's foreign policies on various issues.

The engagement with International Labour Office provided an exposure for the participants to engage with an international organisation in discussing thematic multilateral issues such as international labour guidelines. The engagement enabled us to see things from many perspectives, and not just focus on Malaysia national interests alone, but to achieve results that would benefit the whole international community. Engaging at the multilateral fora taught us that we may get the upper hand in scouting for other country's positions. From then on, we would be able to formulate Malaysia's position and influence the outcome of certain issues, which may serve beneficial for Malaysia and the other country.

As India is a beautiful country and well-known for its unique cultures, historical heritages, traditions and monuments, it was a great opportunity for us to visit Taj Mahal, Old Delhi city and Jama' Mosque, local markets such as Sarojini Nagar, Janpath, and India Gate historical

monument. They were the living proofs for us to immerse ourselves in the Indian culture, and at the same time provided us the chance to understand the significance of domestic social settings.

We had an enjoyable and fruitful experience throughout the week. Not only we had the opportunity to gain insights on the duties and responsibilities at the mission, but we also had the chance to experience the unique culture of India first-hand, which include engagements with the locals, visits to the historical places, and food tasting. The mission attachment programme was definitely a golden opportunity which had furnished us with an idea of what it

is like to become well-versed diplomats.

The attachment programme has succeeded in enriching the DiD participants in attaining a deeper understanding of India, and providing a better overview of Malaysia-India relations and a clearer introduction to issues affecting Malaysia's national interests abroad.



Jakarta, Indonesia

Six Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) participants had the opportunity to attend an attachment programme at the Embassy of Malaysia in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia from 27 July to 3 August 2019. The eight-day programme aimed to train Malaysian junior diplomats in the fields of diplomacy and international relations. It was also designed to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for their diplomatic career.



During the programme, we not only managed to learn more about the Republic of Indonesia in the context of politics, economy, social, and culture, but we also managed to experience the ups and downs of life as Malaysian diplomats abroad. This attachment programme allowed us to obtain an overview of Malaysia-Indonesia relations, political, and economic situation in the country and the region, as well as functions

of relevant Indonesian government bodies and agencies such as House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR), Centre for Education and Training (PUSDIKLAT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia (KEMLU), Ministry for National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre), National Agency for Disaster Management of the Republic of Indonesia (BNPB), ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC), and many more. We also had the opportunity to discuss various issues, especially issues of mutual concern and interact with counterparts from these agencies pertinent to their diplomatic roles. Indonesia was such a strategic country to visit for an overseas attachment programme in Diploma in Diplomacy. There were also a large number of officers in Malawakil Jakarta. Hence, it was a good opportunity for us to expand our contacts for future reference. Apart from the substantive schedule, we also visited the National Monument, Jakarta and Gedung Pancasila.

In conclusion, the attachment programme at the Embassy of Malaysia in Jakarta was truly enriching for

all DiD participants involved. It was highly impactful on us personally and professionally. It had successfully taught us the reality of running a mission abroad, and addressing both administrative and substantive matters at the same time. It was also helpful in preparing ourselves before we go for our posting soon. This attachment programme should be continued as it is a real life experience which is very valuable for the young diplomats in developing their future career in foreign service.



SPKM Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses 3/2019

Competent, efficient and professional home-based staff posted abroad should be fully equipped with knowledge and skills shared by experienced instructors as a preparation in dealing with multifaceted demands and requests by the domestic and foreign stakeholders. Besides serving our national interests abroad, they also carry our flag and prestige, to be respected and highly appraised by the foreign community. As representatives of their agencies, all officers should work as a team and play their role as one, being resourceful, groomed and presentable, and at the same time protect and take care of the national images and reputations.

In this regard, IDFR successfully hosted the third series of SPKM Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses 3/2019 from 8 to 17 July 2019. The course was attended by seventy eight participants, comprised of government officers and their spouses from various ministries and government agencies of the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysian Armed Forces, Royal Malaysian Police, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Tourism Malaysia, Malaysian Palm Oil Board, Federal Territory Islamic Religious Council and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The course, specially designed for officers Grade 41 and above, aimed to boost and develop the participants' diplomatic, administrative, and social etiquette skills as well as to enhance their knowledge in international diplomatic practices to be applied in their future postings. The course included interactive lectures, group discussions and practical sessions on aspects related to working at Malaysian Missions abroad. Among the modules designed for the participants were lectures on *Malaysia's Foreign Policy, Cross Cultural Awareness, Grooming and Social Etiquette, Fine Dining Etiquette, Media Skills, Consular Works at Mission,*



Auditing, Finance, Ethics and Integrity, Enhancing National Security, Sharing of Experience from a Former Diplomat as well as *General Administrative and Asset Management at Mission*. Special exposure to promoting Malaysia as a preferred trading, investment and tourist destination was also conducted in a panel discussion with representatives from the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Malaysia Investment Development Authority and Tourism Malaysia.

The participants were also fortunate to have an interactive session with Dato' Zulkifly Yaacob, Former Malaysian Ambassador to Argentina who shared his experiences in the *"Experience Sharing from a Senior Diplomat"*. They were also honoured to have a session with Mr. Sophian Ab Rahman, Protocol Officer from Istana Negara who conducted the theory and practice on *"Fine Dining, Reception and Official Entertaining"* at Dorsett Hotel Kuala Lumpur, on the third day of the course.

The eight-day course was held at Room Jakarta I & II, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation Building, Kuala Lumpur. This was the first ever SPKM course held outside IDFR. Participants of all agencies benefitted from an hour tour to the exhibition venues such as the Business and Information Center, the Trade Museum, and the Convention Halls. It was a fruitful exposure for the participants to better understand the roles and functions of MATRADE as a promoting

agency for Malaysian products, goods and services to be externally traded to foreign consumers and searching for new markets in other parts of the world.

Apart from MATRADE that allowed their premise to be used as a venue for the course, Tourism Malaysia also reflects their commitment by taking this opportunity to gather all participants and their families for a durian treat held at a fruit orchard located in Semenyih, Selangor. The activity was specially hosted by the agency to further promote durian as one of the local delicacies and attract more tourist to come in and enjoy the "king of fruits". One participant from MPOB also shared on how Malaysia could put forward the promotion of local palm oil to be marketed globally despite facing a boycott especially from the West. Therefore, SPKM is not only an orientation course but it also reflects the enthusiasm of all participants to fully benefit from the knowledge, skills, experiences and information sharing from the agencies and organisations involved.

Overall, the participants have been exposed to new subject matters that they should observe while working at the Malaysian Missions abroad, such as on counter-terrorism, counter-espionage, personal security, and integrity. Besides knowledge of diplomatic and administrative functions, they also appreciated new skills for media engagement, fine dining and the art of entertaining, as well as social grooming and etiquette.

Reflection: My Experience as a Diploma in Diplomacy Participant



It has been almost one month since the DiD 2019 graduates shared their fifteen minutes fame with proud family members, superiors, and colleagues. Looking back, I have to admit that my experiences in Diploma in Diplomacy have definitely been amazing and I am so thankful to have been a part of it. The various excursions, projects, and discussions with members of both private and government sectors all contributed to eye opening and thought-provoking experiences. The time that I spent as one of the DiD participants gave me greater appreciation for the role of those in the service and highlighted the need for diplomats with in-depth knowledge of the world alongside cultural sensitivity, a strong voice, and a focus on self-betterment. A number of memories and elements have left a big imprint on me.

One of my fondest memories in DiD was the attachment programme in Manila, Republic of the Philippines. The cohort spent eight days and seven nights in Manila, specifically in Makati City. This attachment opportunity allowed us to engage holistically with all the theories we have been studying up to this date; a case study we could walk through, eat, and interact with. We took in the loud and colourful sights, sounds, and smells of the city that we would call home for the next eight days. Packed together, tighter than a pack of sardines, my colleagues and I rode around the streets of Manila in the traditional

mode of transport in the Philippines called the Jeepney. From the jeepneys all the way to political, economic and cultural policies, it was very different experiencing it all first-hand.

Through various debriefings, seminars, and visits, we identified so many similarities between the two countries. Of course, we were also able to identify many differences as well. More importantly, we were able to identify ethnological, historical, and other societal factors that meant this South East Asian country would have a very different growth pathway. I also appreciated the opportunities given to us to learn how our Missions abroad operate and function and the roles that we were expected to play when abroad. These not only helped us to become more empathetic individuals but also professionals with a wider array of experiences and knowledge. In short, Metro Manila and all that it had to offer has been an eye-opening and rich learning experience. I believe that study visits and attachment programmes of a similar nature should be continued in future to enable junior diplomats to have exposure to the works conducted by Missions and gain more knowledge on a particular country.

My DiD experience also gave me the chance to engage in activities not only confined to the field of International Relations and Diplomacy, but also other

fields that are equally just as important. I quote the golden opportunity to bathe baby elephants during our CSR project in Kuantan, Pahang and see orangutans up close at Semenggoh Wildlife Centre (the biggest Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre in Sarawak) as examples. Engagement sessions such as these expose us to another important component of Malaysia's growth and development: its flora and fauna and how to gauge more understanding and collaboration from various stakeholders and continue to add to Malaysia's future in the holistic sense.

On the socio-cultural front, visiting museums and weaving centres, watching art performances, learning to dance, and indulging in hands-on arts and craft activities showed to us that culture and art can serve as a tool that transcends language and geography in fostering greater peace and justice based on mutual understanding and shared values. More specifically, it is very apparent that culture and art can act as a mediator and a way to build empathy between cultures and different points of view, traditions, attitude of the world, moving beyond seeing art only in its aesthetic value. Moreover, we learnt that culture and art also serves as an economic tool, generating income and revenue especially from the tourism front. There should be more programmes of this nature, to allow officers to gain more knowledge on arts and culture. I humbly believe that having the right people with a significant level of awareness regarding global concerns and intercultural competence is key when working across borders and cultures, especially in the context of Wisma Putra. Lack of cultural awareness and understanding can lead to major miscommunication/misunderstandings, and ultimately, rejection by host-culture colleagues, clients, acquaintances, and neighbours.

I believe that the DiD programme succeeded in creating better diplomats, who are well-rounded and have an

understanding of a variety of situations. Every day we were exposed to different ways of thinking. With each new presenter or guest speaker we met, we came into contact with their world and their mentality. Oftentimes, it was very difficult to see the story from another perspective but we grew so much from it. In many of the sharing sessions and lecture series, we were challenged to identify some of our own pre-held prejudices about certain countries and we were encouraged to alter our perception through learning and listening to the stories of those who had experienced things on the ground.

On another note about gaining leadership experiences, we were educated and groomed by the best of the best. We took lengthy lessons on how to dress properly, appear in front of the media and hold good networks and connections with others. Sharing sessions with former ambassadors and senior officers taught us the importance of being prepared; it is good to know that even if things do not go according to



your plan, you have a team member who did the extra readings and preparations to help ease the burden for the whole team. In regards to this, we were also reminded throughout the programme the importance of being well read and having an opinion, having a breadth of skills like finance and keeping good ties with both Malaysian and Foreign counterparts. All of these things I hope to take on board with my progression and I hope that they will help me become a professional with a large range of skills. We also took time to discuss the important role of women within the sector and how their representation

is changing. I would like to thank IDFR for giving high-class training and education to more women so that we can also give back to our country and support it in matters of diplomacy.

Overall, DiD has been one of the most beneficial programmes in my short career stint with MFA Malaysia. I hope to grow with my experiences and become like the people who presented to and inspired us. It was not always easy but with every difficulty I believe I was able to grow as a person. I hope I am able to always learn and better myself along this journey, which has just begun for me.

IDFR Welcomes its New Director General



On 6 August 2019, IDFR welcomes its new Director General, Dato' Mohd Zamruni Khalid. Dato' Mohd Zamruni succeeded Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, who, after serving the Institute for more than two years,

left to take up his new post as High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

Dato' Mohd Zamruni has served in the Malaysian diplomatic service for 25 years. His ambassadorial appointment

was as Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary of Malaysia to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2016-2019). Prior to this, he was appointed as Deputy Director General for ASEAN External Relations, AMNS (2011-2015) and ASEAN Political-Security Community, AMNS (2015-2016).

His other overseas postings were as Second Secretary in Vietnam (1996-2000) and France (2000-2002). He was also appointed as Consul General to New York (2008-2011). At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dato' Mohd Zamruni held various positions including Assistant Secretary in charge of Eastern Europe Division (1995-1996); Special Officer to the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2002-2004); and Principal Assistant Secretary in charge of Multilateral Economic and Environment Division (2006-2008).

Institutional Visit by the Participants of the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme



The Centre for Leadership, Negotiation and Public Diplomacy was tasked to deliver briefings for the participants of The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme (SSEAYP) 2019 held on 9 October 2019 at

Library Block, IDFR. SSEAYP is an annual youth exchange programme co-organised by the Government of Japan and the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports. The Malaysian contingent was represented by sixteen selected

youths from various background of studies and careers.

The Centre was responsible in organising lectures and presentations for the team with the aim of exposing them to issues involving the Malaysian Foreign Policy and its New Framework, Soft Diplomacy, and Negotiation Skills. Major (Retired) Mohd Ridzuan Mohd Shariff, Research Officer and Mr. Amirul Khairi Mustafa Bakri, Assistant Director of LNPd delivered lectures on the subjects respectively.

continued from page 1

expressed his hope that the junior diplomats would further empower Wisma Putra as highlighted under the New Malaysia's Foreign Policy Framework. He also hoped that the training was helpful in preparing them for the challenges in their first overseas assignment soon. At the end of his Address, Dato' Marzuki Yahya encouraged them to keep abreast with the changes and developments in global issues to ensure Malaysia's foreign policy and conducts remain relevant in securing our national interest.

The ceremony resumed with the most exciting part, which was the presentation of awards. Smartly dressed in their No. 1 suits, the officers went on stage to receive their Diploma in Diplomacy from The Honourable Dato' Marzuki Hj. Yahya. The highlight of the event was the presentation of awards: the Minister

of Foreign Affairs' Award for Best Overall Student; the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs' Award for Best Leadership; and the Director General of IDFR's Award for Best Academic Achievement. The recipient for the Minister of Foreign Affairs' award was Ms Syarifah Nor Amirah Syed Shamsudin; Secretary General's award was Mr Mohd Shazmee Eddy Mohd Shah; and Director General's award was Mr Muhammad Haidas Muhammad Sharif Song. Ms Syarifah Nor Amirah Syed Shamsudin then delivered a speech in which she, on behalf of the graduates, thanked everyone including the Ministry and IDFR, and most importantly, their family members for their support.

During the ceremony, a video montage on the activities which took place throughout the programme was shown accompanied by musicians from Badan

Kesenian Tentera Darat. Guests were later entertained by the 2019 graduates with a poem recitation in three different languages: English, Arabic, and French and songs such as *Setia* and *I believe* (a French song). The graduates also performed a Javanese traditional dance learnt when they were on their attachment programme in Jakarta, Indonesia. The ceremony was also attended by Dato' Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, the Secretary General, Heads of Department and other senior officials of the Ministry, representatives from various ministries and agencies, lecturers and speakers, IDFR's Distinguished Fellows and staff as well as the graduates' family members.

News Contributors

Norlela Samad, Noraini Awang Nong, Amirul Khairi Mustafa Bakri, DiD 2019 Participants, Syarifah Nor Amirah Syed Shamsudin



Diploma in Diplomacy 2019's Graduation Ceremony





The Launch of the Foreign Policy Framework of the New Malaysia, 18 September



DiD Participants' Attachment Programme at New Delhi, India, 27 July to 3 August



DiD Participants' Attachment Programme at New Delhi, India, 27 July to 3 August



Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills, 27-29 August



Ambassador Lecture Series 2/2019, 26 September



DiD Participants' Attachment Programme at Manila, The Philippines, 27 July to 3 August



Courtesy Call by H.E. Ardasher Qodiri, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Tajikistan, 29 August



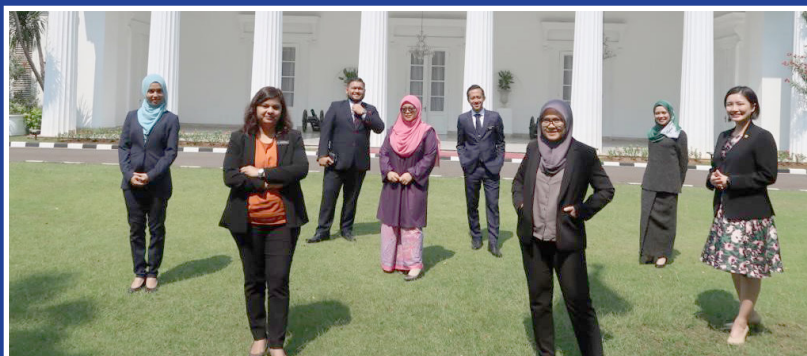
Fine Dining, Reception and Official Entertaining Session, Dorsett Hotel KL, 10 July



DID Participants' Attachment Programme at Manila, The Philippines, 27 July to 3 August



SPKM: Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses 3/2019, 8-17 July



DID Participants' Attachment Programme at Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia, 27 July to 3 August



Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills, 27-29 August



Workshop on Intercultural Communication, Awareness and Diplomacy, 18-20 September



The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Programme, 9 October