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## ASEAN Anniversary Forum 2012



The ASEAN Anniversary Forum 2012 was jointly organised by IDFR, the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) on 5 October 2012. The 250 participants who attended the forum were mostly officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies, members of the diplomatic corps, former Malaysian ambassadors, representatives from think tanks, government linked companies and non-governmental organisations, members of youth groups and students from several public and

private universities. The forum is one of the annual events held to commemorate the ASEAN Anniversary, which is in its 45th installation this year.

Tan Sri Mohd. Radzi Abdul Rahman, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, in his welcoming remarks, touched on the objective of the forum which was to provide a platform for members of the public service, the academia, the private sector, NGOs and the diplomatic community to openly discuss on specific themes related to

ASEAN. This is very essential to cultivate awareness amongst ASEAN people on issues related closely to them.

The Deputy Foreign Minister, Senator A. Kohilan Pillay, delivered an address on behalf of the Foreign Minister. Senator Kohilan spoke on *ASEAN Community 2015: A People-Centred ASEAN*, believing that the Asia Pacific region will continue to be the main engine for global economic growth in the years to come. If there are in place rules and norms to govern behaviour of states, ASEAN members need to ensure the continued strength, innovation and neutrality of ASEAN and in so doing, firmly place ASEAN at the heart of the evolving regional architecture. They also need to take measures to ensure the fullest implementation of all the action lines contained in the three ASEAN Blueprints – Political Security, Economic and Socio-cultural leading to the establishment of the ASEAN Community. He emphasised that ASEAN colleagues are the best assets for ASEAN and they must be fully involved in their region-building efforts. He then reminded the participants of the challenges in promoting People-Centered ASEAN

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## Dr. Surin Pitsuwan

*Secretary-General of ASEAN*

**Q: How would you describe the ASEAN Secretariat?**

A: The Secretariat can be best described as the “heart of ASEAN”, its central mechanism. It is the only Organ of ASEAN which has an “exclusively ASEAN character”. By this, I mean that while all ten ASEAN member states through their national secretariats and representatives such as the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) represent the interests of the member states, the ASEAN Secretariat, on the other hand, represents the holistic interests of ASEAN as an organisation and community. Its importance and role should grow as ASEAN’s own role in the region and in the global community of nations expands. ASEAN’s greatest challenge in the next few years is to build a strong, effective and resilient Secretariat that can deliver the goals of peace, friendship and prosperity.

**Q: 2015 is only three years away. What are some of the things that should already be in place right now for the ASEAN community to be realised?**

A: We must adopt a “regional” mindset and understand the benefits of ASEAN to our peoples. Our next biggest challenge is governance – we must strengthen our regulations and institutions to realise our ambitions at all levels. This involves changing our national laws to meet



the commitments that the ten ASEAN governments have agreed to at the ASEAN level and learn how to resolve our differences expeditiously. ASEAN has not managed to overcome some of these fundamental challenges.

Come 2015, goods will flow freely. This means that people in each ASEAN country should be prepared to compete within the region and the world. There will be winners and losers, so we should have the supporting infrastructure in place. We also need to re-skill ourselves to meet the competition.

Rapid globalisation also ensures that all our peoples are vulnerable to transnational threats like climate change, disasters, terrorism, trafficking of people and drugs, health pandemics and others. There will be an increase of these threats, so we must

accelerate political and socio-cultural cooperation to protect our people.

There is no turning back on this noble project that the five founding members of ASEAN decided to embark on.

**Q: Rohingya Muslims are viewed by the United Nations as “one of the world’s most persecuted minorities”. Do you think Aung San Suu Kyi could play a role in easing the resentment towards them in her own country?**

A: This is a very complicated issue which is part of what I refer to as the “Myanmar problem” which has historical, cultural, human security and development dimensions. It is an issue that is best managed by the Myanmar government and people. The Myanmar government knows that we in ASEAN and the international community including the United Nations stand ready to help prevent the violence from escalating. I have pointed out that this Rohingya problem should NOT be viewed exclusively as a “Muslim” issue. It also has clear constitutional, humanitarian and human rights dimensions. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as much as the Government of Myanmar have interests to manage a difficult issue with justice and care. I have warned recently that this issue has geopolitical implications that affect all countries if the Rakhine coast is radicalized. This will not be good for Myanmar, ASEAN and the international community.







**Q: If there is one thing that ASEAN can learn from the European Union, what would it be?**

A: The idea of One Europe is visionary and the European Union has been a source of inspiration for ASEAN and will always be. There are many lessons for us but the single most important in my view is how the Europeans aspire to build permanent peace based on fundamental freedom, economic and social prosperity.

**Q: Could you share some of the highlights since you became the ASEAN Secretary-General?**

A: I had a modest aim when I became Secretary-General and that was to make the average citizen in our region aware of ASEAN and to understand how regional integration will make a difference to their lives. According to a recent survey of awareness, 81 per cent of those surveyed showed awareness of ASEAN. This is heartening. Another "highlight" is knowing that more stakeholders of ASEAN – the business community both local and foreign, parliamentarians, non-government organisations, young people, etc. – are knocking on ASEAN's doors to participate in community-building. It is also worthy to note that many countries want to establish stronger ties with ASEAN, including the US, Australia, Japan and others. So to date, we have over 66 countries which are now accredited to ASEAN. Many of them, including the US, China, Republic of Korea and Japan have missions to ASEAN that are distinct from their bilateral missions to Indonesia. This is evidence of ASEAN's growing importance and influence. So at many levels, ASEAN is progressing well.

**Q: What are your plans after your term as the Secretary General ends in December?**

A: I plan to take a well-deserved rest and spend as much time as possible with my family.



Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, born on 28 October 1949, is a native of Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Southern Thailand. He received his primary and secondary education in his home province.

He was awarded the American Field Service (AFS) exchange scholarship and was a high school exchange student in Minnesota, USA, in 1967-1968. He returned to Bangkok, Thailand and attended Thammasat University for two years before winning a scholarship from Claremont Men's College, Claremont, California, to complete his B.A. in Political Science (cum laude) in 1972. He then went on to Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A., where he received his M.A. and Ph.D. in 1974 and 1982 respectively, in the field of Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies.

His entire Harvard career was supported by the Winston S. Churchill Association and Rockefeller Foundation Fellowships. He also spent a year and a half studying Arabic and conducting his research at the American University in Cairo, 1975-1977, while concurrently a fellow at the Higher Institute of Islamic Research, Cairo, Egypt. He worked as a columnist for *The Nation* and the *Bangkok Post*, the two leading English daily newspapers in Bangkok, from 1975-1992.

Dr. Surin taught at the Faculty of Political Science at Thammasat University from 1978-1983 and 1984-1986. He also served as an assistant to the Deputy Dean for Academic Affairs during the same period.

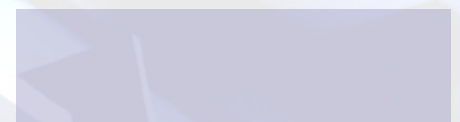
Dr. Surin joined the American Political Science Association's Congressional Fellowship Program in 1983-1984, when he interned in the Congressional Office of US Representative Geraldine A. Ferraro (D-New York), who later became the Vice Presidential Candidate for the Democrat Party in 1984, and worked for the Senate Republican Conference in the later half of 1984. He taught Southeast Asian Affairs at the American University in Washington D.C. during that same year.

He returned to Thailand in 1984 to his teaching position at Thammasat and ran for a Parliamentary seat from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, his home town. He has been returned to Parliament eight times since 1986. As an MP, he was appointed Secretary to the Speaker of the House of Representatives (Chuan Leekpai),

Secretary to Deputy Minister of Interior, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs during 1992-1995 and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1997 to 2001. He served as Chair of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and the Chair of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1999-2000. In September 1999, while on the ASEAN Chair, he led the efforts to get Southeast Asian governments to help restore law and order and that joint undertaking, with the support of the United Nations and the international community, brought about peace and security in East Timor.

Upon leaving the foreign affairs portfolio in mid-2001, Dr. Surin was appointed a member of the Commission on Human Security of the United Nations until 2003. He also served as an advisor to the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty from 1999-2001. In 2002, he concurrently served on the ILO's World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization until 2004. He is currently on the Advisory Board of the UN Human Security Trust Fund; the Advisory Board of the International Crisis Group (ICG); a member of the International Advisory Board of the Council on Foreign Relations in New York; an International Academic Advisor of the Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford University; and an advisor to the Leaders Project, a conference arm of the Cohen Group of former US Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen Washington, D.C. Between 2002-2004, Dr. Surin was also a member of the "Wise Men Group" under the auspices of the Henri Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) in Geneva, advising the peace negotiations between the Acehese Independence Movement (GAM) and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. He has just completed his assignments as a member of the Islamic Development Bank's 1440 A.H. (2020) Vision Commission under the leadership of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, in June 2005.

Dr. Surin was a Deputy Leader of the Democrat Party, Thailand. He also served on the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), charged with bringing peace and security back to Thailand's deep South. He also served as MP in the National Legislative Assembly (NLA). He was nominated by the Royal Thai Government and endorsed by ASEAN Leaders to be ASEAN Secretary-General for year 2008-2012.





## What is at Stake in the South China Sea Dispute?

*Contributed by Dr. Tang Siew Mun*

China's "charm offensive" has run its course. At the early stages of Beijing's outreach to Southeast Asia, it was easy to focus on "low hanging fruits" such as preferential trade incentives, competitive loans and investment. To be sure, Beijing's wooing of Southeast Asia was welcomed and highly appreciated across the region. Although some 15 years have passed since the 1997 financial crisis, China's decision not to devalue the *yuan* and offers of financial assistance to countries hamstrung by the debilitating crisis continues to stand as a testament of China's goodwill towards Southeast Asia.

While some extra-regional parties assiduously sound the clarion call of the looming Chinese threat, Southeast Asia remained steadfast in their belief of China's benign intentions. However, regional perceptions – and their comfort level – of China are changing. Much to the chagrin of both sides, relations between China and its southern neighbours are at its lowest point in two decades. How did Beijing's successful and careful cultivation of Southeast Asia become unhinged? The answer is found in three words – South China Sea.

The South China Sea (SCS) dispute is a long-standing issue that predates the "rise of China." Together with the Korean Peninsula and the Straits of Formosa, the SCS forms three of the region's most volatile flash points. In comparison, tensions and the occasional flare-ups between the SCS claimants – Brunei, China, Malaysia, The Philippines and Vietnam – have been mild compared to the stand-offs between China and Chinese Taipei and the destabilizing effects of Pyongyang's nuclear programme. However, the temperature in the SCS has been rising and the dispute is a high security concern for ASEAN states.

The disputes between China and the claimants are well-documented and have received wide media coverage, and need not be repeated here.

Suffice to say that the SCS is a highly emotive issue that could potentially undermine regional security.

A good point of departure in any discussion on the SCS dispute would be an analysis of the stakes involved. Glancing at China's infamous nine-dotted line map, one could easily surmise that the stakes revolve around the control over the countless number of reefs, rocks, shoals, atolls, islands and other subterranean features. There is also the instrumental dimension of the oil and gas reserves that the SCS is reportedly to hold, and the bountiful fishery resources. The strategic value of controlling the maritime areas of the SCS that straddle the lifeline of the critical East-West trade is immense. All these interests are important but in the larger scheme of things, they are peripheral to China's interest of gaining recognition and acceptance by ASEAN states as a peaceful, friendly and productive neighbour.

China has the wherewithal to establish a dominant foothold in the SCS. The People's Liberation Army's development of a blue water navy is closely and nervously tracked by all of Southeast Asia's maritime nations, least because they do not have the capabilities to match or counter China's growing naval power. The commissioning of its first aircraft carrier, the *Liaoning*, is a game changer and signals the advent of China as a maritime power. This will further strengthen China's already considerable military power that it can bring to bear in the SCS in support of its claims. However, having the capabilities does not imply that China will use its overwhelming military superiority to cow the claimants into submission. Will China exercise self-restraint? Can Southeast Asia take China's peaceful development to heart?

From the vantage point of Hanoi and Manila, China's behaviour in the SCS has been anything but peaceful or benign. In fact, China's aggressiveness is driving The Philippines to strengthen

its security relations with the US. Under its pivot strategy, Washington is happy to oblige and close ranks with Manila and other allies in the region. Likewise, Vietnam has a long list of grievances against alleged Chinese transgressions. While Beijing could counter these allegations by stressing the provocative actions aimed at China, it has to be mindful of its growing image as a "bully."

There is a lot that China could do to buttress its claims and to affirm its sovereignty in the SCS. The elevation of Sansha to a prefecture from the previous designation of a "county" on 24 July 2012 is one such measure. However, it was the announcement by the Central Military Commission that authorised the formation of a garrison command that evoked strong emotions in the region. Every measure that Beijing takes to strengthen its position in the SCS – however legitimate – will be seen as destabilizing at best and provocative at worse. The stronger China becomes in the SCS, the weaker it becomes in Southeast Asia.

China may ostensibly gain control of the SCS, but at what cost? A victory in the SCS is hollow, as it would effectively burn the bridge that currently links Beijing to Southeast Asia. To be sure, different ASEAN states view the stakes in the SCS differently. For some countries like Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, it is not an issue that resonates strongly and it is certainly not a core interest to risk locking horns with China. The claimants have a direct stake and are thus the most invested. Indonesia and Singapore – non-claimant states – have placed the SCS high on their diplomatic agenda, recognising that the brewing storm over the SCS will negatively impact regional stability and security. For China though, what is at stake is not the possible loss of territory or forgoing of the seabed and fishery resources but China's standing and credibility in the region.

A further escalation of tension in the SCS will compel the claimant states



to seriously consider – if they have not already done so – if China is a trustworthy and credible regional partner. The SCS is thus a litmus test for China. Its management of the SCS dispute is providing Southeast Asia – and the world – a preview of how China might use its power when it is fully developed. In other words, Chinese behaviour in the SCS portends of things to come with regard to China's role in the region – and the world.

China needs to walk the talk of peaceful development and resist the temptation of leveraging on its superior power asymmetry relative to the ASEAN states. It would be disastrous for China if it were to assert its claims in the SCS through military force and intimidation. This is an equally nightmarish proposition for ASEAN states to contend with.

Faced with an assertive China, ASEAN states are essentially left with three options. They may elect to capitulate and accede to Chinese domination and control. This is an unlikely proposition and one that will not find much support among their respective national constituents. Alternatively, they may rise up to the Chinese challenge. Given the vast power asymmetry between China and the ASEAN states collective resources, this is an unrealistic option. This leaves the ASEAN states with the last option of seeking out powerful allies that share the same strategic concerns vis-à-vis China. States with formal alliances with the US will deepen their partnership with Washington, while others may opt to establish one.

Chinese nervousness of ASEAN states forming and consolidating security relations with the US can be gleaned from Beijing's frequent assertion that alliances are Cold War relics. Strategically, Beijing is loathe to see an increase in the number of US allies in the region. Nevertheless, uncertainties of China's strategic intentions and concerns of its growing assertiveness are nudging the region ever closer to the US. The US is a

trusted security partner and its pivot strategy pronouncements seem to imply that it remains committed to the region's peace and stability. The net effect of the strategic shift to the US is the bifurcation of the region. Southeast Asia will be divided into pro-Beijing and pro-US camps, which is reminiscent of the Cold War. A divided Southeast Asia will have dire consequences for ASEAN and regional cooperation.

The responsibility (and blame) for the mismanagement of the SCS dispute does not begin and end at Beijing's doorsteps. There is a degree of grandstanding on all sides, including the ASEAN claimants. It is convenient to paint China as the "bully" but this is hardly a constructive way to prevent further escalation of the dispute and the deterioration of ASEAN-China ties. China has to see the merit to the immediate commencement of talks on a regional code of conduct (COC). The Joint Statement of the 15th ASEAN-China Summit on the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) should not detract from the urgency and imperative of a binding framework to manage the five parties' relations and expectations vis-à-vis the SCS. Unless and until such a framework is established, ASEAN-China ties will be susceptible to the claimants' miscalculations and missteps. A code of conduct that binds China will also serve to bind and govern the actions of the ASEAN state claimants. The proposed COC should be seen as an implement to stabilize relations in the SCS and not a tool directed at China.

The formal commencement of discussions on the COC would be a welcomed development and is an unequivocal sign of the ASEAN states and China's resolve to maintain regional peace and stability. There are at least two major hurdles that need to be overcome before such a meeting could take place. Firstly, Beijing needs to be persuaded to set aside their contention that "the time is not ripe" for discussions on the COC. Time is clearly not on China's side.

The diplomatic costs and damage to China's reputation increases as long as the SCS dispute remains in the limelight. The COC is an opportunity for China to demonstrate and reaffirm its friendly and cooperative relations with the ASEAN states. More importantly, it would go a long way to dispel the notion of China's increasing assertiveness. Secondly, ASEAN claimant states should exercise self-restraint by not managing the dispute through megaphone diplomacy. In convincing China to meet on the COC, ASEAN states should assure Beijing that the meeting would be held in a conducive and friendly environment where meaningful discussions can take place. Attempts to exact a pound of diplomatic flesh from China would be detrimental and severely undermine China's faith and interest in moving forward on the COC.

There should be no illusions of a solution to the SCS dispute in the near term. The best that ASEAN states and China could hope to achieve is to prevent the conflict from escalating and to manage expectations. ASEAN and China relations have improved markedly since 1991 when the latter's foreign minister, Mr. Qian Qichen attended the opening session of the 24th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Kuala Lumpur at the invitation of Malaysia. The SCS dispute is a thorny concern in need of urgent attention and management. The COC is an important and vital first step towards the resolution of the dispute. It also contains and limits possible fallout from damaging the strong bilateral political, economic and social ties between ASEAN states and China. Both parties can ill afford to allow the SCS dispute to define their bilateral relations.



*Dr. Tang Siew Mun is Director for Foreign Policy and Security Studies at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia. The views expressed here are his own.*



## 45th ASEAN Day Flag-Raising Ceremony



On 8 August 1967, five countries in Southeast Asia came together to form a regional organisation called the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, in short ASEAN. The founding member countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and The Philippines – were later joined by Brunei, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam between 1984 and 1999.

Since 2005, the anniversary of ASEAN's establishment had been celebrated with a flag-raising ceremony in each of its member country. However, what makes the event extra special this year was that not only was the ASEAN flag raised in the respective countries but everywhere else where there is a diplomatic mission of an ASEAN member country.

The ceremony at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Putrajaya on the morning of 8 August 2012 was simple yet very heart-warming. It was attended by the ambassadors and high commissioners of each of the ASEAN member country, members of the diplomatic corps, parliamentarians, government officials, representatives from universities and teachers and students from various schools around Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

The event commenced with the raising of the ASEAN flag and the ASEAN Song was sung by everyone present accompanied by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Choir Group.

Senator A. Kohilan Pillay, the Deputy Foreign Minister delivered the welcoming remarks on behalf of the Foreign Minister. In his speech,

Senator Kohilan said that this year's theme of *One Community, One Destiny* symbolises ASEAN's determination in heading towards its shared destiny through the ASEAN Community. He also informed the audience that Malaysia will take over the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015 and impressed on the need for everyone to work together to promote awareness on ASEAN.

Immediately after the speech, the ambassadors and high commissioners of each of the ASEAN member country stood side-by-side with their arms linked to represent the unity and close ties among them.

It was a proud day for the ASEAN people as we celebrated our 45th anniversary and move forward to achieve our common goals.



## Baku International Humanitarian Forum

At the gracious invitation of H.E. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijan Government, Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, attended and participated in the Baku International Humanitarian Forum held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 4 to 5 October 2012. IDFR is one of two diplomatic academies, the other being the prestigious Lon-

don Diplomatic Academy, involved in the forum.

The forum, attended by approximately 717 participants from 70 countries, was officially opened by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Ilham Aliyev. In his speech, he focused on the fact that efforts should be put into the development of a multicultural society.

He also mentioned that the Azerbaijani society is tolerant, and will treat with respect and understanding the lifestyle of other nationalities, whether they want to integrate into a single society or prefer to hold on to their traditions and beliefs.

The plenary session, which was held on the first day of the forum, was divided into two parts. Part





One, chaired by H.E. Elmar Mammadyarov, featured ten speeches by former presidents as well as two speeches by representatives of international organisations. Part Two of the plenary session featured eleven speeches by Nobel Laureates as well as presentations by seven respective chairmen of the roundtable discussions, and was chaired by Mr. Mahmud Karimov, President of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Science.

The second day of the forum was allocated for the roundtable discussions which were held at several venues. The topics discussed were *Humanitarian Aspects of Economic Growth Models, Converging Technologies and Outlines of Future, Modern Mass Media and New Challenges, Traditional System of Values in a Post-Modernist Culture, New Methodological Approaches to the Processes of Globalization in the 21st Century, Technologies, Changing a View on Modern Medicine, and Molecular Biology, Multiculturalism and Cultural Self-Consciousness and Multiculturalism in the Life of a Society*.

Not merely a participant, Dato' Ku Jaafar was also elected as co-chairman of the seventh and eighth roundtable discussion on *Multiculturalism and Cultural Self-Consciousness and Multiculturalism in the Life of a Society* respectively.

This session was pivotal in providing a platform for participants to discuss and engage in a more serious manner the possible ways of adopting multiculturalism seamlessly into the Azerbaijan way of life specifically and the world generally. Members of the roundtable discussion agreed that multiculturalism does and can continue to play an integral part in today's society.

In his speech, Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari among others, spoke on the approaches taken by Malaysia to promote cross-cultural understanding within the country. He also expanded on the activities undertaken by IDFR to promote cross-cultural understanding and the efforts being undertaken by ASEAN in achieving its vision of a 'People-Centered' ASEAN Community by 2015. He also stated that Malaysia

would be willing to work with the Azerbaijan Government to promote racial and cultural harmony.

Dato' Ku Jaafar also introduced and clarified the idea of the Global Movement of the Moderates (GMM), first mooted by the Prime Minister, to fight extremism and promote peace through moderation as a way of life for people across the globe. This motion received overwhelming support by the participants of the forum. It was also featured in numerous print and visual media in both Azerbaijan and other countries.

The final Declaration was adopted following the Baku International Humanitarian Forum. The document in particular, urged the public, politicians and scholars to fully support Azerbaijan's initiative to create a special research centre covering world multicultural problems. According to the document also, the comprehensive and multi-level dialogue held within the Baku Forum gave hope to the possibility of an effective resistance to the current challenges of our time.

The Azerbaijan Government's initiative in organising an international forum such as this is commendable as it proved Azerbaijan's seriousness in pursuing a subject matter they feel strongly about. It also marked their arrival in the world arena.





## International Forum on Diplomatic Training: 40th Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academies and School of International Affairs

by Rosmahyuddin Baharuddin

The 40th Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academies and School of International Relations was successfully convened from 26 to 30 September 2012 at the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy (ADA), Baku, Azerbaijan.

The forum was jointly organised by the Vienna Diplomatic Academy, Austria and Georgetown University, United States of America together with the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy (ADA), Azerbaijan. It was officiated by His Excellency Dr. Hafiz Pashayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Azerbaijan and Rector of ADA and this was followed by brief remarks from Dr. Paula Newberg, Director of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Georgetown University.

The 40th forum saw the participation of more than 90 directors and representatives of diplomatic academies from more than 60 countries covering all regions, among them Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Austria, Canada, France, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Malaysia, Qatar, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America. This year's gathering registered an increased number of participants compared to the 39th forum held in Boston, USA in 2011.



The Malaysian delegation was led by IDFR's Director General, Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari. With the theme *Diplomatic Training in the 21st Century: Sharing Experiences and Meeting New Challenges*, the 40th forum discussed issues on diplomatic training, as well as global political issues and its impacts on the design of modules for diplomatic training. The forum was broken down into several panel discussions on various topics namely, diplomacy of small states, energy diplomacy, landscape changes of world politics, evolution of regional organisations and environmental issues. There

were also three parallel optional thematic workshops namely, *eDiplomacy Training – Hype and Reality*, *Content-Based Language Instruction for Diplomats* and *Using Reality in Training for Diplomats in Negotiation*.

During the three-day forum, the participants were also taken on a tour of the Old City of Baku.

The forum was officially closed by His Excellency Dr. Samad Seyidov, Chairman of the Azerbaijan's Parliament Committee on Foreign Policy.





## 13th Asian Bioethics Conference

by Ravichandran Moorthy, Ph.D.

The 13th Asian Bioethics Conference, was held at IDFR from 27 to 30 August 2012. Held concurrently with the 6th UNESCO Asia Pacific School of Ethics Roundtable, this four-day conference witnessed 100 papers being presented by scholars and post-graduate students from over 20 countries from Asia Pacific and beyond.

This conference was jointly organised by the Asia-Pacific Forum on Ethics and Social Justice, a forum dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and understanding of ethics and social justice in the Asia-Pacific and IDFR as its main strategic partner.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, Director General of IDFR in his welcoming remarks highlighted the point that the knowledge regarding bioethical issues, which are very much international in nature, is useful for diplomats and bureaucrats. Diplomats and persons dealing with foreign affairs cannot run away from dealing with issues such as climate change, human security and human rights, which all have bioethical facets in their deliberations.

This bioethics conference is an important and timely initiative to bring to the limelight the multifaceted ethical issues that affect humans and the environment. Bioethics is essentially about ethical controversies involving humans and his environment. Thus, to reflect this focus, this conference adopted the theme *Bioethics and Life: Security, Science and Society* – especially to highlight the broadening of the concept of security in understanding global vulnerabilities.

The conference was officiated by Prof. Tan Sri Dato' Wira Dr. Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hasan Shahabudin, Vice Chancellor of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. In her opening remarks, Tan Sri Sharifah Hapsah said that the peril of climate change has very much to do with hu-

man actions and 'way of life'. Over the last century, with the rapid advent of science and technology, almost all aspects of human endeavour have experienced some level of changes. Consumerism, consumption, population explosion and changes in life-style and life choices have brought about many challenges to human, humanity and the environment.

These new developments have brought about new ethical challenges to how we manage issues related to, among others: health, disease and medical ethics; research integrity and responsibility; emerging technologies; women and gender; environmental ethics and sustainability; and bioethics education. As such, she proposed that such 'human-induced' problems require 'ethical reasoning' in its mitigation efforts. This is where bioethicists can play significant roles to provide moral and ethical guidance in policy formulation and societal awareness.

Bioethics is a recent phenomenon in Malaysia. Less than a decade ago, except for medical sciences, most academics and the public in Malaysia were almost oblivious of the

concept of bioethics. Although the questions of ethics were addressed in numerous other platforms, there was not any authoritative platform to address bioethical issues. Malaysian bioethics is still in its infancy, we do not have specific standards or sets of values to subscribe to.

The ethno-religious plurality of the Malaysian society, while offering an interesting myriad of colourful demeanour, also offers multiple sets of value-systems that sometimes come in contention with each other. Such a situation may prove to be an arduous task for the development of national bioethics culture or standards. This eventually will be the major challenge for the newly established National Bioethics Council to address.

In his concluding speech, Dr. Ravichandran Moorthy, the Organising Chairperson and the President of Asia Pacific Forum on Ethics and Social Justice said that the conference has fostered bioethical reflections and facilitated information sharing amongst stakeholders involved in multidisciplinary field of bioethics, and has helped to demystify some of the issues that have often been considered sensitive.





## Official Opening of the IDFR-UKM Master of Social Science (Strategy and Diplomacy) Session 2012/2013

Ambassador Aminahtun Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR officiated the Opening of the IDFR-UKM Master of Social Science (Strategy and Diplomacy) Session 2012/2013 on 4 September 2012 at the IDFR mini theatre. The programme which consists of three semesters, will run from 4 September 2012 to 1 September 2013.

In her speech, Ambassador Aminah-tun encouraged the students to grab this golden opportunity and develop not only their potential but also the net-working amongst them. Their varied background could contribute towards wider exchange of ideas and views thereby enriching and strengthening the substantive aspect of the course. She also reminded them to consider themselves as part of the IDFR family



and to participate actively in the institute's activities. They will also have direct access to prominent speakers and experts in different fields when they participate in IDFR's roundtable discussions, forums and public lectures.

Commander Farizal Myeor from the Royal Malaysian Navy and Ms. Sharifa Barki Juma from Tanzania were elected as Class President and

Vice President respectively. Both were given the trust to facilitate and ensure the smooth sailing of this programme. Fourteen students registered for the programme comprising seven Malaysians and seven international students. The international students are from Ghana, Jordan, Maldives, Somalia and Tanzania. Their academic background ranges from international relations, strategy and defence, political science, economics, engineering to business management.

The students also underwent a one-week orientation programme at IDFR and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia respectively before starting their lectures. All of them conveyed their excitement at being chosen to be part of IDFR, a renowned diplomatic training institute.

## Orientation Course for Spouses of Malaysian Diplomats

IDFR successfully organised the newly introduced Orientation Course for Spouses of Malaysian Diplomats from September to December 2012. The course was designed specifically for the spouses of Malaysian Diplomats as well as for members of the Ladies Association of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia (PERWAKILAN).

The main objective of the course was to prepare the spouses for their roles and responsibilities while accompanying their respective spouses abroad. The course content was planned based on discussions with Datin Sri Siti Rubiah Abdul Samad, Patron of PERWAKILAN and wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Puan Sri Jazliza Jalaluddin, President of PERWAKILAN, Dato' Rohana Ramli, Deputy Secretary General of Service Management of the Ministry and Ambassador Aminahtun Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR.

The scheduled seven series course began on 5 September 2012. The first series was on *Perks and Privileges* delivered by Dato' Nor'Aini Abd Hamid, Chief of Inspectorate from the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs and *Royal Protocol* delivered by Encik Omar Baba, a protocol consultant. The second series which was held on 19 September 2012, focused on the topic *Emotion and Stress Management* and *Reception and Official Entertaining* delivered by Puan Shahreen Kamaluddin, Managing Director Shahreen Corporate Communications.

The third series of the course was held on 10 October 2012 on the topic *Communication Skills* presented by Ms. Jackie Clarke, Senior Teacher, Professional Development Unit, British Council Malaysia. The fourth series on *Cooking Demonstration and Practicum* was organised on 24 October 2012, where Encik Mohd Zain Kutut, Lecturer from the Faculty of Food Service Management, Department of Culinary and Gastronomy, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) conducted the practical session.

Subsequently, on 31 October 2012, the fifth series on *English Language and Public Speaking* was conducted by Madam Joyce Abraham, English Language Teacher from IDFR. The

sixth series which was on *Official Writing Skills and Meeting Management* was presented by Dr. Abdul Rahim Said, Consultant, Rahimsaid Consulting Services on 7 November 2012. On 28 November 2012, the seventh series on *Grooming and Reception and Official Entertaining (Practicum)* was conducted by Puan Rahimah Yeop, Director of Academic Studies, Research and Publication, IDFR.

The last series for the course was held on 20 December 2012 where Dr. Abdul Rahim Said delivered a lecture on *Teamwork and Leadership*. Puan Sri Jazliza Jalaluddin, President of PERWAKILAN concluded the course where she was invited to deliver a talk on *The Role of Spouse* to the participants.

The closing ceremony and certificate presentation was held at the VIP Dining Room over luncheon. The participants were delighted with the overall implementation and organisation of the course. They also further expressed their interest to participate in future programmes tailored specifically for the spouses.



## Strategic Negotiations for the Joint Ministerial Committee for Iskandar Malaysia (JMCIM-IRDA)

At the request of the Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA), IDFR successfully organised the first Strategic Negotiations for the Joint Ministerial Committee for Iskandar Malaysia (JMCIM-IRDA) course from 3 to 4 September 2012.

Participants of the said course were led by Dato' Benjamin Hasbie, Federal Commissioner of IRDA. In total, 59 participants attended the course ranging from the immigration, transport, environment, tourism, iconic project and industrial cooperation working groups committee. The objective outlined for the course was to develop knowledge and understanding concerning issues pertaining to Malaysia and Singapore in the context of negotiations. The aim was to establish positive collaboration between Iskandar Malaysia and Singapore so as to increase the investments in Iskandar Malaysia through various sectors.

The two-day course saw lectures by prominent and distinguished speakers. Among them were Professor Dr. K.S. Nathan, Director of the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) who spoke on Malaysia-Singapore relations in



the context of regionalism and Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi Abdul Razak, Secretary General of the World Islamic Economic Forum Foundation (WIEF) and former Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia who shared his experience as a diplomat. IDFR also arranged lectures on topics such as *International Negotiations* delivered by Puan Rahimah Yeop of IDFR, *Malaysia-Singapore Future Challenges* delivered by Mr. Steven CM Wong of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) and *Economic Relations* delivered by Dr. Sufian Jusoh of the World Trade Institute Consulting Malaysia (WTI). The final lecture of the

course was delivered by His Excellency Dato' Md. Hussain Nayan, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Singapore. The High Commissioner shared some valuable thoughts and insights on substantive issues related to Malaysia-Singapore bilateral relations.

In general, the participants were pleased with the course and further expressed their positive comments concerning the knowledge, exposure and benefits that they had gained. IRDA had also expressed their interest and hope that IDFR will continue to organise such courses in future.

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by 2015 which consist of changes in the thinking of the governments and also bureaucrats which are accustomed to think nationally rather than regionally. Next, there needs to be a change from the 'Power to the Government' mindset to a 'Power to the People' mindset and the government must encourage active and meaningful bottom-up participation from the stakeholders in the ASEAN decision-making process. Lastly, the Deputy Foreign Minister highlighted that ASEAN must create a sense of belonging amongst its people where ASEAN should move beyond the vision of a 'People-Oriented ASEAN' to a bolder 'People-Centred ASEAN',

which will be one of the key planks of Malaysia's Chairmanship in 2015.

A panel discussion on the same topic was held. Prof. Ruhanas Harun from Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia (UPNM) moderated the session. The panelists were YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin ibni Tuanku Muhriz, Founding President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS); Ambassador Dato' M. Redzuan Kushairi, Deputy Chairman of Foreign Policy Study Group (FPSG); Prof. Dr. K.S. Nathan, Director, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Mr. Bunn Nagara, Associ-

ate Editor of The Star Publication. All panelists gave fresh insights into the overview of ASEAN today, the arguments on whether ASEAN is a people-centered organisation, important relations between government and the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) and three areas that needed to be focused on by the leaders which are the economic dynamics of the region, stability in member states and between countries as well as national interest.

The forum ended with closing remarks delivered by Prof. Dato' Dr. Abdullah Mohamad Said, Acting Vice-Chancellor of UiTM.



## Strategic Analysis 2012 Course Ends on a High Note



The closing ceremony for the Strategic Analysis 2012 course was held at IDFR's VIP Dining Room on 21 September 2012. The three-week course, which began on 3 September 2012, was officially closed by Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General of IDFR. The 27 participants comprised of government officers and diplomats from 17 countries in the African, American, European and Asia continents. The countries represented were Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Cambodia, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

The closing ceremony saw participants receiving their certificates from Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari and was later feted to a sumptuous high-tea reception in true Malaysian hospitality style. The event was made even more unforgettable when the participants surprised everyone present by individually saying "thank you" in their mother tongue! The course participants remarked that although they were excited at the prospect of going back to their home countries, they were sad to leave after a memorable three-week stay at IDFR.

The course was conducted in partnership and with the support of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP). It was specially designed to enhance participants'

knowledge of strategic thinking and security analysis as well as to provide a platform for the sharing and exchanging of views on strategic thinking and management. The three-week course adopted an integrated teaching and learning method in which participants learnt through lectures, discussions, simulation exercises, briefings as well as through contextual visits.

Among the issues discussed during the course were national and international security, diplomacy in the 21st century, and discourse of strategy, strategic planning and thinking as well as the Malaysian Government's Transformation Programme (GTP). As no play makes Jack a dull boy, contextual visits were also organised for the participants to have first-hand experi-

ence of what Malaysia has to offer in terms of infrastructure, culture, recreation and also food. Among the places of interest visited were the PETRONAS Twin Towers, National Monument, National Mosque, Central Market, Petaling Street, Dataran Merdeka, Batu Caves, Genting Highlands, Malaysia Tourism Centre (MaTic) and the Kuala Lumpur Craft Centre.

This year's participants were very fortunate to be given the opportunity to visit the state of Johor and Malacca for their state visit. During the visit to the state of Johor, the participants were received by officers from the Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA) who gave a detailed tour around Nusajaya. Meanwhile, the visit to the state of Malacca will forever be etched in the memories of the participants as they were greeted by the Chief Minister of Malacca, Datuk Seri Haji Mohd Ali Mohd Rustam. The Malacca State Government was very kind to arrange an array of activities for the participants in Malacca such as cruising along the Malacca River, experiencing rickshaw rides to Jonker Walk as well as going up the Taming Sari revolving tower! It was indeed a memorable trip and not forgetting the variety of food the participants tasted throughout the course such as *satay*, *cendol durian*, fried *kuetiau*, *nasi lemak*, *roti canai* and *teh tarik*.





## International Relations Module for the Participants of Diploma in Public Management (DPA) 1/2012

IDFR and the National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN) jointly organised the International Relations Module for the Diploma in Public Management (DPA) 1/2012 from 1 to 4 October 2012 and from 5 to 8 November 2012. The module was attended by 150 officers from *Sidang C and D* and 149 officers from *Sidang A and B* respectively.

The objective of the module was to develop the participants' knowledge and understanding of the concept of diplomacy and international relations and to provide an overview of the roles and functions of Malaysian diplomats as well as to enhance knowledge concerning Malaysia's position on international issues, particularly ASEAN.

The module included lectures on *Malaysia's Foreign Policy*, *the Vienna Convention and Consular Relations*, *Malaysia's Role in the Creation of ASEAN Community in 2015* and *Malaysia's Position on Counter*



*Terrorism*. The participants were also given the opportunity to learn the tools of diplomacy such as international negotiation and English language and diplomacy from IDFR's experts. Mr. Jeffery D. Rathke, the Public Affairs Counsellor from the Embassy of the United States of America in Kuala Lumpur was also invited to share his views on *Diplomats in the 21st Century* with the participants.

The participants were also required to do a group project presentation on topics such as *the Global Movement of the Moderates*, *Challenges in the Middle East*, *Islamic Diplomacy in the Current World Situation*, *South China Sea and Spratly Issues*, *the Emergence of China as Economic Powerhouse*, *North Korean Nuclear Crisis* and *Malaysia's Role Towards ASEAN Community 2015*.

## Specialised Diplomatic Training Course for Libyan Diplomatic Officers



IDFR successfully concluded a specialised Diplomatic Training Course for Libyan Diplomatic Officers which was held from 10 to 21 September 2012. The specialised training on diplomacy was the culmination of a series of meetings and discussions between the institute and the Libyan government through its diplomatic mission here. The Libyan government

Malaysia as its close partner in the region which could provide the necessary assistance in rebuilding the new government in Libya.

A total of 16 Libyan diplomatic officers attended the two-week course which included topics such as *International Negotiation*, *Cross Cultural Communication*, *Overview of Public*

was represented at the meetings by its ambassador, His Excellency Dr. Bubaker Al-Manzori, who was very keen and enthusiastic to have the Libyan diplomats trained at IDFR. According to the ambassador, the Libyan government looked up to

*Diplomacy and Multilateral Diplomacy*. The participants also attended a public lecture on *the Global Movement of Moderates* by Tan Sri Razali Ismail, Chairman of the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation and a dinner talk on *Diplomacy in the 21st Century* by Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General of IDFR. They were also taken on a study visit to Malacca and Johor and visits to the Petronas Twin Towers and the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE).

Overall, the Libyan diplomatic officers unanimously expressed their satisfaction and gratitude for being given the opportunity to benefit from attending the course and the chance to visit Malaysia and experience the various sights and sounds of a stable, progressive and multicultural society.



## 13th Asian Bioethics Conference





## ASEAN Anniversary Forum 2012





## International Forum on Diplomatic Training: 40th Meeting of Deans and Directors of Diplomatic Academies and School of International Affairs



## Courses and Events









## Ramadan and Syawal Celebration





## Diploma in Diplomacy Graduation Ceremony





## Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants Series 2/2012

It was a joyous and momentous occasion for the 24 international participants who completed the Diplomatic Training Course (DTC) for International Participants Series 2/2012 at the Certificate Presentation and Closing Ceremony at IDFR on 19 October 2012. The ceremony was officiated by Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General of IDFR and attended by several ambassadors, high commissioners and representatives from the represented embassies and high commissions.

The course which was the second series for the year was conducted under the sponsorship of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) which provides assistance to developing countries. The participants came from Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Jordan, Lao PDR, Liberia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Oman, Pakis-

tan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Yemen.

The modules were tailored to meet the standard and requirement of preparing young officers from the diplomatic corps to face challenges in a fast moving global scenario. However, the course was designed to not only impart knowledge in a classroom-style setting but it also involved study visits to the various government agencies and ministries around Kuala Lumpur and also Putrajaya. The participants were also taken to Malacca and Johor where they were briefed on Malacca's tourism industry and the Iskandar Regional Development Authority (IRDA) respectively. The participants were amazed by the tremendous growth and development that Malaysia has undergone since its independence in 1957.

During the ceremony, the diplomatic officers expressed their thanks for the opportunity given to them to attend the course where they had gained valuable knowledge and were able to share experiences with each other and the guest speakers.

They were also grateful that the course had made them better prepared for their future endeavour in the diplomatic arena.



## Mid-Career Course for Diplomats

The Mid-Career Course for Diplomats was held at IDFR from 10 to 21 September 2012. Eight selected officers from several divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia attended the course.

In line with the objectives of improving the officers' professional knowledge and diplomatic skills and revisiting some of the important areas related to diplomatic services as well as enhancing their leadership, communication and effective management skills, IDFR had tailored modules which covered among others issues concerning the Ministry such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Strategic Plan and Key Performance Indicator. Modules which dealt with skills in diplomacy such as International Negotiations, Language and Diplomacy, Presentation and Communication Skills as well as Speech Writing were also organised.



IDFR also invited distinguished speakers to deliver talks on current important topics such as *ASEAN Future Challenges and its Dialogue Partners*, *Global Movement of Moderates*, *Public Diplomacy*, *Middle East Crisis*, *Human Rights*, *Role of Civil Society*, *Human Trafficking*, *Maritime Diplomacy* and *Malaysia as an International Islamic Financial Centre*.

The modules highlighted in this programme focused more on the development of knowledge so as to ensure that the officers will be well-equipped and polished to a certain extent. The participants were delighted and had expressed their appreciation to IDFR for the efficient management and organisation of the course.



## Ramadan and Syawal Celebration



IDFR takes pride in creating a harmonious and balanced environment for its course participants and staff. This includes celebrating and rejoicing in year-round ethnic and religious celebrations. In conjunction with the holy month of Ramadhan and blissful Syawal, the Welfare Club had arranged several activities as part of its Ihya' Ramadan and Syawal celebration.

The group recital of the Koran or *Tadarus Al-Quran* was held daily throughout Ramadan and the participants were divided into two groups – the males were led by Ustaz Hassan Mohd Ali, our own Arabic language officer while the females were led by Ustazah Sakdiah Mohamed Nusi from the Federal Territory Islamic Division followed by *Zuhur* congregational prayer.

Also held were two religious lecture sessions where IDFR was fortunate to host Al-Fadhil Ustaz Hazaruddin Baharuddin, Grand Imam of the Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin Mosque, Putrajaya on 26 July 2012 and Mr. Zarizal Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission on 2 August 2012. Al-Fadhil Ustaz Hazaruddin focused on matters of *amal*, *nafsu*, *tarawikh*, Al-Quran and *lailatul*

*qadar* while Encik Zarizal zoomed into the topics of Islam, integrity and diplomacy where he reminded everyone that integrity is about doing what is required and avoiding actions which are prohibited in one's daily life and work.

Taking into account that we had some international participants who were away from home during Ramadan, an *iftar* or breaking of fast was organised on 13 August 2012 with the assistance of the DiD participants. The event, which was a mini feast with sumptuous home-cooked food was enjoyed by all in the warm company of colleagues and friends, thus strengthening the brotherhood spirit. The night ended with *Isya'* and *tarawih* congregational prayers.

The highlight of the month-long celebration was a joyous Aidilfitri celebration held on 6 September 2012. IDFR delightedly shared the joy with children from MyKasih Foundation and their chaperones, guests from the Ministry, members of the diplomatic corps, collaborators, vendors and staff of the institute. International participants who were attending the Strategic Analysis Course for International Participants

and the Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy were also introduced to the local way of celebrating Aidilfitri through the event.

Dato' Ku Jaafar expressed IDFR's warm welcome and pleasure at having the privilege of celebrating Aidilfitri with the children from MyKasih Foundation, a non-profit organisation that provides food aid, health awareness and financial literacy programmes, children's education and skills training programmes to less fortunate Malaysians. He acknowledged the diplomatic corps, collaborators and vendors for their continuous support to the institute. He also expressed his wish that the harmonious and forgiving manner during Aidilfitri be observed all year round as it will lead to a conducive working environment.

The children each received *duit raya* presented by Dato' Ku Jaafar and Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, the Deputy Director General. The event, which was also part of IDFR's corporate social responsibility activity invoked humility and realisation of the importance of sharing and caring about others, especially the unfortunate ones. IDFR will continue to enhance the spiritual aspects of the working and training environment as this is in line with the core values of IDFR.





## Cultural Diplomacy

Browse through the 'Now playing' section in a local newspaper and chances are more than half of the movies in the list are Hollywood movies. Whether we like it or not, we have to admit that the Americans have been successful in getting across whatever message or value that they wanted to portray through movies. Hollywood is not just part of the American entertainment industry but it is also part of the American culture. The Hollywood example is a testament of how powerful culture is as a tool for communication.

Expanding the idea further, culture is also a product that could be utilised in the conduct of diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy, according to an American political scientist, Dr. Milton C. Cummings, is defined as "the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems traditions, beliefs and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding". To put it in a more straightforward manner, cultural diplomacy is the facilitation and exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture



or identity in promoting national interests, building relationships or enhancing socio-cultural understanding.

The DiD participants had the chance to experience a part of culture when they participated in the cultural diplomacy module held at Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA) from 3 to 7 September 2012. Throughout the five-day module, they were given a glimpse of the Malaysian culture, which included a wide variety of traditional and modern dances, songs, theatre performances, and contemporary visual art which provided

them with a better understanding and appreciation of its concept, theory and history. They were also given the opportunity to partake in the practice of various forms of traditional and contemporary art.

At the end of the five days, the participants were treated to a tasty *Hari Raya* spread at the National Visual Arts Gallery's Aidilfitri Open House. Also held at the Gallery that day was the launch of the *Kuasa, Harapan dan Tanah* (Power, Hope and Land) exhibition, which was officiated by its Director General, Ambassador Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad.

## Module on Defending National Interests

The Defending National Interests module was one of the main highlights of the DiD programme. From 6 to 10 August 2012, the 24 DiD participants underwent the module which was essentially a press conference simulation exercise. The module put together into practice many aspects that the participants learned in the programme such as media and presentation skills. The participants' English language proficiency was also put to test throughout the module.

The participants were assigned topics covering a wide range of domestic and international issues such as racial integration, ASEAN and future challenges and the



Global Movement of the Moderates (GMM). Each participant had

to deliver his or her respective presentation and was required to respond to questions from the floor and evaluators comprising senior officials from the institute and the Ministry. The participants were assessed based on a number of criteria including knowledge on the subject given, ability to remain calm under stressful situation, analytical thinking and stewardship in presentation.

The participants also did several group activities to reflect on the presentations made. They identified key points and discussed ways to improve their presentations, drawing from respective presenters' strengths and weaknesses.



## Talk by H.E. Ambassador Datuk Paul W. Jones on Malaysia-US Bilateral Relations

His Excellency Datuk Paul W. Jones, the Ambassador of the United States of America to Malaysia, was at IDFR on 17 August 2012 to deliver a talk on Malaysia-US Bilateral Relations to the DiD participants. Also present at the talk was Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR, Mr. Lim Juay Jin, Director of Training and several IDFR officers.

In his talk, His Excellency Datuk Jones encouraged the junior diplomats to explore and broaden their knowledge and go beyond the comfort of their desks. He advised them that knowledge and information are important tools which diplomats need to possess in order to have a better understanding of global issues rather than relying solely on speaking notes.

He also spoke on the warm, close and dynamic Malaysia-US bilateral relations, which is not limited to politics, security and trade but also social cooperation in fields such as student exchange programmes



and English education assistance. During the question and answer session, His Excellency Datuk Jones was very open, frank and informative in discussing issues pertaining to the United States' involvement in the South China Sea and its presence in The Philippines, its special relationship with Israel which is a contrast to not doing enough for Palestine, its expectations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the ineffective roles of the P5 and the future of expanding P5's membership

as well as the US Presidential election, among others.

The talk ended with appreciation remarks from Ambassador Aminah followed by a memento presentation to His Excellency Datuk Jones.

The talk was certainly a breath of fresh air for the DiD participants in further understanding Malaysia-US bilateral relations which is not only useful for them but also important for their future undertakings.

## Diploma in Diplomacy 2012 Graduation Ceremony

by Hanizah Mohd Izzuddin

"I hope your dreams take you... to the corners of your smiles, to the highest of your hopes, to the windows of your opportunities, and to the most special places your heart has ever known..." - Anonymous

It was for one night, one night only where the 24 of us celebrated the end of our six-month journey at the completion of the Diploma in Diplomacy course. In a class of our own, with our colourful background and personalities, we were the class of 2012.

The night commenced with the Master of Ceremony, Ms. Nadhirah Zainuddin, addressing the floor and welcoming all guests to the Graduation Ceremony for the Diploma in Diplomacy 2012 at the

Multipurpose Hall. This was followed by a *doa* recitation by Mr. Al-Hafiz and a welcoming speech by Tan Sri Mohd. Radzi Abdul Rahman, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia.

In his speech, Tan Sri Mohd. Radzi expressed that a diplomat's ability to multitask, to collaborate with his colleagues, to persevere and to prioritise, is proof of one's passion and commitment towards the foreign service. He went on to say that diplomats not only need to have broad and deep knowledge of people and countries, but also understand and be sensitive to their norms, cultures and values. Over and above that, he said, the sharing of experiences is pertinent in seeking a common ground and

mutual respect. These are among the traits that the Secretary General expects from Malaysian diplomats in ensuring that they would be able to manage Malaysia's foreign relations effectively.

The Foreign Minister, Dato' Sri Anifah Aman in his speech cautioned the graduates that there is a mammoth task ahead of them and he beseeched them to give their level best and their fullest support and commitment to the Ministry. He is confident that they would be able to execute their duties with vigour and integrity towards protecting and furthering Malaysia's national interests. He encouraged the officers to practise lifelong learning and welcomed their thoughts and ideas to improve the Ministry's performance.

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The class president, Mr. Wan Mohd Afeek Afifi Wan Ali then took the floor to warmly welcome everyone and briefly informed that the graduates comprised of Malaysians and international participants from Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Laos, Namibia, Qatar, Ukraine, United States of America and Uzbekistan. Mr. Afeek also enthusiastically highlighted the astounding activities and modules undertaken by the graduates throughout the course.

During dinner, a slide presentation on the activities which took place throughout the course was shown accompanied by a performance by musicians from ASWARA. Guests were later entertained by the graduates with traditional dances of *Endang*, *Alu-Alu* and *Daling-Daling* and songs such as *Tanah Pusaka*, *Someone Like You*, *Nobody Knows*, *One Moment in Time* and *1Malaysia*. The graduates also performed Arabic, French, Mandarin and Spanish songs.

Senator A. Kohilan Pillay, the Deputy Foreign Minister, presented the diplomas and certificates to the graduates. He then presented the



Best Student (Overall) award to Mr. Wan Mohd Afeek Afifi Wan Ali, the Best Student (Leadership) award to Ms. Nurhezazzila Ghazali and the Best Student (Speech Writing) award to Ms. Mimi Kaur Ramday. Senator A. Kohilan also presented the best speaker awards for the UNSC Simulation Module to Ms. Hanizah Mohd Izzuddin, Mr. Brock Fox, Mr. Mohammad Azmi Sukiang and Ms. Rosfazidah Razi.

It was indeed a memorable night for the DiD graduates who spent countless hours preparing for the graduation ceremony. Our journey did not stop there. In fact, a new

chapter has begun for us to embark on, armed with the knowledge and experience gained in preparing ourselves for the uncertainties in the future. We will strive for the best, not only to fulfil our responsibilities as officers in the Malaysian Foreign Service, but also to materialise our dreams.

"To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe", as said by Anatole France, Nobel Prize winner for Literature in 1921 is the best line of aspiration for hopefully many great things to come from the DiD graduates.

## Talk on Communication by Dato' Yasmin Yusuff



On 29 August 2012, the participants of the Diploma in Diplomacy 2012 were fortunate to have Dato' Yasmin Yusuff, a prominent public figure in the communication field as a guest speaker. The well-known emcee, actress, radio deejay, owner of a talent and casting company and

former Miss Malaysia was willing to share her experiences, thoughts and knowledge specifically on communication with the junior diplomats.

The session aimed to equip the participants with the necessary knowledge and skills on communication which are crucial in shaping a well-rounded diplomat and to facilitate the participants in their responsibilities especially in the international arena. The refreshing and lively session explored various areas of communication namely, types of communication, the importance of lifelong learning, the necessity to be a principled person, the importance of practising good values especially

honesty and the influence of culture in communication. Dato' Yasmin Yusuff elaborated on the topics by associating her work life experiences and sharing her vast experiences in dealing with foreigners and working abroad which would be useful and beneficial for the participants in their future undertakings.

At the end of the session, the participants expressed their appreciation to Dato' Yasmin Yusuff on her willingness to share her extensive experience. The session which was held in a laid-back and interactive manner was not only enjoyable and invaluable but also provided a different perspective on communication.



## Cherished Moments of DiD 2012

by Mimi Kaur Ramday

It has been more than two months since the DiD 2012 graduates shared their fifteen minutes of fame with proud family members, superiors and colleagues. The first few weeks after the course was very hectic. It was spent familiarising with a new division or department, adjusting to new colleagues and work culture, and going back to the routine morning drive to work. It has also been difficult to revisit the days of eating take-a-way food as opposed to the sumptuous food served at IDFR's dining hall. Absence does make the heart grow fonder!

It all started on 14 April 2012 as 24 officers registered at IDFR for the six-month DiD programme. The batch comprised 17 officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and one officer each from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Plantation and Commodities, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Ministry of Defence and National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN). It was an unforgettable first day filled with getting-to-know-you sessions in between briefings of the do's and the don'ts at the institute. Though happy to be away from work, we were resigned to the fact that we were students once more and were actually quite anxious of the new life that awaited us.

This was especially true when we were informed that we had to pack and leave for a teambuilding cum camping session at a secret location in Janda Baik on the third day. On that eventful day, we trekked for half an hour, expecting the worse and finally arrived at a beautiful and serene site called Puncak Rimba. The term 'camping' was really an overstatement as we were provided with a thermal blanket and duck feather pillows in our individual tents!

In retrospect, this could actually be a classic example of unity in adversity.



For three days, we obediently followed all instructions and shared our varied points of view. We had fun getting to know each other, albeit through the unconventional way, and became mentally drained completing the activities. In the process, we started bonding and trusting each other. As fittingly described in the words I found on the internet, "in life you will realise that there is a purpose for everyone you meet. Some will test you, some will use you, and some will teach you. But most important are the ones that bring out the best in you. Those are the ones worth keeping". Looking back, I must say that the activities conducted revealed the many colourful sides of us all. It especially opened up a new way of looking at things we often took for granted and reinforced, for me at least, the fact that old habits do die hard!

The following months saw us undergoing an integrated teaching and learning method in which we learnt through lectures, discussions, simulation exercises, briefings as well as contextual visits and attachment programmes. Among the key issues covered during the programme were on Malaysia's domestic and foreign policies, national and international issues and the many facets of diplomacy. The importance of the English language as an effective diplomatic tool was also emphasised by making it a major component of the programme. Arabic, French, Man-

darin and Spanish were also offered to give us basic communicative competence.

The Language Division is to be commended for implementing the *Floor is Yours* sessions, weekly journal writing and literary appreciation week as creative methods to improve our English language proficiency. Meanwhile, the learning of the foreign languages was also made extra special and memorable when we hosted lunch for the institute's staff. During the memorable event, food from the Middle East (*Nasi Arab*), China (*Crab Meat Soup*), France (*Gratin Dauphinois*) and Mexico (*Quesadillas*) were served, painstakingly prepared from scratch by us under the skilful guidance of our respective language teachers. Therefore, we not only learn the language but were also exposed to the socio-cultural aspects of the language through the country's food, music and cultural heritage.

IDFR also provided us with opportunities to personally meet distinguished personalities who shared their valuable knowledge and experience. Among them were His Royal Highness Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah Ibni Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah, the Royal Patron of IDFR; YAM Tunku Dara Tunku Tan Sri Naquiah Ibni Tuanku Ja'afar, an expert on social etiquette; and YAM Tunku Zain Al-Abidin ibni Muhriz, President of the Institute for Democracy and Eco-

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nomic Affairs (IDEAS) Malaysia. Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's former Prime Minister, Tun Mohd Khalil Yaakob, Governor of the state of Malacca, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, the Secretary General of ASEAN, H.E. Dato' Paul Wayne Jones, U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia, H.E. Ong Keng Yong, High Commissioner of Singapore to Malaysia and former Malaysian diplomats, among them Tan Sri Razali Ismail, Tan Sri Hasmy Agam, Tan Sri Hamidon Ali, Datin Paduka Melanie Leong and Dato' Lily Zachariah. A tea talk event with Tan Sri Mohd Radzi Abdul Rahman, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was also organised to enable him to share his views and aspirations of future diplomats. Occasionally, there were also sessions with senior officers from the Ministry who shared tips on the workings of a particular department or division.

The programme was indeed a good platform to excel as we learnt only from the best. IDFR managed to engage subject matter experts to interact with us. These include experts from the international circle such as Prof. Paul Meerts (negotiation), Mr. Brian Cracknell (public speaking), Dr. Alistair King (grammar), Mr. Simon Lancaster (speech writing), Mr. Kamal Malhotra (United Nations Development Programme) and Mr. Paul Alan Vernon (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). In addition, home grown experts engaged were Dato'

Mahadzir Lokman (public speaking), Ivy Josiah (human rights), Dato' Yasmin Yusuff (communication), Puan Rozanah Ibrahim (language) and others. As icing on the cake, IDFR also managed to secure Prof. Emeritus Datuk Dr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, Science Advisor to the Prime Minister, who aptly shared with us on the topic of science diplomacy.

Words cannot fully describe the gratitude we felt to the institute for giving us this priceless chance of a lifetime. In a matter of six months, we were exposed to a variety of issues and learnt twice as much as when we were at the Ministry. During the programme, there were many modules worth mentioning but the significant ones that left a significant impact were the Defending National Interest, United Nations Security Council simulation exercise, Regional and International Affairs Module and definitely the Parliament attachment with Members of Parliament and the Mission Attachment programme with the Embassy of Malaysia in Thailand and Indonesia. In addition, various contextual visits were also arranged to the state of Malacca, Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre (MPTC), National Visual Art Gallery, Akademi Seni Negara (ASWARA), Malaysia External Trade Development (MATRADE), NKRA Corruption Monitoring and Coordination Division, Malaysia Tourism Centre (MaTiC) and Karyaneka. Apart from these, we were privileged to be in-

vited by the American Embassy in Kuala Lumpur for a study visit to the United States' Carrier Strike USS George Washington CVN-73.

The three-day visit to the state of Malacca was filled with various activities such as courtesy calls, official briefings and visits to places of interest in Malacca. The one week attachment programme with the Parliament of Malaysia was spent observing the parliamentary sitting and spending time at the respective parliamentary constituencies with the assigned Members of Parliament. In retrospect, the week-long attachment programme with the embassies in Thailand and Indonesia gave us a greater understanding of the role and function of Malaysian missions. These visits and attachment programmes attested to the fact that learning opportunities and knowledge sharing do exist even in places one would least expect. After undergoing all these modules, we discovered newfound respect for the two ASEAN member states, as well as our homegrown state leaders and MPs, for they too are diplomats in their own special way.

In short, the time spent at IDFR was optimised to give maximum impact to ensure that we become better





diplomatic officers after graduating from the programme. Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General also instilled in us the values of respecting others, taking responsibilities and being humble. These values often manifested in the various non-academic programmes organised during the course of the programme. Among them were a barbeque dinner, a badminton tournament, a friendly futsal match, a breaking of fast and community service at the Elephant Sanctuary at Kuala Gandah. Realising that charity always begins at home, we always made it a point to celebrate birthdays of fellow participants, the institute's senior officers as well as Teachers' Day. Mr. Lim Juay Jin, the Director of Training, was equally overwhelmed when participants visited him at his office bearing a gift for his newborn son!

The journey we went through together was full of memories; the good, the funny and the bad. We had our share of joy and laughter, overcame our differences and endured difficult times. We admired and respected each other's capabilities and yet accepted the fact that no one is born perfect. We grew and matured together as unique individuals as much as we stand collected as a group. As luck and fate would have it, all good things must come to an end so that we would appreciate the value of togetherness. Words



could not possibly describe all the beautiful and memorable moments we shared or even the many waking hours we were together in E209, our classroom.

We cannot possibly remember vividly all the memories we have shared. It would not be easy to recollect the journey that we have gone through in the duration. Neither would it be possible to name each and every one who had come and left a mark in our lives. One thing for sure, we will be forever indebted to the esteemed institute, the charismatic management team and its hardworking officers for moulding us to be the officers we are today. Nothing can compare to the sad feeling that came with saying goodbye to the Institute and bidding *adieu* to senior officers

who dedicatedly guided us through the unforgettable and remarkable journey. What more to leave newfound friends who are now part of our lives...

As we head out and look forward to our different journeys in life, we take comfort that this is not goodbye because we will surely meet again. Until we meet again...

May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be always at  
your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon  
your face,  
The rains fall soft upon your fields  
And until we meet again  
May God hold you in the hollow of  
His hand.

## Roundtable Conference on Malaysia-Cambodia/Laos/Myanmar Relations towards Strengthening ASEAN Through Multi-Channel Dialogue

A two-day roundtable conference on Malaysia-Cambodia/Laos/Myanmar Relations towards Strengthening ASEAN through Multi-channel Dialogue was held by the Foreign Policy Study Group (FPSG) in collaboration with IDFR and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) from 27 to 28 August 2012. Continuing the success

of previous conferences organised concerning ASEAN matters, this conference successfully assembled distinguished speakers and participants from government agencies, NGOs, universities, diplomatic corps and talented and budding youths, who generated in-depth knowledge sharing from the multilateral per-

spectives of Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar.

The roundtable conference commenced with an Opening Remarks by Tan Sri Razali Ismail, Chairman of FPSG and Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, IDFR's Deputy Director General. Ambassador Aminah

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commended FPSG's continuous effort in engaging ASEAN issues continuing from the previous roundtable conference on Malaysia-Indonesia/Thailand/ Vietnam Relations towards Strengthening ASEAN Regionalism-ASEAN: The Way Forward also held at IDFR in March of this year.

Ambassador Aminahtun acknowledged the timely convening of this roundtable for Malaysia as it would contribute to Malaysia preparing for its Chairmanship in 2015, where ASEAN is set to attain the ASEAN Community 2015. ASEAN in 2015 is expected to be able to pool together the sovereignty and development of the member countries which is in line with one of Malaysia's Chairmanship aims in 2015 – to create not just 'People-Oriented ASEAN' but 'People-Centred ASEAN'. She reiterated the point stressed by the Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak in conjunction with the 45th ASEAN celebration, where among others, he believes that the maturity of the relationship among ASEAN member countries which is based on the concept of ASEAN Centrality and ASEAN Solidarity, will help the member countries towards the efforts of resolving many issues amicably.

The conference identified that cooperation, peace, development, inclusiveness and connectivity as well as new crucial factors such as youth involvement and sufficient media coverage are needed to enhance the strength of ASEAN

and to sustain the current growth rate. As the central player in the region, there is also a need for ASEAN members to collectively be coherent and cohesive in managing the involvement and influences of the global arising big powers. As an organisation which promotes unity in diversity, the closed-forged bonding is seen as an assurance for a feasible ASEAN Community by 2015.

For the realisation of the ASEAN Community 2015, Malaysia as one of the leading ASEAN countries in areas such as agriculture, forestry, ICT, commercial practices, manufacturing, health and education would make an ideal partner for the emerging developing countries in ASEAN such as Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. These three countries are taking respective actions in accordance to the Roadmap and Blueprints for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015) in order to decrease the development gaps among member countries amidst the changing geopolitical landscapes, economic uncertainties, security threats and other factors.

Among the other recommendations for achieving ASEAN Community 2015 is to implement social protection; focus on human resource development in the emerging ASEAN countries; find solution for issues of migrant workers following the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers; respect for all

international laws, agreements and conventions on territory boundary; set up comprehensive foreign policy mechanisms which could be implemented by all ASEAN member countries as well as ensure that mutual consolidations are always in practice.

ASEAN is also facing the issue of adopting international standards which are exclusive of ASEAN considerations in terms of economy. As mentioned by Tan Sri Razali Ismail, ASEAN would have to deal with the standard of governance set for foreign investment by other countries regardless of the country's own governance situation. ASEAN would have to consider whether to conform to the ideological and intellectual construct of western countries or come up with ASEAN's own concept of what governance should be.

The conference concluded with observations and remarks expressing mutual hope for creating innovative and fresh forms of dialogue between ASEAN member countries to strengthen ASEAN towards ASEAN Community 2015 and beyond.

## ERRATA

Please find appended a typing error in Diplomatic Voice Volume 2 2012:

Page 30, under the title *Attachment at Embassy of Malaysia in Bangkok, Thailand*, paragraph 4, line 6, ASEAN Community 2012 should be changed to ASEAN Community 2015.

*We deeply regret for any convenience caused.*



## The Second MIMA South China Sea Conference

The Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) organised the Second MIMA South China Sea Conference at the Doubletree by Hilton, Kuala Lumpur from 4 to 5 September 2012. The conference with the theme *Geo-strategic Developments and Prospects for Dispute Management* provided an ideal avenue for track-two discussion (track two initiatives allow for discussion and dialogue without being bound by political fetters) on maritime subject that is of current, mutual, regional as well as international interest.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari was given the honour to moderate the final panel discussion session entitled, *The Way Forward in Managing Disputes in the South China Sea*. Panelists for the sessions were Tan Sri Abdul Kadir Mohamad, Distinguished Fellow, Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia (ISIS); Prof. Raul Pangalangan, Professor of Law, College of Law, University of The Philippines; Dr. Nguyen Hung Song, Deputy Director General, Institute for Foreign Policy and Strategic Studies, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam and Dr. Xinjun Zhang, Associate Professor, Tsinghua University.

The panelists shared their views on the mechanism and approaches which could be taken to manage the disputes in the South China Sea. Prof. Raul Pangalangan enlightened the audience on the true interests of the parties involved; deep sea mineral deposits, fishing rights in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), access to navigation by foreign ships and national security for the coastal states in the territorial waters. He also shared his observation that the parties are in a dilemma as to either cooperate under the Law of the Sea or claim sole rights over the sea area.

Tan Sri Abdul Kadir then proceeded with the issue of overlapping maritime claims between China and ASEAN as well as between ASEAN countries, such as Brunei, Malaysia,



The Philippines and Vietnam. China and ASEAN's latest effort in regional diplomacy is to finalise a new Code of Conduct in the South China Sea which is seen as a new initiative to contain the tensions and establish the basis for peaceful settlement of the disputes. However, based on previous results of negotiation between China and ASEAN, the Code of Conduct will not likely establish a mechanism for actual settlement of the existing overlapping claims. Pursuant to this, Tan Sri remarked that the genuine way forward is for all claimant countries to really focus on the core issues and start making sincere efforts to facilitate the solution. He suggested two concrete steps to achieve the solutions: the four ASEAN claimant countries must begin the process of finding solutions between themselves to their own overlapping claims and China must make a clear basis for its claim in terms of international law.

Dr. Nguyen Hung Son further sparked the interest of the audience by outlining five measures which should be taken by ASEAN and China to stabilise the tension in the South China Sea which poses a threat to

regional peace and progress. The five measures were: for ASEAN and China to extend strategic assurances to one another; to work on additional guidelines to implement the Declaration of Conduct; to immediately start dialogue on drafting a binding regional code of conduct; to engage in dialogue and cooperation to promote mutual understanding of UNCLOS and reach harmony in its interpretation, application and implementation as well as to encourage bilateral relations to help manage the overall situation, including the territorial disputes.

Due to time constraint, Dr. Xinjun Zhang kept his session short and highlighted that if disputes are not resolved through agreement, it could also be based on discussion and mutual understanding.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari in his concluding remarks stated that the claimant parties should practise wisdom partnered with strong commitment to find a long-lasting solution and way forward in managing the disputes in the South China Sea.



## The IDFR Library



The library, which occupies two floors, is located at Block D of the institute. The main collection, which consists of reference, lending and current journals are situated on the first floor, while bound journals, language books, multimedia, fiction and Malaysian mission collection is housed on the ground floor.

It provides research and reference materials as well as lending services, especially to IDFR staff and course participants. The library also extends its services to officers and staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia's diplomats abroad, officials of foreign embassies in Malaysia and researchers. The library is also open to the public but for reference purposes only.

The objective of the library is to assist the institute in becoming a centre of excellence. It is a repository for the discipline of international relations, diplomacy and strategic studies. To achieve this, further enhancement on its collection is being done on a regular basis.

### Collection

The library has more than 70,000 volumes including reference and text books, journals, magazines, newspapers and audio visual materials. The collection emphasises contemporary information resources on international relations, diplomacy, strategic studies and related subject. In line with the rapid advancement in information communication and technology, the library encourages

the use of the library portal, <http://www.idfr.gov.my/library> to access the library's electronic resources. Users can browse through the available collection via the library's Web OPAC at <http://opac.idfr.gov.my/>

### Other Services

Among services rendered are photocopying, easy borrowing through the use of self-check machines (by using the borrower's National Registration Identity Card) and easy return through the use of a book drop kiosk which allows borrowers to return their books anytime at the hostel lobby.

### Facilities

The library provides a conducive reading area, computer terminals with internet access, WiFi coverage, a television and a music corner, a mini theatre with seating capacity for 25 people and also a board game corner.

The library is open from 7.30am to 5.00pm daily and is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays.





## What They Say ...

Strategic analysis, strategic thinking and related issues are essential to diplomacy in general. I learnt a lot by attending this course which implements different approaches and filled with experienced experts. The diverse backgrounds of participants enabled me to obtain a different view of issues which I knew beforehand and is very beneficial.

We all know Malaysia through the media and our reading. But the three weeks experience definitely showed Malaysia's success story. We hope that it will continue to serve as a model for the other Muslim countries.



**Mr. Moez Mahmoudi**  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Tunisia

(Participant of the Strategic Analysis Course 2012)



**Mr. Murad Ozbekbayev**  
European Department

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkmenistan

(Participant of the Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants Series 2/2012)

I didn't expect to have such a great course in Malaysia. I realised that there are a lot of aspects to be learned from Malaysia. I like most are the foreign policy and cultural heritage aspects.

I was well aware that I can learn about diversity of one's culture but I didn't expect that it applies to foreign policy. It made me realise the potential cooperation between our two countries. It's not only about oil and gas, about Petronas, but also in humanitarian and diplomatic relations.

As for the course, this is one of the best formats and I would come again for such a course. Maybe Malaysian diplomats can come to Turkmenistan as we also have our institute of foreign relations.

I'm renewed, I'm reborn.

From my personal experiences being posted to many different countries, I think that it's something good to know the culture and it helps a lot to also know the language.

This is a good opportunity by IDFR and through this course arises the opportunity to know other people (diplomatic corps) and to know the culture better.

I am looking at this course from two perspectives which is fun learning and as an extra language apart from other languages I have learned throughout the years.



**Mr. Idriz Konjari**  
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Embassy of the Republic of Albania in Malaysia

(Participant of the Conversational Malay Course 2012)



**Ms. Nabiryo Olive Enid**

Department of Immigration,

Ministry of International Affairs, Uganda

(Participant of the Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants Series 2/2012)

The course is very relevant as it opens my eyes to the fact that there is a huge gap in diplomacy practices for different countries. One part taught us the appropriate and internationally accepted diplomatic behavior as well as etiquette.

When we talk about training, we get the idea that we will be confined in a room, handouts and classroom sessions. But in this case, I really admire the curriculum which combined everything. From classroom sessions, study visits to interesting places, we got to learn different interesting things, left me speechless (overwhelmed with excitement). I personally have a lot to take back to Uganda. When it comes to the people, Malaysians are so warm till it brought me back the feeling of being home as Ugandans are also very warm. The Genting Highlands, it's like you're not in Malaysia – it looks like another world with so many things to do. I wish we could have that in our country.



## Upcoming Courses/Events at IDFR\*

Spanish Level VI	7 January - 3 June 2013
Spanish Level I	8 January - 26 March 2013
Spanish Level III 1/2013	9 January - 29 March 2013
Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 1/2013	14 - 17 January 2013
International Trade in Green Technology: Opportunities and Challenges	18 January 2013
Arabic Level IV	29 January - 26 June 2013
Arabic Level IX	30 January - 27 June 2013
Say It Right 1/2013	4 - 6 February 2013
Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Officers and Spouses under Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara (SPKM) 1/2013	18 February - 1 March 2013
Mandarin Level 1	18 February - 24 April 2013
Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD)	18 February - 15 May 2013
IR Module for DPA Participants 2/2012	26 February 2013
Building Blocks of Good English	4 - 8 March 2013
IR Module for DPA Participants 2/2012	5 March 2013
Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants 1/2013	11 - 29 March 2013
Workshop on Diplomacy for International Institute for Muslim Unity (IIMU) Participants	19 - 20 March 2013

\*Subject to changes

### Best Wishes

#### To our colleagues who celebrated their birthdays in October, November and December

##### October

Ambassador Aminah Tun, Haslil Hadi, Mohd Zaini, Rahimah, Sarinah, Suresh Kumar

##### November

Azmah, Khairul Bariah, Mohd Azrul Efendy, Tuan Rosazian

##### December

Erdee Azreen, Ghazali, Norazlin, Rabeha, Sebastian, Zaimi

#### To our colleagues, who left us with pleasant memories

Suresh Kumar A/L K. Rengasamy – transferred to Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD)

Zarina Md Yusof – transferred to the Ministry of Tourism

Fareeza Mohd Fadzil – resigned from her contract

Roziyana Che Othman – transferred to the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

Mohd. Zaki Hamid – transferred to INTAN Sabah

Amar Ricky Wong – transferred to the Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture

Shukor Md. Yusof – transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

#### To our colleague who recently took the vow of matrimony

Mohd. Fairuz Asraf Ismail

#### To our colleagues who recently had a 'visit from the stork'

Jamiah Rozali and Muhamad Idham Hairudin

In Memory of...



Our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family of Allahyarham Encik Abdul Rashid Bidin on his demise on 7 November 2012/22 Zulhijah 1433.

May Allah SWT bless his soul and bestow him a good afterlife.

*Al-Fatihah*

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