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Book Launch: *A UN Chronicle 1988-1998*



goings-on, as well as describing in detail aspects of leadership at the UN as reflected in his own presidency of both the Security Council in 1989 and the General Assembly from 1996 to 1997. In so doing, he revealed the roles played by Malaysia on a number of key issues that emerged at that time.

In his impromptu speech, Tun Dr. Mahathir voiced his support for Tan Sri Razali's effort in writing the

The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) is pleased to announce its latest publication titled, *A UN Chronicle 1988-1998* by Tan Sri Razali Ismail with Sharifah Shifa al-Attas.

It chronicles Tan Sri's years at the United Nations (UN) beginning with his appointment as Malaysia's Permanent Representative to the UN until his tenure as the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to Myanmar from 2000 to 2005.

The book was launched on 30 April 2014 by Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad at IDFR. The event was hosted by the

Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, Datuk Othman Hashim and attended by officials from the Ministry, members of the diplomatic corps, various government agencies, universities, various associations, private sector and members of the media.

In this book, Tan Sri Razali Ismail recollected his years at the UN during a time when multilateral diplomacy struggled to find relevance towards the end of the Cold War and after. Tan Sri Razali described how Malaysia fought its diplomatic battles and also provided new revelations into the

book with the aspiration that the dialogues and discussions on the UN reforms and changes be galvanised for a better future. He acknowledged that it was a very challenging task due to the structure of the UN itself and the fact that "people in power loathe to give up power."

Tun Dr. Mahathir also reminisced the days when he delivered his speech at the UN as a delegate and described Tan Sri Razali as someone who always delivered. He expressed the hope that Tan Sri Razali's book will be a useful reference for everyone.

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Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa

Former Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia

Q: Congratulations on your appointment as the Chief Executive of Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia. What were some of the factors that made you consider accepting the post of Chief Executive of ISIS Malaysia?

A: I was a mid-career officer at Wisma Putra when ISIS Malaysia was established. When I returned from my first posting in Washington D.C. and was assigned as Principal Assistant Secretary, I attended many seminars and conferences organised by ISIS and got to know the pioneering researchers and staff at ISIS, in particular its first Director General, the late Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee, a man whose pleasant personality, diplomatic skill and intellectual prowess I admired a lot. My association with ISIS continued afterwards when I served in the Policy Planning Division and later when I became the Under-Secretary for Southeast Asia and the South Pacific in 1992-94. This association further continued when I was Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I have always recognised ISIS Malaysia's reputation as the oldest and leading think-tank in Malaysia. Many of the policy recommendations adopted by the Government had originated from ISIS. I actually hesitated when I was offered to take the job of Chief Executive of ISIS. I was comfortable with whatever I was doing after retiring from the Ministry. But I also saw the opportunity to be in a different but familiar environment, to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the formulation of policy advice at the Track 2 level.

Q: How will your experiences at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia help to further develop ISIS?

A: The diplomatic and administrative experiences gained during the thirty-six and a half years I spent at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been of great help not only for my career in

Wisma Putra but also in the post-retirement years thus far. I can use and have actually begun to draw on those experiences to deal with the challenges at ISIS. First, I aim to ensure that ISIS continues to maintain its reputation and position as a leading think-tank in Malaysia and the region. Second, ISIS needs to set its priorities in the fields of research, analyses and policy advice to be able to meet current challenges, remain relevant and avoid duplication and redundancy. Third, I have given top priority towards efforts to improve and upgrade the premises and facilities, create a more staff-friendly and conducive working environment, allow for wider research space and creativity and, above all, maintain high standards and quality of research and outputs. Fourth, continued efforts are needed to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to the Institute.

Q: Since ISIS is one of Malaysia's leading think-tanks, how will Knowledge-Based Economy help bring Malaysia closer to a developed nation by 2020?

A: A knowledge-based economy is the way forward for now and the future and is inextricably linked to globalisation and the information revolution. Malaysia has been gearing itself to become more integrated with the rest of ASEAN and the world and to attain the status of a high-income economy and developed nation by the year 2020. ISIS Malaysia has helped in contributing ideas and policy recommendations in this regard and would continue to do so, in particular through its Economics, Technology, Innovation, Environment and Sustainability (TIES), and Social Policy programmes.

Q: What are some of your thoughts for the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) as the training and research arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia?

A: IDFR has developed a very good

"I have always recognised ISIS Malaysia's reputation as the oldest and leading think-tank in Malaysia. Many of the policy recommendations adopted by the Government had originated from ISIS.

I actually hesitated when I was offered to take the job of Chief Executive of ISIS. I was comfortable with whatever I was doing after retiring from the Ministry. But I also saw the opportunity to be in a different but familiar environment, to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and the formulation of policy advice at the Track 2 level"

reputation primarily as a diplomatic training institution. It has trained scores of diplomats and officials not only from Malaysia but also other countries and has established linkages with other diplomatic academies and training institutions all over the world. While maintaining its training role, IDFR should expand its capacity for research especially in areas such as the political, social and cultural traits and peculiarities of countries and regions. Based on the research findings, it can produce studies, papers and reports that could help in furthering our understanding of those countries. These would be useful to diplomats, business people, voluntary workers, expatriates and even the ordinary tourist and could help avoid situations such as the case of alleged child abuse by Malaysian parents in Sweden or when Malaysian companies lose money in foreign countries for lack of understanding of the business culture there. In this regard, our diplomats abroad can be encouraged to participate in the research work and their effort and product could be counted in the assessment of their performance or they can even be



rewarded with some form of academic recognition.

Q: Based on your experience and knowledge, what are the key tools in creating professional Malaysian diplomats?

A: The key tools in creating good and professional diplomats essentially are

“The biggest challenge in my diplomatic career was the separation between my family and I during my posting as Ambassador to Bosnia Herzegovina in 1996–1998. The circumstances prevailing at that time forced this upon us. I have quite adequately described this unpleasant but necessary experience in the book, *Number One, Wisma Putra*. That experience taught me two things: first, long distance separation is hard on a family especially the children, and therefore, families should stay together as much as possible and second, Wisma Putra should try to avoid situations which force families to separate ”

good training and mentoring, a supportive organisation, i.e. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, adequate financial resources and a positive attitude among people. Nowadays, our diplomats are provided access to training and mentoring programmes at various levels, at IDFR, INTAN and elsewhere which should enable them to be equipped with the right skills and knowledge to perform their roles. But success can only come with a positive attitude, willingness to learn and improve and the drive to excel; qualities which require self-motivation and introspection and cannot be easily acquired simply through training. For a diplomat, skills in and command of languages are essential. Unfortunately, many of our diplomats do not feel the need to improve themselves in this very important aspect of a diplomat's career.

Q: Throughout your career, you have probably encountered numerous challenges. What was the biggest challenge you have had to overcome and how has that affected your life today?

A: The biggest challenge in my diplomatic career was the separation between my family and I during my posting as Ambassador to Bosnia Herzegovina in 1996–1998. The circumstances prevailing at that time forced this upon us. I have quite adequately described this unpleasant

but necessary experience in the book, *Number One, Wisma Putra*. That experience taught me two things; first, long distance separation is hard on a family especially the children, and therefore, families should stay together as much as possible and second, Wisma Putra should try to avoid situations which force families to separate. During my tenure as Secretary General, I tried to ensure that such a situation could be prevented. *Alhamdulillah*, my family and I overcame that challenge and I dare say that I have the best family that any man can have; a loving and supportive wife and three wonderful children who have become responsible adults and parents themselves.



Tan Sri Rastam was appointed Chief Executive of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia on 1 January 2014. He spent more than 36 years as a career

diplomat in the service of the Government of Malaysia. He began his career in the Malaysian Administrative and Diplomatic Service (PTD) as an officer attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in April 1974. He served in various capacities at the Ministry and Malaysian diplomatic missions abroad, including as High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan (1994–1996), Ambassador of Malaysia to Bosnia Herzegovina (1996–1998), Ambassador of Malaysia to the Republic of Indonesia (1999–2003) and Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations in New York (2003–2005). He returned to serve as Deputy Secretary General for Political Affairs at the Ministry in August 2005 and was appointed as Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 8 January 2006. Tan Sri Rastam officially retired from Government service on 2 September 2010.

Speech by Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia at the 40th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Malaysia and China on 31 May 2014



His Excellency Li Keqiang
Premier of the People's Republic of China,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Da-Jia-Hao

Forty years ago, my father set out on what he called a 'journey of goodwill, to sow the seeds of mutual understanding and trust'.

That journey led him here, to Beijing, and to this very hall. It was here that he signed an agreement with Premier Zhou Enlai formally establishing diplomatic ties between our countries. It was here that we began a new chapter in our relations. And it is here today that I feel not just the responsibility of government, but the responsibility to my father – to continue his legacy and ensure the deepening of Malaysia-China ties.

Our nations are joined by a history that spans a thousand years. The friendship that began during the Song dynasty flourished under the Ming, as a relationship built on trade was strengthened by blood – as Chinese families made the Straits of Malacca their home. From Zheng He and the Peranakans to Sun Yat Sen in Penang, our nations' stories share the same cast.

It should not have been a surprise, therefore, that Malaysia was the first South East Asian country to establish relations with China. Yet some allies advised my father, Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak, against the decision.

Alone amongst the members of ASEAN, he held firm, and extended a hand of friendship to the People's Republic of China. As a university student in 1974, I asked my father why; why did you make that journey and establish diplomatic relations? He replied, and I quote, "because Zhou Enlai is a man I can trust". At a time of upheaval and uncertainty, Malaysia and China laid the foundations of trust for a relationship which has advanced and flourished.

Over the past four decades, as our nations have developed, we have grown closer together. China is Malaysia's largest trading partner; and Malaysia is China's largest trading partner in ASEAN. We formed a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for prosperity and growth. And last year, we signed a Five Year Development Programme for Economic and Trade Cooperation.

As our economies grow, so too do the bonds between our people. Thousands of our students have made the journey to learn in a different culture, my own son included. The ties of family and language which were forged in the fifteenth century grow deeper with time. There is perhaps no better symbol of our friendship than the recent arrival from China of two giant pandas, who have become an instant hit with the Malaysian people.

Like all friendships, ours is sometimes tested. Malaysia was deeply saddened by the tragic disappearance of Flight MH370, with 50 Malaysian passengers and crew and 154 Chinese passengers on board. Facing a mystery without precedent, we were

grateful for the support of the Chinese government, which has spared no expense in the search effort. We will not rest until the plane is found.

I believe that, with time, we will grow even closer together. Good relations are easy when times are good; but true friendship is forged in difficulty. In his speech four decades ago, my father stressed that "this goodwill that exists between us must be carefully nurtured."

It is in this spirit that I come here to China. And I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of the People's Republic of China for the hospitality and warmth extended to us on this visit, and particularly to Premier Li Keqiang for attending today.

The joint communiqué we have signed further broadens and deepens cooperation in all areas of mutual benefit – economic, tourism, financial services, political, cultural and military. We have agreed to increase our level of trade and investment, enhance people to people relations, and to preserve peace and stability in the region.

Today, we renew the bonds of friendship that were established four decades ago. And as Asia assumes a greater role in the world, we look forward to greater co-operation in the service of common goals.

In years to come, we will remain partners for prosperity; connected by history and firm in our commitment to peace. The ties that bind us will bring stability for our region, and opportunity for our citizens. For as the Chinese proverb says: "If people are of one heart, even the yellow earth can become gold."

Thank you.

Role of Public Diplomacy

Contributed by Aznan Mat Piah

What is 'public diplomacy'? You may have heard of 'public diplomacy' and might be wondering what it means.

A diplomatic mission operating in a host country has a duty and responsibility to ensure that the publics in that country have an accurate update not only on foreign policy developments but also on domestic economic and social policies that have bearings on its country's image and reputation abroad. It is a major task for a diplomatic mission, and the Information Section handles this function. This is briefly 'public diplomacy.'

In some academic books, public diplomacy is referred to as foreign 'propaganda' conducted or orchestrated by diplomats. In simple terms, the task of public diplomacy involves engaging the media and the non-media channels to put the country's policies in the correct perspective and to dispel any wrong impression about the country's policies.

In many countries, public diplomacy has become a major instrument of foreign policy. An important element of public diplomacy is media diplomacy where journalists are frequently engaged in diplomatic events and processes. Sometimes they even initiate diplomatic processes. The media functions both as an independent actor and as a tool in the hands of policy makers and journalists. Political scientists regard media diplomacy as dominating ingredients in contemporary international relations due to changes in mass communication, politics, and international relations.

Apart from media diplomacy, other components of public diplomacy are cultural diplomacy, public information, internal broadcasting, education and cultural programs, and political action. They provide the means of influencing foreign publics without the use of force. The now defunct US Information Agency defined public diplomacy as "promoting the national interest and national security of the

United States through understanding, informing, and influencing foreign publics, and broadening dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad."

It is not surprising therefore for developed countries like USA, Britain, France, Germany, and Japan to be found using other avenues such as cultural and education centres, business forums, national press clubs and foreign correspondents clubs, and other forms of networking mechanisms to conduct beneficial activities to spread their influence internationally through public diplomacy.

Traditionally, it is often the role of the diplomatic mission in the receiving state to defend the interest of the sending state and to protect the interest of its nationals, within the limits permitted by the international laws. The duties of diplomatic mission also include negotiating with the government of the receiving state as directed by the sending state; ascertaining by lawful means conditions and developments in the receiving state, and reporting thereon to the government of the sending state; promoting friendly relations between the sending state and the receiving state, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relationship.

The significance of diplomacy role for any nation state no doubt depends to a large extent on communication between government-to-government, which involves the capability of diplomats in their advisory and implementation capacity. Yet, the importance of public diplomacy directed at foreign audiences, counting on people-to-people contact, and influencing public opinion on key policies and issues could not be ruled out.

Involvement in Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is very close to my heart because it had been my career for more than 20 years when I served

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Wisma Putra from 1976 to 1999. The time spent during those days both at the Ministry in Kuala Lumpur and at four Malaysian diplomatic missions abroad - Bangkok, Tokyo, Paris and London - had been very interesting and indeed challenging.

I regard the field as one of the most crucial tools in the practice of diplomacy. A public diplomacy that is proactive, well coordinated, innovative and informative is essential in advancing the interest of the nation abroad.

From my experience, public diplomacy plays an important role, at least for Malaysia in the promotion of foreign policies, as it helps to communicate the nation's interests abroad. Officially, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through its information dissemination activities and public information channels to provide accurate information about the country's position on domestic and foreign policy issues affecting the country's image abroad. It is not incorrect to say that public diplomacy has to do with public relations practices at the international level in creating harmony and avoidance of conflicts. In the words of John Paluszek of Global Alliance, harmony is the objective of macro public relations.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Wisma Putra) there exists a department, presently called the Department of Information and Public Diplomacy, which looks after media relations, publicity and promotion, visits of foreign journalists, organizing media events, monitoring of public opinion and managing reputation or image building.

Abroad, public diplomacy role at diplomatic missions is carried out by the information attaché or a diplomatic officer assigned to carry out such responsibility. His or her main task is to communicate the nation's policies and interests abroad through public diplomacy channels like the

media and the non-media entities including the non-governmental bodies.

It is important for the international audiences to have a positive and balance picture of the country in terms of the national policies and practices to be seen in accordance with the accepted international code of behaviour.

The country must be projected as politically stable and enjoying economic development and promoting social justice and harmony. Public diplomacy role is therefore to ensure a sustained image and to manage the country's reputation with the view to maintain a positive and favorable impression of Malaysia among the international community, which would be useful to facilitate trade and draw foreign direct investments.

The Department of Information and Public Diplomacy at the Ministry of Affairs was earlier known as the External Information Division, which came into being in 1970. The division was staffed and managed by officers trained in information and public relations field, most of who were seconded from the Ministry of Information. Some of them came from journalism or public relations background and had considerable working experiences in the mass media or public relations agencies. Others were recruited directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with qualification in mass communication or public relations when the Ministry had wanted to have its set of officers, trained in the field to serve the Ministry on a continuous basis, whose experiences in the field would be beneficial in long term.

Early Years

Among the issues that required immediate attention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the early years of its inception were the promotion of Malaysia as an independent and a

sovereign nation in the eyes of the world community particularly after the May 13 1969 black incident. Following this incident was the urgency to defend the affirmative action policy, the New Economic Policy, the two-pronged blue print with the objectives to eradicate poverty and restructure society. The policy had been perceived as discriminatory towards the non-Bumiputra population.

As a newly independent nation, Malaysia needed to position itself among the international players. The conduct of public relations overseas was then considered important to explain and defend Malaysia's policies. This was carried out with a good reason because Malaysia had received negative coverage in the international media, especially the western media whose slanted and bias reporting of the issues had put the country in bad light in the eyes of the international community.

The western media had influenced their perception of Malaysia as a democratic country with a multiracial and multicultural population.

Next is the issue of how Malaysia handled its immediate neighbours. The experience of Malaysia-Indonesia confrontation from 1963 to 1965 affecting bilateral relations between the two countries was a lesson that went to show the importance of building good relations with our neighbours instead of looking at distant countries like the United Kingdom (in the case of Malaysia) or Netherlands (in the case of Indonesia), who were former colonial masters, to come to our assistance in times of needs.

The realisation on the importance of countries in Southeast Asia taking care of the interest of neighbouring states had led to the formation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in August 1967, which was indeed very significant. Hence, during the early years, ASEAN needed to be emphasised as the

cornerstone of Malaysia's foreign policy.

Foreign Policy Issues

Under the premiership of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the nation's foreign policy adopted a much greater economic orientation in the country's external relations while championing the rights, interests and aspirations of developing countries. This approach led to the advocacy of the South-South Cooperation, a more proactive role in the G-77, the establishment of the G-15 and the 'Look East Policy' being instituted. This shift to the East had greatly influenced Malaysia's economic development. Malaysia became the voice of the developing world and was a role model for many developing countries, as it became well known for its active stance at the United Nations and other international conferences.

Malaysia also emphasized the importance of its role in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and actively engaged in the Non-Aligned Countries (NAM), the Commonwealth, Group of Seventy Seven (G77), and Developing Eight (D8). No less important has been the country's continued active participation in the United Nations and other international organisations.

Under the present leadership of Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak, Malaysia continues to project a forward-looking and pragmatic foreign policy whilst continuing to facilitate trade, attract foreign investments as well as project Malaysia as a stable and peaceful country.

Najib's reform package, including the New Economic Model and the Government and Economic Transformation Programmes, aimed at taking the nation into high-income bracket, are efforts that require attention, especially from potential investors and economists. Malaysia has also initiated the Global Movement of Moderates among like-minded countries.

In the decade leading up to 2020, Malaysia has to deal with great changes in the global environment whilst improving and upgrading the country's domestic conditions. Recognising this challenge, Malaysia's foreign policy would continue to focus on protecting national interests while contributing responsibly towards the building of a fair and just world.

This development certainly calls for a more enhanced role for public diplomacy to establish a credible image for Malaysia in the eyes of the international community.

Tribute

Looking back, I had the opportunity to

work under the guidance of distinguished and prominent diplomats like Tan Sri Ahmad Kamil Jaafar, Tan Sri Hasmy Agam, Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, the late Datuk Jamaluddin Abu Bakar, Dato' Kamaruddin Abu, the late Dato' Ismail Ambia and Dato' Shahuddin Mohamed Taib.

They were my mentors and they had been instrumental in guiding me to focus and sustain my interest in the field of diplomacy in general, and public diplomacy in particular.

One cannot rule out the importance of public diplomacy role in getting the right message across to the international audiences in building mutually beneficial relationship and in contributing towards national interest.



Aznan Mat Piah is currently a Senior Academic Fellow at the International Islamic University Malaysia. He lectures in the Department of Communication on specialized subjects of public relations, diplomatic communication and strategic communication. He has been involved in government public relations, corporate communication and media relations, and public diplomacy work both at home and abroad; having served the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Information for a total of 32 years. He has contributed to the development of public relations profession in Malaysia through several years of involvement in the Institute of Public Relations Malaysia (IPRM) as Council Member.

Reflections: Simulation on Promoting and Defending National Interest

Contributed by Ahmad Irshad Razib

The simulation session of the Promoting and Defending National Interest module for the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) programme 2/2014 was held on 4 and 5 August 2014 at IDFR.

The purpose of the module is to equip future diplomats of the country with the necessary skills in promoting and upholding the nation's agenda at the global stage. Simultaneously, the module was formulated to train diplomats in dealing with members of the media and building positive relations with the media.

The 16 participants of DiD 2/2014 were each given different topics of current interest ranging from Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015, to the empowerment of women in Malaysia.

For the simulation module, the participants had to play the role of a senior diplomat or other senior officials of a government agency and were given seven minutes each to deliver their

press statement relating to their given topic. The simulation session module was set up in a mock press conference setting, with the presence of at least three panelists acting as journalists who posed challenging questions to the participants. The panelists consisted of senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, senior management of IDFR, members of the National Union of Journalist and other experienced media practitioners.

For a few months prior to being tested in the simulation session, the participants were given courses in handling difficult questions, preparing press statements and delivering effective presentations. The participants went through painstaking measures to ensure that they possess adequate grasp of the issue to be presented, attain the confidence level to deal with difficult questions and emerge strong when being provoked.

At the end of the simulation session, the participants had a regroup session

conducted by a guest speaker Mr. Brian Cracknell, on areas that they could improve.

The participants learnt that in promoting and defending any national agenda, especially when representing the country at an international public setting, one must first stay grounded to Malaysia's current policy and branding. When presenting a cause, it is crucial to acquire sound knowledge of the subject and possess a good command of the language used during the presentation. Being firm yet accommodating to journalists during an interview is also an essential trait.

Reflections: *Arab Spring in Bahrain*

Contributed by Mohd Shahafeez Shaharis, Malawakil Dakar

It was a normal morning on 14 March 2011. Normal in the sense that everything was the same since a month ago, when the Arab Spring movement which started in Tunisia and Egypt made its way to the Kingdom of Bahrain. As it has been for the past month, I had grown accustomed to being stopped at several roadblocks manned by local youths who would randomly check vehicles that passed by. In a number of instances, my car would be up for search. With my limited Arabic, I would argue that diplomatic cars should be exempted from such treatment. Sometimes I won the argument, and sometimes I did not.

Now, this is not a fair reflection of what Bahrain is all about. It is quite a developed country with a vibrant capital, Manama, that hosts upscale shopping complexes and exquisite supercars. The people were friendly and life was good. However, for decades, the Shia majority in the country claimed that they have been marginalized by the Sunni minority, headed by the Al-Khalifa family. Protests and demonstrations were a daily occurrence albeit on small scale and swiftly cordoned by the authorities. As a local friend would jokingly say, "if you see burning tires on the streets of Bahrain, keep calm and just move along."

But when the uprising wave hit Bahrain in February 2011, the response by the masses was overwhelming. Knowing that it would

prove futile to curb such widescale protests, the government allowed demonstrations to be held at the Pearl Roundabout under the condition that it should be done peacefully. And the protestors flocked to the area in record numbers. Rallies were held, speeches were made, food served aplenty. It was like a festival.

However, after weeks of 'festivities', the demonstrators grew restless as there were no reaction or provocation by the authorities. They decided to march from one side of the town to the other. And yet, the authorities did nothing. The demonstrators grew even more restless. Rumours of impending government crackdown made them agitated. The demonstrators felt threatened and they made the first move. The roads were blocked with stones and garbage cans by vigilantes armed with iron rods. They searched cars that passed by to seek out 'government agents' allegedly trying to sabotage the Pearl Roundabout.

And this was my daily routine until that fateful day on 15 March 2011. All the makeshift roadblocks were left unmanned. It was not until I came across several armoured cars and tanks moving towards the direction of the Pearl Roundabout that I realized what was happening; the crackdown on the protesters had started!

I turned back and informed the Ambassador. The decision was made to close the chancery and our homes were transformed to an office. The

Embassy had been preparing for this scenario for quite some time by updating the list of registered Malaysians in Bahrain as well as having an evacuation plan should the situation turn out for the worst. But personally, I was not prepared for the onslaught that came later as hundreds of unregistered Malaysians came out of the woodwork. Some were reasonable, simply asking us to inform them of developments, while some were not, demanding to be evacuated instantaneously. We even received a call from a Malaysian Member of Parliament informing us that he received complaints from members of his constituency that the Embassy did not extend assistance to them.

The ordeal lasted for two weeks. Luckily, no evacuation was deemed necessary. The crackdown was successful in quelling the uprising. However, the aftermath was not without a great cost. Casualties on both sides, though not as many as recorded in other similar uprising, were casualties nonetheless. As I bid my farewell to Bahrain in July 2013, the country was still mending its wounds. The government had initiated an independent inquiry and a national dialogue with the hope of reaching reconciliation.

Sometimes, I shuddered imagining such scenario happening on our shores. I hope that despite the differences and issues that we have with one another, we would always resort to dialogue and tolerance which have been the foundation of our country.

Panel Discussion in Conjunction with the 40th Anniversary of Malaysia-China Diplomatic Relations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, in collaboration with the Malaysia-China Friendship Association and the Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya, organised a Panel Discussion in Conjunction with the 40th Anniversary of Malaysia-China Diplomatic Relations. This panel discussion was

held to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China. It was also aimed at providing an overview and understanding of the relationship of these two countries as well as enhancing awareness of the importance of bilateral relations bet-

ween Malaysia and China to the public.

The event commenced with welcoming remarks by Dato' Hussin Nayan, Director General of IDFR. He reminded us of the significant visit made by Malaysia's second Prime Minister, Tun



Abdul Razak bin Hussein Al-Haj to China, which paved the way to build stronger cooperation between the two countries, resulting in a bilateral trade volume of USD 106 billion in 2013 and an exchange of 100 million personnel within a year. He also took the opportunity to thank H.E. Huang Huikang, the Ambassador of China to Malaysia, for playing a pivotal role to help manage the crisis of the MH370 incident involving the family members of the passengers.

H.E. Huang Huikang then delivered his Keynote Address by recalling back the historical ties of the two nations. He further mentioned that Malaysia and China have actually worked together and collaborated in aspects of political, economic and social nature on many occasions. He further reiterated that the strong relationship between China and Malaysia is like 'a brother in a family' hence the resilience felt in the bond even during such challenging times as MH 370 crisis.

In the first session titled, *Revisiting 40 Years of Malaysia-China Relations: Insights from Diplomacy*, the panelists were Dato' Khor Eng Hee (Honorary Governing Council, UNAM), Tan Sri Dato' Michael Chen Wing Sum (Former Housing and Local Government Minister) and Dato' Abdul Majid Khan (Former Malaysian Ambassador to China and President of Malaysia-China Friendship Association) with Ambassador (R) Dr. Azhari Karim moderating the session. The panelists deliberated on historical aspects and

presented factors that led to the structuring of the Malaysia-China relationship which has inexplicably strengthened and benefitted both countries. Dato' Khor Eng Hee quoted, "40 years is short in the life of a nation, but 40 years is a long time in the life of a human being" and shared with the audience his experience in conducting Malaysia-China relations during that period. The discussion also took into account steps that had been formulated and taken to maintain and improve Malaysia-China relations.

For the second session titled, *The Rise of China and Its Implications for Malaysia-China Relations: Economics, Political and Strategic Perspectives*, the speakers were Professor Dr. Cheong Kee Cheok (Senior Research Fellow, Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya), Professor Dr. Li Mingjiang (Coordinator of China Programme, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, NTU, Singapore) and Dr. Ngeow Chow Bing (Senior Research Fellow, Institute of China Studies, University of Malaya). The session was moderated by Professor Dr. Lee Poh Ping, (Senior Research Fellow in the Institute of China Studies, Universiti Malaya). The panelists discussed on the emerging power and influence of China in the region and the rest of the world and how this has influenced the relationship between the two countries.

As he has conducted extensive research in the area, Professor Dr.

Lee Poh Ping offered a brief review of the Malaysia-China relations since 1974 that touched upon topics like the Chinese revolution, ethnicity, economics and the rise of China. Co-presenter, Professor Dr. Cheong Kee Cheok then discussed the relations between the nations in terms of the economy and politics as well as the changing dynamics in these areas that are impacting upon the relations. He quoted, "even though trade and investment are basically driven by the market, political factors obviously played a very big role."

The next speaker, Professor Dr. Li Mingjiang, spoke about China's security policy and its implications on Malaysia-China relations in the coming years. His presentation touched on four main areas; i.e. ways to conceptualise China's strategic policy in East Asia, cooperation for competition, non-confrontational assertiveness and implications for regional security.

The last discussion was on *Development of Malaysia-China Defense Ties: 1992 to Present* presented by Dr. Ngeow Chow Bing. He observed that defence ties was not a priority focus and did not receive much attention. Dr. Ngeow suggested that having defence ties need not necessarily mean going into alliance but in a sense would indicate how both countries had developed a sense of trust in one another as it involved a very sensitive area of governance that is national security. He highlighted that the subject of defence would be one key area to look into when assessing the bilateral ties of the countries.

In attendance were respective Ambassadors and High Commissioners, government officials, academicians, think-tanks, NGOs, foreign participants from the Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), ASEAN-China young diplomats and members of the media.

National Colloquium on Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN 2015



session titled, *ASEAN Outlook: Re-assessing the Pillars Approach and How Malaysia Can Take A Proactive and Constructive Leading Role as Chair of ASEAN in 2015*. Speakers for the session were Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamad, Minister of International Trade and Industry, Dato' Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob from the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat and Datuk Hj. Ab. Ghaffar A. Thambi from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. Other sessions included themes related to community building, youth, security and economic matters.

The Colloquium proved to be a constructive event where various proposals, comments and observations were shared based on enthusiastic responses received from participants. In his closing remarks, Datuk Othman Hashim, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs assured that the Ministry will continue to engage the stakeholders and expressed that coming together is a beginning, keeping together will be a sign of progress and working together will surely lead to success.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia in collaboration with Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia hosted a National Colloquium on Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN from 8 to 10 April 2014. Participants of the Colloquium were various stakeholders from the government sector, practitioners, academicians, think tanks, civil society organisations, the youth groups, members of the media and experts in ASEAN affairs.

The Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Hj. Abdul Razak officiated the Colloquium and deli-

vered a Keynote Address. In his address, the Prime Minister shared his assessment, views and vision related to Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015. Malaysia has identified the creation of a truly 'People-Centred ASEAN' as the central element of its Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2015. The establishment of ASEAN Community in 2015 will further strengthen regional integration and cooperation which reflects on ASEAN's readiness to contribute positively to global affairs.

Throughout the three-day event, participants were engaged in various sessions delivered by prominent speakers. Dato' Hussin Nayan, the Director General of IDFR moderated a

Lecture by H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic on *Experience with the International Media and the Importance of Truthful and Moderate Approach*



IDFR held a lecture on H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic's *Experience with the Interna-*

marks, congratulated H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic on being awarded the

tional Media and the Importance of Truthful and Moderate Approach at the Treaty Room on 11 June 2014. The objective of the lecture was to disclose the participants to H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic's experience and best practices in international media.

Dato' Hussin Nayan, the Director General of IDFR, in his welcoming re-

Lifetime Achievement Award during the Asia HRD Congress 2014. The award is conferred to individuals who have made a lifetime achievement and services to his country and people.

Dato' Hussin Nayan spoke about the power of media in shaping world opinion and media as a tool that connects its audiences and happening elsewhere around the world. He also mentioned that H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic's use of the media, either by design or pushed by desperation, to attract attention of the world community to the happenings in Bosnia and Herzegovina had saved the suffering

Bosnian from potential annihilation. Dato' Hussin Nayan then added that Malaysia had led the voice of moderation since its very formation. He said, "The anchor for Malaysia at every turn of our growth has always been moderation in all our practices, ranging from social order to economic to religion to politics." Dato' Hussin Nayan ended his remarks with an emphasis on the importance of ensuring moderation as our anchor and core national philosophy regardless of the side of the political aisle we may stand on.

In his lecture, H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic mentioned that he possessed many years of experience in his role as a foreign minister, Prime Minister as well as former member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and has

very rich experience in dealing with the media. In fact, he played a crucial role to increase public understanding of Bosnian issues worldwide, especially with respect to war, aggression and devastation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, through media. H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic briefly discussed the history, happenings and suffering of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The lecture also touched on the role and focus of the Bosnian Foreign Ministry, arms embargo on Bosnia as well as multicultural society. He believes that truthful and moderate approach in engaging both media and the world has never been more important for building trust because, in his words, "in the long run, it is impossible to hide things." At the end of his lecture, H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdzic highlighted that

Bosnia and Herzegovina, small though it may be, is relevant and has a place in the international arena.

H.E. Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR, in her closing remarks talked about her experience as a Malaysian Ambassador to Ukraine and Croatia. She had also expressed hope for both Malaysia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to work together to advance and further the pursuit of the universal value of moderation.

Sixty-eight participants from the diplomatic corps, government agencies, universities, think tanks as well as media attended the lecture.

The 31st ASEF Board of Governors' Meeting in Riga, Latvia and Working Visit to Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia

The Director General of Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) attended the 31st Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF) Board of Governors' Meeting held in Riga, Latvia from 29 to 30 May 2014 and went on a working visit to Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia on 2 June 2014.

ASEF is an institute established under the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM). As ASEF continues its work in promoting mutual understanding of Asia-Europe ties through intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, the meeting was set to discuss various issues especially with regards to synergies between ASEF's activities with ASEM process. During this meeting, the Governor from Malaysia, Dato' Hussin Nayan, was elected as the Asian Member of the Finance and Audit Committee. It

was attended by 62 Governors and Note Takers from both Asia and Europe member countries.

Apart from the meeting, the contributions from member countries and some of ASEF project portfolios were

for the Governors and Note Takers. There was also a cultural tour on 31 May 2014 around Riga.

To also fulfil the invitation from Tallinn University of Technology (TUT), a working visit to Tallinn, Estonia was organised. During a meeting, the prospect of people-to-people exchanges was discussed and the Malaysian delegates were shown around the campus and university's facilities. In conjunction with the visit to TUT, meetings with the Estonian School of Diplomacy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Estonia was also arranged. H.E. Andres Unga, the Ambassador of Estonia to Australia was also present to welcome the Malaysian delegates.



also discussed. The State Secretary of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Latvia both hosted a reception and a dinner

Indonesian Election: Opportunities for Indonesia and Challenges for the Region



On 24 June 2014, IDFR featured one of its Distinguished Fellows, Dr. Farish A. Noor, in the IDFR Lecture Series titled, *Indonesian Election: Opportunities for Indonesia and Challenges for the Region*. Dr. Farish Noor is also an Associate Professor at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

The programme commenced with welcoming remarks by Dato' Hussin Nayan, the Director General of IDFR. In his speech, Dato' Hussin Nayan thanked Dr. Farish Noor for his continuous intellectual contribution and for sharing his thoughts and valuable insights into current and contemporary issues. He also expressed hope

that Dr. Farish Noor would shed light on the topic especially after personally journeying through Indonesia's political, cultural and historical legacy by spending a considerable number of years doing research and field work in Indonesia.

According to him, it is important to understand Indonesian politics since the election results would also influence Indonesia's foreign policy.

Dr. Farish Noor began his talk by expressing hope that Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN 2015 will begin on a positive footing by forming a stronger multilateral pact among ASEAN members. Based on data compiled through his experience of travelling to the different parts of the archipelago and interacting with multi-level social groups, Dr. Farish Noor succinctly described the journey Indonesia had experienced during the Post Suharto Era which had led the country of multiple complexities to become one that is stronger and resilient.

According to Dr. Farish Noor, as two neighbouring countries which are bound to be impacted by each other's success or failure, it would be beneficial for Malaysians to study and understand Indonesia, especially on the Indonesian education system, which has consistently strengthened the country and raised nationalism among Indonesians. As a country which has produced millions of young ambitious graduates and is by itself prosperous with natural resources, Indonesia's main challenge would now be to strategise its available resources in order to better manage success and stability. Dr. Farish Noor also observed that Indonesia had undergone enormous socio-economic changes. Decentralisation has changed the way Indonesia is being governed and has made the local law or *perdat* (*peraturan-peraturan daerah*) of the local government more powerful. Provincial local power has become more important than central power in Jakarta. This concept has also extended to the way media relations have evolved in Indonesia. The local post or daily has become more important as it is published internally covering local news which is deemed more significant to the local people compared to the national post.

Economic Diplomacy Series

IDFR in collaboration with the World Trade Institute (WTI), University of Bern, Switzerland organised three series of Economic Diplomacy namely, *Workshop on Community Wealth Creation through Geographical Indications (GI)*, *Workshop on Bangladesh Trade Policy: Meeting the International Standards and Technical Regulations and Overcoming the Barriers in International Trade* and *Workshop on Negotiating International Economic Agreements*.

The *Workshop on Community Wealth Creation through Geographical Indica-*

tions (GI) was held on 17 April 2014. Dr. Sufian Jusoh, Senior External Fellow from the WTI, University of Bern, Switzerland moderated the workshop which was attended by five participants. During the workshop, participants learned about the overview of GI, GI contributions to socio-economic development, international legal framework for GI, Malaysian GI laws and barriers faced by the GI product exporters.

Dr. Sufian Jusoh also emphasised that it was important for the local GI entrepreneurs to register their products

under the competent authority or a trade organisation to ensure proper implementation is taken.

The *Workshop on Bangladesh Trade Policy: Meeting the International Standards and Technical Regulations and Overcoming the Barriers in International Trade* also was held on 17 April 2014 at IDFR. It was attended by nine trade senior officials from Bangladesh and moderated by Dr. Sufian Jusoh.

Among topics discussed in the workshop included International Standards and Technical Regulations, how

government can overcome barriers in international trade and elements that can cause major impact to trade such as globalisation, deregulation and privatisation.

The participants also discussed on the measurements that could be used to overcome problems in trade policy such as reviewing the existing International Standard and Technical Regulation, remove unnecessary rules and compliance cost and improve efficiency through enabling fair competition.

The *Workshop on Negotiating International Economic Agreements* was held

from 24 to 25 April 2014 at IDFR. During the discussion, the two distinguished speakers, Dr. Sufian Jusoh from WTI and Ambassador Dato' Muhamad Noor Yacob, former Malaysian Ambassador to the WTO highlighted the challenges during preparation and negotiations of economic and trade agreement. The challenges involved the ability to ensuring transparency in the negotiations and the efficiency to manage various chapters of the agreements.

The speakers highlighted that as a negotiator, one should have better understanding regarding scope,

stages, style and the level of negotiations as some of the context can indirectly affect the negotiations. Negotiation also involves several cultural factors such as individualism, collectivism, power distance, masculinity, femininity and uncertainty avoidance. The participants had the opportunity to learn some of the main strategies to become a better negotiator.

The programme which was held at IDFR was attended by participants from several academic institutions, ministries and agencies.

Panel Discussion on *The Current Developments in Ukraine*

On 7 May 2014, the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) organised a Panel Discussion on *The Current Developments in Ukraine*. It served as a platform for the exchange of information, knowledge and insights on developments in Ukraine and its impact to the region concerned, in particular the relations between Ukraine and Russia. The panel discussion also looked at the reaction/response from the international community especially the United Nations (UN) on the issue.

The session commenced with welcoming remarks from Dato' Hussin Nayan, Director General of IDFR. It

was moderated by Associate Professor Dr. Ravinchandran Moorthy from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The panelists included Professor Dr. Mohammad Naqib Ishan Jan, Lecturer, Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah (Faculty) of Laws, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Professor Dr. Azmi Hassan, GeoStrategist at Institute of GeoSpatial (INSTeG), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Ambassador (R) Dato' M. Redzuan Kushairi, Deputy Chairman, Foreign Policy Study Group (FPSG).

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Naqib Ishan Jan gave his views on the situation in Ukraine on legal aspects including the

legality of Russian's action, its implications and also views from the International Law's perspective. Meanwhile, Prof. Dr. Azmi Hassan touched on current developments in Ukraine. As a former career diplomat, Ambassador (R) Dato' M. Redzuan Kushairi highlighted a number of dimensions in the crisis of Ukraine such as history, foreign policies and the challenging issues.

The panel discussion ended with a question and answer session. Officials from various government agencies attended the discussion.



Book Launch: *A UN Chronicle 1988 - 1998*



Panel Discussion in Conjunction with the 40th Anniversary of Malaysia-China Diplomatic Relations



National Colloquium on Malaysia's Chairmanship of ASEAN 2015



Training Courses



ASEAN-China Young Diplomats Training Course 2014



MTCP: Crisis Management Course for International Participants 2014



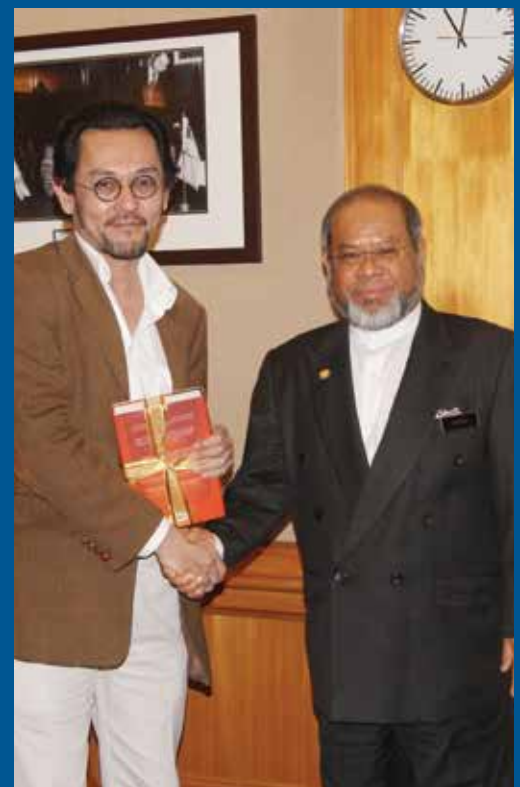
MTCP: English Language for Diplomacy Course 1/2014



Lecture by H.E. Dr. Haris Silajdic on Experience with the International Media and the Importance of Truthful and Moderate Approach



Lecture by Dr. Farish A. Noor on Indonesia Elections: Opportunities for Indonesia and Challenges for the Region



Maritime Security in Southeast Asia

Contributed by Yee Tsai Siew and Zebine Nissa



On 19 June 2014, IDFR in collaboration with the United States Embassy in Kuala Lumpur organised a talk on *Maritime Security in Southeast Asia* by Professor Dr. David Arase, Resident Professor at the Johns Hopkins-Nanjing University Center for Chinese and American Studies.

The talk began with welcoming remarks delivered by Dato' Hussin Nayan, Director General of IDFR. Prior to the commencement of his talk, Professor Dr. Arase made it a point to note that his views on maritime security in Southeast Asia expressed were those of his own and did not represent the views of the US.

The talk focused on the current South China Sea boundary disputes, with

overlapping claims by various countries in the South China Sea, in particular, four ASEAN claimant countries, namely, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam. Professor Dr. Arase elaborated on the claims by the Philippines and Vietnam on China's claim as defined by the "nine-dash line." The talk also discussed on the relevance and the legality of claims with regard to the United Nation Convention on Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Professor Dr. Arase also mentioned about the new mantra coined by President Xi Jinping, namely the "Chinese dream," as well as China's aspiration to rise as an influential maritime power. China has sought to play the primary role in Asia and to cultivate an economic dependence on China

within the region. Professor Dr. Arase moved on to present his observations on the stand point of the US with regard to the overlapping territorial claims of the South China Sea. The US' position on the matter is neutral, as it would not take sides in sovereignty disputes. He also stated that the US has hopes for China to appreciate the benefits of status quo.

In his conclusion, he said that with an issue that is currently very much alive, it would be interesting to witness how these territorial disputes would unfold themselves. With time, China would be expected to clarify the definition and the legality of its "nine-dash line," which forms the legal basis of its territorial claim within the region.

The talk was attended by dignitaries from the various Embassies and High Commissions in Kuala Lumpur, academicians, officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies, foreign participants from the Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), as well as participants of Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD).

All in all, the talk gave a broad perspective on the subject of maritime security in Southeast Asia. It also shed light on the respective interests of the countries, which were both, directly and indirectly, involved in the territorial dispute within the region.

New Challenges for Diplomats of the 21st Century

Contributed by Fazlisya Ramly

On 16 June 2014, the participants of the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) programme 2/2014 attended a tea talk session titled, *New Challenges for Diplomats of the 21st Century* delivered by His Excellency Ong Keng Yong, High Commissioner of the Republic of Singapore to Malaysia. The session began with opening remarks from the Project Manager,

Ms. Yee Tsai Siew who is also one of the DiD 2/2014 participants.

His Excellency Ong Keng Yong caught the attention of the audience to his first piece of advice, namely, a diplomat should be well-versed in the geography of the world. He recounted his early days as a diplomat, when he would often duel with his spouse in

guessing the capital cities of the countries in the world. He also elaborated the work and life of a diplomat.

He shared that since the post-World War II era, the then existing means of communication could not afford the exchanges of information to happen in real time. However, with the communication advancement at the turn of the

21st century, the internet has encouraged instantaneous communications, making communication between the headquarters and missions abroad, easier and accessible than it was before. As the saying goes, speed is everything, and speed has made the diplomat's work even more demanding. Hence, it is vital for those involved in diplomacy to provide feedback or response with immediacy.

Globalisation and the advancement in communication have also made issues and events to become interconnected. Such conditions have demanded diplomats not to compartmentalise issues or events, as was previously done in the past, due to the interdependency between issues, people and countries. Advancement on the means of communications has also called for diplomats to increase their engagement with the public, given the greater participation of stakeholders in various international issues. Hence, this justified the greater significance of public diplomacy.



In the context of ASEAN and globalisation, he highlighted that as an ASEAN diplomat, one must continue to embody the ASEAN spirit. That is, while preserving one's national interest, one should also be mindful of the interest of ASEAN. He provided an example whereby in the realisation of the ASEAN Community by 2015, ASEAN Members should adopt an integrated economic framework, in line with the existing ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). This would be important to ensure ASEAN adapts to the dynamics of globalisation.

Overall, His Excellency shared his experience in a very realistic and open manner. It was an insightful session which drew analysis and anecdotes from his personal experience as a career diplomat. In a nutshell, diplomats must be able to think clearly, articulate well and write succinctly in order to depict the bigger picture of diplomacy. With the trends of globalisation in the 21st century, it is imperative for diplomats to look at the bigger picture, in the scheme of international relations.

Training Courses

Intermediate and Advanced Speech Writing Courses

Two Speech Writing courses for officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia were recently concluded. The Intermediate Speech Writing Course was held from 16 until 18 April 2014 and attended by nine Principal Assistant Secretaries. Meanwhile, the Advanced Speech Writing Course was organised from 28 until 30 April 2014 with the participation of seven Undersecretaries.

The objectives of the course were to increase understanding on the principles of successful speech writing; expose the participants to the skills, techniques and strategies in speech writing, and enable the participants to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses as speech writers. The courses

were conducted in a series of interactive lectures, individual and group work and in-class speech writing exercises. Among the course modules were; *The Art and Craft of Speech Writing, Skills, Techniques and Strategies in Speech Making, Analysis of Best Speeches, Organisation of a Speech and The Use of Metaphors, Repetitions, Rhetoric and Contradictions in Speech Writing.*

Both sessions were facilitated by Mr. Simon Lancaster, who is one of United Kingdom's top speech writers. He has written speeches for world leaders and CEOs and trained hundreds of professional writers over the years.

SPKM: Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses Series 3/2014 (Grade 41 and Above)

The third series of the SPKM: Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses was held from 19 to 30 May 2014. The course was attended by 76 participants from various ministries and government agencies under *Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara (SPKM)*. The participants comprised of 41 officers for grade 41 and above and 35 spouses.

The main objective of the course was to prepare the participants prior to their first postings abroad in aspects related to foreign policy, administration, management, finance, culture, diplomacy, security and etiquette. Focus was also given to topics relevant to promoting Malaysia from the points of view of tourism, investment, products and culture. As for the spouses, the course exposed them to



their roles, functions and responsibilities while accompanying the officers abroad.

ASEAN-China Young Diplomats Training Course 2014

The ASEAN-China Young Diplomats Training Course 2014 was conducted from 19 to 30 May 2014. The two-week course was attended by 16 participants from Brunei, Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and ASEAN Secretariat.



The objectives of this course were to enhance the awareness of young diplomats on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership and to encourage people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and China.

Throughout the course, the participants were exposed to issues and topics exemplified by experts concerning diplomacy and international relations from the Malaysian perspective. Among the topics discussed were *Malaysia's Foreign Policy*, *Asean Community 2015*, *ASEAN Economic Pillar and External Relations*, *Global Movements of Mo-*

derates, *Geopolitical Relations of China with ASEAN Nations: A Psychological Perspective*, *International Negotiations and Environmental Crisis*.

Apart from lectures, a number of study visits were organised, including visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Tourism and Culture and Putrajaya as well as a three-day visit to Langkawi Island.

Orientation Course for Secretaries and Executive Officers

The Orientation Course for Secretaries and Executive Officers was conducted from 19 until 30 May 2014. It was attended by 16 secretaries and executive officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The course was conducted at the request of the Ministry in preparing the participants for their duties and responsibilities at the Ministry and missions.

The modules of the course were monitored closely by the Ministry so as to ensure strict adherence to its practices, rules and regulations. During the first week of the course, participants went through lectures on Financial Matters delivered by officers from the Ministry including *Asset Management*,



Auditing and Financial Management. The participants were also required to sit for a short test as part of the course module. For the second week, the participants were exposed to topics ranging from *Protocol and Consular Matters*, *Preparation before Posting*, *Grooming and Etiquette*, *Language and Communication*.

Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP): English Language for Diplomacy Course 1/2014

IDFR organised the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP): English Language and Diplomacy Course series 1/2014. Twenty-three participants namely from Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Bosnia Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Comoros, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Maldives, Mauritius, Morocco, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Togo, Uzbekistan and Vietnam attended the two-week course.

The objective of the programme was to enhance the participants' proficiency in the use of English specifically in the realm of diplomacy and international relations. Apart from that, the course also aimed at enhancing the participants' general English Language proficiency in the four skills areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In line with the objectives, IDFR arranged interactive modules such as

Active Listening, Writing Diplomatically: Sentence Structure and Applying Grammar, The Sound of English Language: Pronunciation, Presentation Skills and Public Speaking as well as Speech Drafting.

Crisis Management Course for International Participants 2014

The Crisis Management Course for International Participants 2014 was conducted from 2 to 20 June 2014. The course was attended by 24 participants from Brunei, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Congo, Cuba, Gambia, Kenya, Lao PDR, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Nauru, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Seychelles, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

The objective of the course was mainly to enhance knowledge and understanding on the theoretical and practical aspects of international crisis and crisis management, to increase knowledge and skills in the various approaches and techniques of crisis management and to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences in crisis management.

The three-week course included

several substantive topics on *Theory and Concept of Crisis Management, Food and Commodity Crisis, Energy Crisis, Diplomacy in Crisis Management, Economic and Global Crisis, Strategic Thinking in Crisis Situation, Crisis Forecasting, The Law and Armed Conflict in International Crisis, Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes Through Adjudication by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Emerging Global Environmental Crisis Adjudication by ICJ, Conflict Resolution: Respect for Diversity, Country Risk Management, Simulation: Country Risk Management, Maritime Security in Southeast Asia and Managing Change After Crisis.*

One of the interesting modules was the *Simulation Exercise: Media Response in Crisis Management*. Participants had to handle the media questions individually based on the scenario given and were recorded. The feedback and comments were made through the play back video. In relation to the media, the participants were fortunate to participate in the public lecture titled, *My Experience with the International Media and the Importance of Truthful and Moderate Approach*, delivered by H.E. Dr. Haris

Silajdzic, former Member of Presidency and Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering his wealth of experience in dealing with international media, he was responsible to increase public understanding of the Bosnian issues worldwide particularly in war.

They also participated in a number of study visits to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia, Malaysian Handicraft Corporation, Putrajaya Holdings, Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (Klang District), Tourism Malaysia Pahang and East Coast Economic Region (ECER), Kuantan, Pahang. These study visits indirectly gave an exposure to the participants the culture and life style of Malaysians. Through a homestay programme in Pantai Sepat, Pahang, the participants enjoyed watching the Malaysian Martial Arts and *kompang*, *pukat tarik* demonstration and coconut tree climbing demonstration. They also participated in the traditional games namely *congkak* and *sepak raga* and learnt how to make *laksa* Pahang, one of the traditional Malay cuisines.

Say it Right!

Say it Right is an English course conducted biannually here at the Institute. On 24 February 2014, IDFR welcomed the first group of participants consisting twenty officers from various ministries and government agencies to attend a three-day programme on mastering English pronunciation skills. A second group comprising 29 participants attended the

second course from 19 to 21 May 2014.

The aim of the course was to raise the participants' awareness on understanding the English sound system, so that, they may be able to articulate clearly and express themselves intelligibly and confidently. As such, correct pronunciation, use of stress in words

and sentences and intonation are the main thrust of the course.

During each three-day course, the participants were involved in role playing and pronunciation games and activities and based on their feedback, the course was beneficial in helping them to be more confident in speaking English.

Building Blocks of Good English

Building Blocks of Good English is a five-day course and was conducted from 10 to 14 March 2014. It was attended by 12 participants and they

were officers from the Rural and Regional Department, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Sultanah Hajah Kalsom Secondary School, Kuantan.

The objectives of this course were to enable the participants to demonstrate the use of the language in a variety of contexts and to build their

confidence as comfortable users of the language. This course on grammar and deals with problem areas like sentence skills, subject-verb agree-

ment, verbs, tenses and correct structure of different questions types.

Based on their written feedback, the

participants found the course to be very beneficial as it helped them to improve their English especially in dealing with their daily tasks.

Effective Writing Skills 1/2014

Good writing skills comes with the confidence and ease of putting pen to paper or in the globalised world of today; from the keyboard to the screen and ending with the printed form of the written piece. Thus, a total of 21 participants from various ministries and government agencies attended the course which was held from 17 to 20 June 2014. They were from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Prime Minister's Department,

BERNAMA, National Sports Institute of Malaysia, Department of Standards Malaysia, National Visual Arts Development Board, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning Peninsular Malaysia and Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency.

In order for the participants to write effectively in English, they need to have a good understanding of the grammatical structure of the English

language. As such, the content of the course was drawn up with a review of the English tenses and the construction of strong sentences. The participants were also exposed to the tone and purpose of writing, developing ideas and composing strong paragraphs. Other than that, participants were taken through on the use of resources in writing and how to proof read and edit their writing.

Conversational Malay Course 2014

The 42-hour Conversational Malay Course was conducted from 4 March to 15 May 2014. The course was specially conducted for foreign diplomats in Kuala Lumpur and was held every Tuesday and Thursday from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

A total of thirty diplomats from the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq, High Commission of the Republic of Singapore, High Commission of the Republic of Zambia, High Commission of the Republic of Kenya, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, High Commission of the Republic of South Africa, Embassy of Italy, Embassy of

the Arab Republic of Egypt, Embassy of the Republic of Senegal, Embassy of the Republic of Peru, High Commission of the Republic of the Fiji Islands, Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, High Commission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Embassy of the Czech Republic, Embassy of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Embassy of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, Embassy of Romania, Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and Embassy of Austria attended the course.

The objective of the course was to expose the participants to the basics

of conversational Malay and at the same time to help the participants gain a better understanding of the Malay culture in Malaysia. The participants showed their enthusiasm towards the course by interacting in the Malay language throughout the course, based on their experience and prior knowledge of the language.

Special Foreign Language Course for Wisma Putra Officers

The special foreign language course for Wisma Putra officers was provided at the request of young officers interested in improving their competency in Arabic, French and Spanish. The course aimed at giving the opportunity to attend foreign language

classes, to all officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who were eager to learn these languages but found it difficult to attend evening classes on week days, due to work commitments. Thirty-four participants registered for this 44-hour course that started on 8

March and ended on 24 May 2014. It was conducted at IDFR on Saturday mornings from 9 am to 1 pm.

There were eight participants for Arabic, 12 for Spanish and 14 for French. Most of them had some previ-



ous knowledge of the language they had chosen. Nevertheless a few of them had never learnt the language before. So, this basic foreign language course consisted of a revision for some, while it was a totally new experience for others. A few participants from previous and on going Diploma in Diplomacy courses also joined the group. Ultimately the group blended perfectly, in spite of the differences in level and background, everyone participated actively.

All participants who attended this course were motivated and interacted nicely in an enjoyable atmosphere. It was also beneficial for team building as it gave the participants a chance to meet in a different venue and a more relaxed environment. It was also a great opportunity for people working in different divisions to meet and catch up with each other. Many were keen to attend cultural events together, especially during the French Speaking Week and the French Art and Film Festival as well as the Latin American Festival in Kuala Lumpur. The coffee break was their favorite place for exchanging tips and updating each other on the latest foreign food joint or happenings in town.

Although the timing coincided with the

recent challenging events afflicting the country, the ASEAN meeting and the visit of Barack Obama that brought an additional work load for the Foreign Ministry, the majority of the registered participants successfully completed these courses. They are looking forward to the next course.

Congratulations to all those who were willing to sacrifice part of their weekend for their self improvement as well as for better career prospects.

Hopefully, they will continue learning and practising together so that they eventually become proficient in their respective foreign language.

We wish them all the best!

The 28th Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR)

The 28th Asia-Pacific Roundtable (APR) was held on 2-4 June 2014 at the Hilton Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Organised by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia on behalf of the ASEAN-ISIS, the three-day roundtable brought together about 400 distinguished speakers and participants from the diplomatic corps, universities, government agencies, think tanks as well as media from about 30 countries of the Asia-Pacific and Europe.

The keynote address during the Welcoming Dinner on 2 June 2014 was delivered by the Minister of Home Affairs, Malaysia, the Honorable Datuk Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi on behalf of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, as the Prime Minister was away from Kuala Lumpur on official duties. In the keynote address, he stressed the importance of the role of norms, rules and institutions in shaping the world we live today as well as the commitment to nurturing and strengthening the bonds of friendship and international cooperation among

countries. Without which, this would be a world where, quoting the Greek historian Thucydides, "the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must." He also mentioned that Malaysia and its ASEAN partners have placed much emphasis on building institutions, rules and norms especially in the current on-going efforts to realize the ASEAN Community. He impressed on Malaysia's strong commitment towards the recent Joint Declaration of the ASEAN Defence Ministers on Defence Cooperation towards a Peaceful and Prosperous ASEAN Community. Datuk Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi also highlighted the issues related to the South China Sea, the spirit of cooperation among countries in the MH370 incident, countering the threat of terrorism and a nuclear-free world.

The first plenary session discussed *Opportunities and Challenges in Constructing a Peaceful and Prosperous Region: a Japanese Perspective*. The speaker, the Honorable Mr. Norio Mitsuya, Senior Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,

spoke on the importance of the Asia-Pacific region and Prime Minister Abe's visit to 14 countries in the Asia-Pacific region after assuming office in December 2012 is a testament of Japan's cognizance of the importance of the region. Mr. Mitsuya also highlighted security issues in the Asia-Pacific region such as the growing threat of mass destruction weapons, the surge in military spending and arms trade, threat against freedoms of navigation and over flight on the high seas, challenges in non-traditional security issues, and issues related to the East and South China Seas that would undermine mutual trust of states. At the end, he proposed three Issue Resolution Approaches to be taken within the region; namely, cooperation for enhancing the global commons, reinforcing regional architecture, and strengthening partnerships based on trust.

The second plenary session consisted of Prof. Dr. Paul Evans from the Institute of Asian Research & Liu Institute for Global Issues, the Univer-

sity of British Columbia, Canada as the Chair; and Prof. Dr. Chen Dong-xiao, President of Shanghai Institutes for International Studies; Prof. Dr. Andrew J. Nathan, Class of 1919 Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science of Columbia University, US; and H.E. Ambassador Bilahari Kausikan, *Ambassador at-Large* and Policy Adviser of the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs as speakers. The speakers spoke about *Understanding the "New Type" of Major Power Relations*, an idea introduced by then Vice President of China Xi Jinping during his visit to the US in February 2012. It was interesting to note the similarity in both Prof. Dr. Chen's and Prof. Dr. Andrew's understanding of the said idea despite their different nationalities. In short, the idea was understood as China's hope for US to treat it fairly and equally; to recognize its legitimate security interests; and to refrain from trying to block its peaceful rise because both China and US will benefit from the peaceful accommodation of China's legitimate security interests.

The third plenary session was made up of Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, Chairman of ISIS Malaysia as the Chair; and Prof. Dr. Yan Xuetong, Director of the Institute of International Studies of Tsinghua University; Prof. Tomohide Murai, Chairman for the International Relations Programme of the Japan National Defence Academy; and Mr. Jusuf Wanandi, Co-Founder and Senior Fellow of CSIS & Vice-Chairman, Board of Trustees, Indonesia CSIS Foundation as speakers. The topic discussed was *Resetting Sino-Japanese Relations*. The highlight of this session was the differing views and perceptions of Chinese and Japanese scholars against the intentions of their countries and on issues such as the importance of mutual trust in forging relations between countries. Prof. Murai was wary of possible "small war" in East Asia that could jeopardise the security and peace of the region. Prof. Dr. Yan, of course, rebutted his proposition. Prof. Dr. Yan also rebutted Mr.



Mitsuya's view on mutual trust as the first step in forging closer relations between countries (first plenary session), questioning if it [mutual trust] is an excuse not to or a prerequisite to forge relations between countries. He then gave an example, pointing out that China and Malaysia did not have much trust against each other in the early 1970's, still, both countries managed to establish diplomatic relations and later to build mutual trust that have lasted until today.

The fourth plenary session, made up of Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa, Chief Executive of ISIS Malaysia as the Chair; H.E. Ambassador Viorel Isticioaia Budura, Managing Director for Asia and the Pacific and Chair, Asia-Oceania Working Party (COASI), the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Union; Major General Jun Nagashima, Cabinet Councillor and Deputy Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretary, National Security Secretariat of Japan; Professor Dr. Kim Sung-han, Director of IIRI of Korea University and former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea; and Ms. Kelly E. Magsamen, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs of Department of Defense, USA, as speakers, was about Fostering Peace

and Managing Security in the Asia Pacific. In this session, matters related to the South China Sea, North Korean nuclear problem, US-China relations, and Sino-Japanese competition were discussed. It was said that there are significant differences between the security environments in Europe and Northeast Asia and that it is still premature to talk about collective security in Northeast Asia as bilateral security arrangements will remain the backbone of its security for a considerable period of time.

The fifth plenary session was about Myanmar's Political and Economic Reforms. The chair was Associate Professor Simon S.C. Tay and the speakers were Dr. Tin Maung Maung Than, Senior Research Fellow of Singapore Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS); Dr. Zaw Oo, Economic advisor to the President of Myanmar and Executive Director of Centre for Economic and Social Development at the Myanmar Resource Development Institute; and Mr. Soe Myint, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Mizzima Media Group of Myanmar. In this session, the participants were informed of Myanmar's undergoing significant political and economic reforms and the rather positive impact they have on Myanmar's media industry. It was also suggested that as Myanmar is a "late comer" in the region, it is prepared to

learn lessons and inspire successes from its neighbours so as to catch up with them.

The sixth plenary session was on ASEAN's Post-2015 Agenda: Strengthening and Deepening Community Building. It was chaired by HRH Prince Norodom Sirivudh, Founding Chairman of the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP) and Privy Counselor to His Majesty the King of Cambodia. The speakers included H.E. Ong Keng Yong, Singapore High Commissioner to Malaysia and former Secretary-General of ASEAN; Mr. Hitoshi Tanaka, Chairman of the JRI Institute for International Strategy and former Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan; and H.E. David Taylor, New Zealand Ambassador to Indonesia and ASEAN. This session discussed issues on economic integration, regulatory coherence, corruption, development divide and the need to narrow it, ASEAN regional identity, the role of media, Timor Leste issues, managing ASEAN's external relations as well as dispute management and resolution. It was noted that the challenge will always be issues of sovereignty, trust and national interest assessments. Thus, ASEAN member states need to find ways to build confidence and achieve progress for their overall benefit.

The seventh plenary session was chaired by Associate Professor Dr. Mely Caballero Anthony, Head of Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University of Singapore and former Director of External Relations of ASEAN Secretariat. The speakers were Professor Emeritus Dr. Carlyle A. Thayer from School of Humanities and Social Sciences of University of New South Wales (Canberra) and the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA); Dr. Vijay Sakhuja, Director of Research of Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), India; and Ms. Youna Lyons, Senior Research Fellow of Centre for International Law, National University of

Singapore. With the theme Beyond Territoriality: Managing the Maritime Commons in the South China Sea, this session highlighted the common security challenges in the South China Sea which included navigational safety, Search and Rescue (SAR) operations, boundary issues, mutual suspicion, confidence-building measures on maritime security, management of fisheries as well as ASEAN's management of the maritime commons in the South China Sea.

The eighth plenary session was on Is Japan Back? The session was chaired by Professor Dr. David A. Welch, CIGI Chair of Global Security, Balsillie Institute of International Affairs of University of Waterloo, Canada; and the speakers were H.E. Ambassador Yoshiji Nogami, President of the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) and former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan; Professor Dr. Richard J. Samuels, Ford International Professor of Political Science and Director, Centre for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA; and Prof. Dr. T.J. Pempel, Jack M. Forcey Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science of University of California, Berkeley, USA. This session was essentially about the face of contemporary and future Japan after Abe's government took office. The discussions focused on Abenomics; Japan's position in the Asia-Pacific region; Prime Minister Abe's promises during the LDP presidential election campaign in 2012 such as revising the Constitution, visiting the Yasukuni Shrine and revisiting the historical record that had justified the Kono statement apologizing for Japan's military enslavement of the "comfort women"; "Abepolitics"; China-Japan relations; and Japan-South Korea relations.

The ninth plenary session, namely the Dynamics of India's Rise: National Imperatives and International Aspirations, was chaired by Tan Sri Dr. Mohd Munir Abdul Majid, Chairman of Bank Muamalat Malaysia, Board Member of

ISIS Malaysia and Visiting Senior Fellow at LSE IDEAS, Malaysia. The speakers were Dr. Manoj Joshi, Distinguished Fellow of Observer Research Foundation, India; Mr. Pramit Pal Chaudhuri, Foreign Editor of *Hinduistan Times*, India; and Dr. Ian Hall, Senior Fellow and Director of Graduate Studies in International Affairs (GSIA), the Australian National University. The focus of this session was essentially on challenges, both domestic and external, facing India's rise. Among the domestic challenges were "providing education, jobs, welfare, power, water and many other services to its population" while external challenges included problems with its immediate neighbours such as Pakistan, challenge posed by a fast-rising China, and terrorist attacks. Regarding external challenges, it was said that India lacks the means to credibly deter and compel potential adversaries and that this weakness has obstructed its ability to act as an aspiring great power. Thus, it was suggested that a shift towards a more credible posture, for example to strengthen its hard power, is needed should India is to address its external security challenges, especially that posed by China.

The last plenary session saw discussions of the Future of Thai Politics. This very timely session was important as it brought to public eye the ongoing developments in Thailand which would affect its future and the region. Some common fallacies of the Thai polity such as "all coups have an anti-democratic or anti-civilian intent, and are staged for the coup leaders (military forces) to seize power as an end in itself" and "Thais who favour democracy, social peace and the rule of law oppose all coups" were raised. The participants were also informed of the coup actions for "peace and order" which included curfew; detention of key figures in politics; closure of broadcast news agencies; and suspension of the Constitution, parliament and Senate; as well as post-coup developments such as curfew relaxed and later lifted, the

establishment of national reconciliation centres, “3-stage road map for return to democracy, with elections,” “more than 80% of the 700-plus TV channels return to operations” and etcetera. It was predicted in the session that barring unforeseen major disruptions, there will be a return to parliamentary democracy before the end of 2015; the military will continue

to play a pivotal political role; “coup as intermittent interludes between democratic parliamentary rule;” parliamentary democracy as default political position; and the constitution will be amended occasionally for example post-coup.

The APR was officially closed by Tan Sri Rastam Mohd Isa, Chairman of

APR Organising Committee and Chief Executive of ISIS Malaysia. IDFR was represented by Ms. Norani Ibrahim, Deputy Director General (T), Ambassador Ainahtun Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General (C), Ms. Rafizah Zahri and Ms. Lim Hui Chin from the Regional and Security Studies Division.

Address by H.E. Rod Smith PSM, Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia

On 17 June 2014, the Australian High Commission and the Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (ASLI), organised an Address by H.E. Rod Smith, the Australian High Commissioner to Malaysia held in Double Tree Hilton, Kuala Lumpur.

The Address was attended by officials from Wisma Putra and other government agencies, members of the diplomatic corps, politicians, business leaders, think tanks, representatives from universities and media. IDFR was represented by Ms. Norani Ibrahim, Deputy Director General (T), Ambassador Ainahtun Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General (C) and Ms. Lim Hui Chin from the Regional and Security Studies Division.

In his Address, H.E. Rod Smith spoke on Australian Foreign Policy and a Region in Transition and offered a brief overview of Australian economic development since 1960s. He stated that through a broad and aggressive reform agenda in the 1980s and 1990s, Australia has transformed from an insular, highly regulated economy with inefficient public sector monopolies, low productivity and growth as well as poor comparative economic performance into an open, dynamic, flexible and high-productivity economy.

According to him, “Australia today is globally engaged, economically open and competitive, focused on Asia,

enmeshed in the forums of the region, proudly multicultural and confident of its place in our neighbourhood.” Australia is also a member of the G20, with the world’s 12th largest GDP as well as the 5th highest GDP per capita and was the only developed country to avoid recession during the global financial crisis. He further stated that “Australia is forecast to realize average annual real GDP growth of 3% between 2012 and 2018, the highest forecast among major advanced economies.”

H.E. Rod Smith also spoke about the economic transformations of Asia. He believes that Australia has been a beneficiary of this phenomenon and that its prosperity over the last decade benefited greatly from China’s rise. Despite that, Japan remains one of Australia’s largest trading partners.

He noted the importance of ASEAN and Southeast Asia to Australia. He said that ASEAN is Australia’s second largest trading partner after China. It is also a vital institution that plays a cohesive and positive role in regional economic and social integration. Australia’s links with ASEAN are varied and deep. This year Australia commemorates the 40th anniversary of its formal dialogue partnership with ASEAN and is proud to be ASEAN’s first dialogue partner and to support ASEAN’s role at the centre of regional institutions. Southeast Asia is also fundamental to Australia’s strategic

and economic interests. Situated at the intersection of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Southeast Asia acts as a fulcrum for the rapidly intensifying exchange of goods, people and knowledge between East, West and South Asia.

He also highlighted that “Australia’s future security and prosperity will depend heavily on the region remaining peaceful, secure, stable and prosperous.” In short, Australia’s interests are best served by a stable balance of power in Asia that encourages economic integration, inclusive and outward looking. There is therefore a need to build a comprehensive relationship with Asia. This explains Australia’s continued support for and engagement with the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Defence Ministers Plus process and the East Asia Summit.

With regards to Australian foreign policy, he said that Australia has a very clear focus on the Asian region but not to the exclusion of the world beyond. Australia has long-established links to other parts of the world and a strong commitment to global institutions such as UN and WTO, and international law. This year, Australia holds a seat at the UN Security Council and is pleased to be supporting Malaysia’s candidacy for membership of the Security Council for the next term.

Excellence Service Award

On 14 May 2014, a total of 110 officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia including the Malaysian Missions Overseas received the Excellence Service Award. The ceremony was officiated by the Foreign Minister, Dato' Sri Anifah Haji Aman in the Auditorium, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Malaysia.

The purpose of this ceremony was to acknowledge the hard work of the officers who had shown excellent performance throughout 2013. It was also to acknowledge the dedication and commitment given by them in

conducting their responsibilities and achieving their Key Performance Indicator. In his speech, Dato' Sri Anifah Haji Aman hoped that this award would not only give motivation to the recipients but also serve as an inspiration to others to increase their quality of work as well as performance. A better group of officers will lead to a better ministry and service. Seven IDFR officers were among the award recipients; Ms. Rahimah Yeop from Academic Studies, Research and Publication Division, Ms. Azmah Mahmud from Training Division as well as Ms. Nor Azura Mior Daud, Mr.

Sebastian Anak Dio, Mr. Mat Basir Jaafar, Mr. Alif An Naz Nazaruddin and Mr. Ibrahim Nor from Corporate and Management Services Division.

My Experience as a Diploma in Diplomacy Participant Contributed by Choo Hwai Jeng



On 3 February 2014, I arrived at the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR), Kuala Lumpur to start the new phase of my career as a Malaysian diplomat. It has been three years, nine months and 30 days since I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia on 3 April 2010. In between this period, many of my seniors were talking about their lives being a diplomat, but never once did they fail to highlight that the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) is the prerequisite for a Malaysian diplomat to be considered for posting.

With such expectations, 16 of us arrived and registered ourselves with Ms. Rosida bt Ismail, Mr. Haris Syarwani bin Razali and Ms. Shermawaty bt Awang Sahari, our course coordinators to start the DiD programme. We

were aware that many pairs of eyes were looking at us and assessing our performance. Therefore, we had done our best in order to perform in all the modules. Since most of us had worked in the Ministry for three to four years, the academic modules were useful as we could relate it to the tasks that we had performed, namely drafting reports, meeting minutes, note verbales, speeches and others. Not to forget that the module on *Defending National Interest* also created many sleepless nights among us, knowing that we will be grilled by international journalists and senior officers for half an hour on delicate issues.

Other than academic modules, the attachment programme in a foreign mission was useful and interesting for everyone. This time around, we were

fortunate that we got the opportunity to be attached with the biggest Malaysian Mission abroad, our Embassy in Jakarta. Other than siteseeing, we also attended briefings in our Embassy, as well as KEMLU (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia) and the ASEAN Secretariat. Thank you to our Head of Delegation, Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim for giving us the opportunity to have a dialogue with the prominent industry captains of Malaysia in Jakarta.

One thing I would not forget about the DiD programme was the teamwork and team spirit that was formed among the participants over the course of the programme. Every one was required to perform certain duties for many events in DiD namely, becoming masters of ceremony, speech writing, programme master and others. None of us shrugged from our responsibilities. Eventually, all events were completed without any hiccup.

The DiD programme definitely is a stepping stone for a Malaysian diplomat to obtain necessary skills and confidence to embark on an exciting and demanding career. I personally cherished the moments.

My Working Experience at IDFR

Contributed by Syahrul Nizzam Nordin



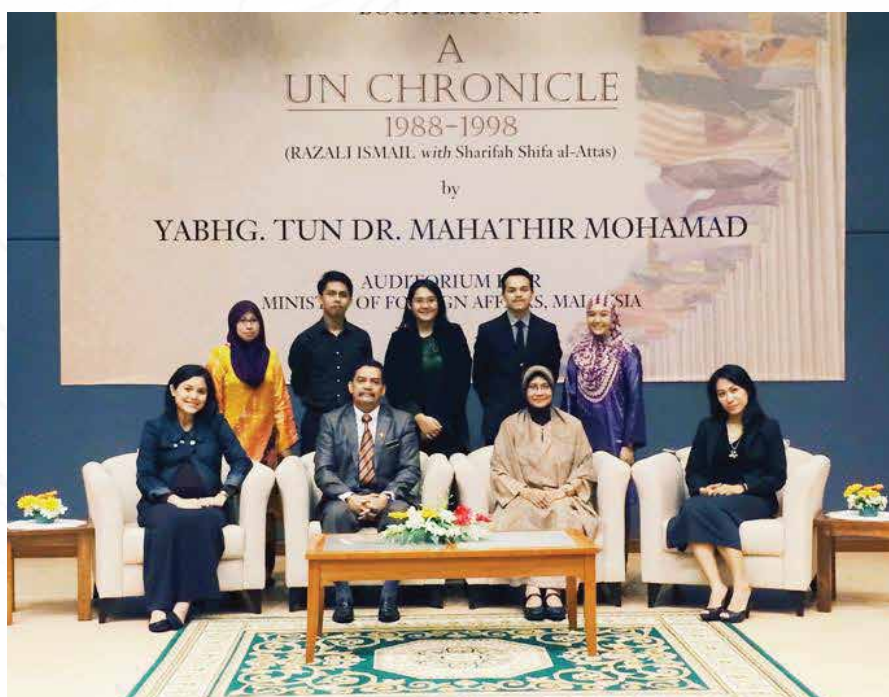
My experiences as a Part-Time Daily Employee (PTDE) under the Academic Studies, Research and Publication Division, IDFR were overwhelming and thrilling, an experience of a lifetime. I was a PTDE for approximately nine months, working specifically on Public Affairs which included conducting interviews with distinguished figures and course participants; managing IDFR's Facebook account and web portal; writing reports of IDFR's events and invited events; helped with research and compiling contents for the IDFR publications. Within the nine months, I was blessed with the opportunity to meet our heroes and leaders, namely, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad and his wife, Tun. Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali; our current Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak; Deputy Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin; the Foreign Minister, Dato' Sri Anifah Haji Aman; and Deputy Foreign Minister, Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin and former ambassadors/diplomats who have contributed in shaping our foreign policy today. My knowledge on current global, regional and domestic issues expanded through the seminars and conferences that IDFR organised and co-organised, or were invited to. These

conferences, lectures and talks have also increased my interests and passion in ASEAN and the regional issues such as the South China Sea.

Working as a PTDE at IDFR was truly an amazing experience. It creates, to me, a platform for fresh graduates to find a job, to gain knowledge and experience and to build networking with professionals from various fields. I was fortunate to be placed under the Academic Studies, Research and Publication Division. My colleagues helped me in various ways, showing me the proper and formal way to write letters and e-mails,

filing and how to deal with certain people. Throughout my year at IDFR, the hardest task given was to be in charge of the invitation list for the book launch of Tan Sri Razali Ismail's book titled, *A UN Chronicle*. It was my first time and I did not know much about the protocol aspects. With the time constraint, I tried to cut corners and as a result, made several crucial errors.

The event, however, went well. The auditorium was filled with former and current diplomats, foreign ambassadors, academicians, government officials and members of the media. Another achievement that I was very pleased with was being able to arrange an interview session to promote the book, where both Tan Sri Razali and IDFR's Director General, Dato' Hussin Nayan were featured on Agenda Awani, a slot in Astro Awani. Overall, I was blessed with the opportunity, with this experience. As I developed my soft skills, knowledge, networking and attributes; because of IDFR, I am now working at the Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMMF) as a researcher. My ambitions have grown and I hope that one day, I can serve our nation as a diplomat.



What They Say...



**Ms. Dk Nor Zaidah Hayati
Pg Hj Shahminan**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade,
Brunei Darussalam
(Course participant of the ASEAN-China
Young Diplomats 2014)

“It was a very beneficial and enjoyable course. Not only did I get to learn more about China-Malaysia relations, ASEAN-China relations and Malaysia’s culture, I also got the opportunity to make new friends from every single ASEAN member state and also China. The sessions which involved group discussions and simulation exercises were one of the highlights of the course as it gave us an opportunity to exercise our understanding of the topics discussed. Our visits to Langkawi and the arts centre were also undeniably memorable as it allowed us to learn more about Malaysia and its culture.”



Mr. Joel Jonathan Delgado

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dominican
Republic
(Course participant of the MTCP: English
Language for Diplomacy Course 1/2014)

“I was amazed by the quality of professors and trainees. It had been great for me to improve my language skills for which I’m thankful. In the beginning I thought this course was about just negotiation and vocabulary acquisition, but it has gone further, with the visits and the classes along with the secretariat’s help. The varied participants from different cultures made the course very harmonious and the class environment was always right.”



Ms. Tudose Camelia Narcis

Embassy of Romania in Malaysia
(Course participant of the Conversational
Malay 2014)

“It is an excellent class. We had been offered not only the language understanding, but the kind teacher also offered a cultural perspective and understanding of its value. The way our teacher explained with stories about the Malay way of life and the meaning of the words were very enjoyable. I am hoping the class can be extended to the next level.”

Upcoming Courses/Events at IDFR *

Arabic Level II	4 August-31 December 2014
Arabic Level VII	5 August-30 December 2014
Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses under <i>Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara</i> (SPKM) 4/2014 (Grade 41 and Above)	11-22 August 2014
MTCP: Workshop on Diplomacy for Senior Officials	25-29 August 2014
Effective Presentation Skills 2/2014	26-29 August 2014
Diploma in Diplomacy 2/2014 : Regional and International Affairs Module (RIAM)	28 August-4 September 2014
MTCP: Strategic Analysis for International Participants 2014	1-19 September 2014
Basic Conversational Malay	2 September-18 November 2014
Spanish Level VI	16 September-25 November 2014
Spanish Level III	17 September-26 November 2014
Building Blocks of Good English 2/2014	22-26 September 2014
Mid-Career Course for Diplomats	22 September-3 October 2014
French Level I	22 September-1 December 2014
French Level VIII	23 September-2 December 2014

* Subject to changes

Best Wishes

To our new colleagues, who recently joined the IDFR family

Ahmad Kham Abu Kassim
 Dev Kumar A/L Balakrishnan
 Lim Hui Chin
 Amirul Mustafa Bakri
 Farah Dibah Abu Hanipah
 Nik Nazarina Nek Mohamad

To our colleagues, who left us with pleasant memories

Mohd Farid Mohd Arif
 – transferred to the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia
 Rosmahyuddin Baharuddin
 – transferred to the Public Service Department of Malaysia

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

Zanariah Abdul Malek

Suriya Zanariya Zakaria

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