

IDFR 2019

Annual Report



Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia



An aerial photograph of a university campus. The image shows several large, modern academic buildings with red-tiled roofs and white walls. A central courtyard features a large, circular fountain with a blue and white design. The campus is surrounded by lush green trees and landscaped grounds. A paved road runs along the right side of the image, and a parking lot is visible in the lower right corner. The text "IDFR 2019 ANNUAL REPORT" is overlaid in the center of the image.

IDFR 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

IDFR 2019 Annual Report

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Email: info@idfr.gov.my
Facebook/Twitter: @IDFRMalaysia

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MESSAGE

from the Secretary General,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia



I wish to congratulate the Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR) for concluding another successful year in 2019. As the primary training institution for Malaysian diplomats, IDFR plays an important role in equipping our Foreign Service officers with the essential skills, knowledge, and tools to enable them to effectively carry out their duties and functions abroad.

In this dynamic and globalised world, we are constantly faced with various global challenges and multifaceted issues of international concern. As diplomats, our principal duty is to ensure that our national interests are promoted and protected at all times. We must be able to respond swiftly to all changes and equip ourselves with the necessary skills.

Foreign Service officers must also keep themselves updated and abreast on new developments on international relations, as well as Malaysia's domestic challenges and policies in order to be able to advance Malaysia's interests. This requires versatility, breadth of knowledge, resourcefulness, communication, and collaboration to drive results in ever-changing conditions.

It is therefore imperative that the programmes conducted at the Institute must continue to meet the demand and challenges faced by our Foreign Service officers. A more focused and tailor-made training programmes that would equip them with the core skills, relevant diplomatic tools, and know-how must be developed to achieve this objective.

Over the course of the early part of 2020, the global community is facing the unprecedented crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government is putting all efforts to curb the spread of the virus. Malaysian diplomats all across the world are mobilised to assist Malaysians stranded due to the outbreak in foreign countries.

In crisis such as this, diplomats must be quick and efficient in our communication. Some situations might require us to promptly articulate the Government's positions and policies to Malaysians living abroad. It is crucial that, in times of crisis, not only must diplomats be versatile, they must also possess the knowledge, skill, and resourcefulness to manage whatever situation comes their way.

It is clear that IDFR has another full and challenging programme of work in store for 2020, albeit it needs to be further refined to attune to the new normal. I am confident that the Institute will build upon the success of 2019, for a better 2020.

Last but not least, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dato' Mohd Zamruni Khalid, former Ambassador of Malaysia to Vietnam, on his appointment as the new Director General of IDFR in August 2019. Dato' Mohd. Zamruni brings with him a vast experience in diplomacy and foreign relations that would help steer IDFR to greater heights. I would also like to thank Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, former Director General of IDFR for his contribution and innovative ideas when helming the Institute from 2017-2019.

On that note, I wish IDFR all the best in the year ahead.

DATO' SRI MUHAMMAD SHAHRUL IKRAM YAAKOB

FOREWORD

by the Director General,
Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations (IDFR)



I am pleased to present the Annual Report, which provides a summary of the various programmes and activities undertaken by IDFR in the year 2018. First and foremost, I extend my deep appreciation to my predecessor, Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany, who helmed IDFR from February 2017 to April 2019. His tireless efforts and meticulous planning had set IDFR to soar into another remarkable year in 2019. The various training programmes, intellectual discourses, seminars, and forums as well as being host to several events were undertaken successfully. These achievements were made possible through the hard work and team efforts of dedicated and committed officers and staff of IDFR.

As the training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the core business of IDFR is the training of diplomats and diplomatic officers, both local and foreign. In 2019, IDFR successfully organised 33 courses and 11 discourses involving participants from various disciplines. The Institute also organised three programmes under the aegis of the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, a platform for Malaysia to share its development experience and expertise with other developing countries. To promote intellectual discourse on various subjects related to diplomacy and international relations, IDFR also organised lecture series, roundtables, forums and workshops throughout the year.

One of the Institute's flagship programme – the Diploma in Diplomacy – was organised from 11 February to 23 August, and was attended by 21 bright and aspiring junior officers of the Ministry. The six-month programme encompassed attending modules at the Institute and undergoing the internship programme at the Malaysian Diplomatic Missions in New Delhi, Jakarta, and Manila. They were also tasked to organise various events to complement the classroom learning as well as be involved in community services programme.

The other flagship programme is the Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy, which commenced in September 2019. The programme saw the enrollment of six Malaysian students and three international students for the 2019/2020 intake.

The year 2019 was also a notable one as IDFR has been tasked to be the Knowledge Management (KM) secretariat and oversee the implementation of knowledge management at the Ministry. In implementing this initiative, the Institute has taken various steps including the formation of IDFR's KM team, officers and staff are sent to KM-related courses to gain understanding on KM processes, the establishment of KM committee with representatives from Wisma Putra to coordinate the implementation of KM with regular meetings as well as development of KM portal.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to His Royal Highness Sultan Dr. Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah, the Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan for His Royal Highness' support. My sincere appreciation also goes to Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Datuk Wira Marzuki Yahya, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Dato' Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their guidance and unstinting support for IDFR's programmes and activities.

DATO' MOHD ZAMRUNI KHALID

**Institute of Diplomacy
and Foreign Relations (IDFR)**

INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, or IDFR in short, has been the training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia since 2004. Established in 1991, the Institute trains Malaysian Diplomats in the areas of diplomacy, international relations, soft skills, and foreign languages. It also trains diplomats and other officials from recipient countries under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme as well as the ASEAN Secretariat in areas including diplomatic training, strategic analysis, and economic diplomacy.

IDFR is made up of four learning centres. They are:



The four centres are supported by Management Services Division

One of the Institute's flagship programmes is the *Diploma in Diplomacy*, a six-month intensive course for junior Malaysian diplomats in preparation for their first posting to Malaysian Missions. IDFR has also been offering another flagship programme – a one-year *Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy*, a joint programme with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, which has been in place since 1999.

To complement classroom learning, discourses comprising lectures, forums, round table discussions, and workshops are also organised on a regular basis. Prominent figures who have addressed audience at IDFR include Kofi Annan, Yasser Arafat, Benazir Bhutto, Nelson Mandela, Sultan Hassanah Bolkiah, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Ban Ki-moon, Gareth Evans, Helen Clark, Tan Sri Rais Yatim, Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Tuanku Muhriz, and His Royal Highness Sultan Dr. Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah Al-Maghfur-Lah, the Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan and the Institute's Royal Patron.

IDFR also organises an annual *Cultural Appreciation Day*, which enables the foreign participants to introduce and showcase their respective country's culture and cuisine. It also allows them to experience more of the Malaysian culture through various performances and activities.

Among the Institute's collaborators are the Association of Former Malaysian Ambassadors, Foreign Policy Study Group, Global Diplomatic Forum, International Committee for the Red Cross, MERCY Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Universiti Malaya, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, and the foreign missions in Kuala Lumpur.

IDFR also has a panel of Distinguished Fellows, made up of former Malaysian ambassadors who are experienced practitioners and also outstanding academicians in the field of diplomacy and international relations, who contribute ideas and continuously support the growth of the Institute.

IDFR has a wide range of facilities that include:

- Training rooms
- Meeting rooms
- Library
- Language lab
- Computer lab
- Auditorium
- Multipurpose hall
- Hostel
- Gymnasium
- Swimming pool
- Tennis cum futsal and squash courts
- Wireless coverage



IDFR's main block

IDFR's Royal Patron and Distinguished Fellows

Royal Patron

**His Royal Highness Sultan Dr. Nazrin
Muizzuddin Shah ibni Almarhum
Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah**
The Sultan of Perak Darul Ridzuan

Distinguished Fellows

HRH Tunku Zain Al-‘Abidin ibni Tuanku Muhriz
*Founding President
Institute for Democracy and Economics Affairs*

Tan Sri Razali Ismail
*Chairman
Cypark Resources Berhad*

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan
*Former Chairman & Chief Executive
Institute of Strategic and International Studies*

Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi Haji Abdul Razak
*Secretary General
World Islamic Economic Forum Foundation*

Tan Sri Hasmy Agam
*Former Chairman
Human Rights Commission*

Tan Sri Abdul Kadir Mohamad
*Distinguished Fellows
Institute of Strategic and International Studies*

Professor Dato’ Dr. Zakaria Ahmad
*Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
HELP University*

Dato’ Dr. Mohd Yusof Ahmad
*Director
Institute of ASEAN Studies and Global Affairs UiTM*

Dr. Chandra Muzaffar
*President
International Movement for a Just World*

Professor K.S. Nathan
*Principal Fellow
Institute of Ethnic Studies
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*

Professor Dr. Sufian Jusoh
*Deputy Director
Institute of Malaysian and International Studies
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*

Datuk Dr. Chamil Wariya
*Chief Executive Officer
Malaysian Press Institute*

Dr. Ngeow Chow Bing
*Director
Institute of China Studies
University of Malaya*

Madam Chee Yoke Ling
*Director
Third World Network*

The IDFR Team

Director General

Dato' Mohd Zamruni Khalid
(From 6 August)



Heads of Centres



**Ms. Norli Muadza
Mohd Noor**

Director of Centre for
Political Studies and
Economic Diplomacy
(From 31 October)



**Mr. Hamizan
Hashim**

Director of Centre for
Leadership, Negotiation
and Public Diplomacy
(From 1 November)



**Mr. Ruzaimi
Mohamad**

Director of Centre
for Languages and
Cultural Diplomacy
(From 14 August)



**Mr. Mohd Suhaimi
Ahmad Tajuddin**

Director of Centre
for Competency
Enhancement
(From 17 December)



**Ms. Barathi
Muniyandi**

Acting Director
of Management
Services Division

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL



Ms. Fadhlin Jaffar

Mr. Muhamad
Ramdan NorIDFR
TEAM**Not in photo:**

Ms. Romancitta Natalie Dusipil

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Ambassador
Mohammad
Azhar Mazlan
(Until 30 October)Associate
Professor Dr.
Norraihan ZakariaDr. Wan Liyana
Mariah Wan
Zainal Abidin
(Until 5 April)Dr. Wirdawati
Abdul Rahim
(Until 5 February)Ms. Noraini Awang
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Abd LatafMs. Noraziah
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Mohd ShariffMr. Amirul Khairi
Mustafa BakriMr. Muhammad
Shafiy Mazlan
(Until 28 February)Mr. Fakhrul Arifin
Mohammad
Zulkifly

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Ms. Nazirah
Nazaruddin
(Until 18 July)

Ms. Suhaiza Sabri



Ms. Suhaini Ramli

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(Until 13 August)



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(Until 31 October)



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Zainul Ariff



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(Until 31 October)



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Muai



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Abd Karim



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Anuar Yusof



Mr. Mohd Zul Aiman
Zainal Abidin



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Ms. Norhashikin
Hassan



Mr. Azrul Nizam
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Mr. Alif An Naz
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Mr. Muhammad Najib Zulkifly

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Ms. Badriyah Johari



Ms. Nor Azura
Mior Daud



Ms. Nur Idayu
Abdullah



Mr. Mohd Shahhizam
Che Ahmad



Ms. Che Nurul
Huda Che Aziz



Ms. Gurnam Kaur
Hari Singh



Mr. Ahmad Yani
Kamaruddin

Not in photo:

Mr. Mohamad
Fitri Ghazali

Corporate Affairs Section



Ms. Norlela Samad



Ms. Deborah
Tan Sue-Yuen
(Until 24 November)



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Mohamed



Mr. Mohd
Issammuddin Sayuti



Ms. Ida Rosyanty
Ishak



Ms. Hanriyani
Sahmawi

Office of the Director



Ms. Nik Latifah
Mohd Zaki

**Centre for Political Studies
and Economic Diplomacy**

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES AND ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

The Centre for Political Studies and Economic Diplomacy focuses on the areas and issues of diplomacy and international relations, bilateral and multilateral political, economic, and trade relations as well as security. The Centre organises courses on relevant, current, and varied subjects related to political studies and economic diplomacy, including those offered under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP). The Centre also organises intellectual discourses on topical issues related to political studies, economic diplomacy, and international relations through its various lecture series.

The Centre welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with other ministries and government agencies, foreign governments, international and regional organisations, local and foreign think tanks as well as universities to generate, share, and disseminate practical knowledge in political studies and economic diplomacy to our participants and other diplomacy practitioners.

Strategic Analysis Course for Malaysian Participants

The Centre organised its first training programme for 2019 from 4 to 8 March. The *Strategic Analysis Course for Malaysian Participants* was designed to enhance the participants' knowledge on strategic thinking and security analysis, and expose them to the changing political, security, and strategic environments of the modern world. The course contents covered, among others, *Malaysia's Foreign Policy, Introduction to Strategic Analysis, Malaysia's Approach to Innovative Service Delivery, Strategic Choice Process and the Art of Choosing in Diplomacy, Negotiation Tools for Strategic Analysis, Migrating to Opportunity - Labour Mobility in Southeast Asia Around the Globe, Law of the Sea Convention 1982 and its Impacts on Recent Development in South China Sea, Intelligence and National Security, Traditional and Non-Traditional Maritime Security, and Cyber Security-Digital Analysis and Risk Analysis.*



The programme was attended by 11 officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources, Ministry of Communications and Multimedia, Ministry of Health, National Institute of Public Administration, Royal Malaysian Police, Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, National Security Council, and Majlis Amanah Rakyat.

Economic Diplomacy Series 1/2019

On 6 March, the Centre organised its first seminar under its Economic Diplomacy Series. Titled *Malaysia-China Trade and Investment: Challenges, Opportunities, and the Way Forward*, the seminar brought together experts from the government and private sectors to deliberate the impacts of China's trade and investment on Malaysia's economy.

The seminar was divided into two sessions/topics, i.e. i) *Malaysia-China Trade and Investments from the Government's Perspective* and ii) *Malaysia-China Trade and Investments from the Private Sector's Perspective*.



The panellists for the first session were Mr. Unny Sankar Ravi Sankar, Director of the Belt and Road Initiative National Secretariat at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Malaysia, Ms. Li Yabin, First Secretary at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Malaysia, and Dr. Tham Siew Yean, Senior Fellow at the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore. Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Head of the Centre, was the moderator.

An overview of current trends, policies, challenges, and opportunities with regard to Malaysia-China bilateral economic relations was presented by the panellists. Mr. Unny Sankar reiterated the Malaysian Government's commitment to participate in and benefit from the Belt and Road Initiative. Other topics discussed include trade dispute settlement mechanisms, capital flows, and trade facilitation.



In the second session, Mr. Lee Heng Guie, Executive Director of the Socio-Economic Research Centre, Dato' Ong Chong Yi, Chief Executive Officer of Port Klang Free Zone Malaysia, Mr. Ong Chee Tat, National Deputy President of the SME Association of Malaysia, and Dato' Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, President of the Malaysia-China Friendship Association were the invited panellists. The session was moderated by Datuk M. Supperamaniam, Distinguished

Fellow of the Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia. The discussion focused on the experience of Malaysian SMEs in the Chinese market and outlined

the contributing factors to the hurdles faced by these firms to conduct business in China. The session also examined the role of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement in defining trade incentives for SMEs. Subsequently, the panellists recommended solutions that can facilitate better trade cooperation, including offering beneficial tips to Malaysian SMEs on how to enhance their business practices and competitiveness.

The seminar was attended by officials from various ministries and government agencies, members of several diplomatic missions and think tanks, IDFR's course participants, and university students.



IDFR Lecture Series 1/2019

On 15 March, the Centre collaborated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to organise a luncheon talk titled *Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons* by Dr. Gilles Carbonnier, Vice-President of ICRC. Dr. Carbonnier has over 30 years of professional experience in the areas of development economics, humanitarian action, and international trade and has been Professor of Development Economics at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva since 2007.



In his talk, Dr. Carbonnier discussed two main themes: i) the devastating humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons and ii) the current development in the discourse of such weapons. Firstly, he elaborated on how the foreseeable humanitarian consequences of nuclear

weapons contribute to and are contributed by the lack of adequate humanitarian response capacity to assist victims. He cited the account of Dr. Marcel Junod, the then head of ICRC delegation in Japan, who witnessed first-hand the devastating aftermath of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima in 1945, especially in terms of medical infrastructure, personnel, and assistance capacity. The catastrophic, long-lasting consequences of nuclear weapons render them incompatible with the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, namely, combatant distinction, civilian precaution, and proportionality of military response.

On the current discourse on nuclear weapons, Dr. Carbonnier expressed his concerns on the growing risks of nuclear escalations due to the gradual erosion of the nuclear disarmament and arms control framework, increasing regional and international tensions and threats, and the mainstreaming of nuclear weapons in politics. Despite the significant reduction of the number of nuclear weapons compared to that of the Cold War levels, he opined that the threats of use – especially among nuclear states and their

allies engaged in ongoing conflicts – are far greater today. Thus, ICRC, through various worldwide campaigns to raise public awareness on the impacts of nuclear weapons, urged global leaders and citizens to take immediate steps to reduce nuclear risks, such as ratifying the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons that would limit and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons. Dr. Carbonnier concluded his talk by indicating that a viable and humane geopolitical security is only achievable through progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives.

The talk was attended by officials from various ministries and government agencies, members of several diplomatic missions, officials from ICRC in Kuala Lumpur, representatives from the media, IDFR's course participants, and students from several universities.

MTCP: Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants 2019

IDFR, through the Centre, successfully organised the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP): *Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants* from 15 to 26 April. It was attended by 18 foreign participants from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Jordan, Lao PDR, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as two officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The programme was designed to provide exposure to young diplomats to various topics, including *Malaysia's Foreign Policy, Practices in Diplomacy, Multilateral Diplomacy, Crisis Management, International Negotiations, and Economic Diplomacy* by officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation. The participants were also taken to Batu Caves, Royal Selangor Pewter Centre, Kuala Lumpur Craft Complex, Kuala Lumpur Tower, and Kuala Lumpur City Centre as part of the cultural introduction to Kuala Lumpur, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Millennium Monument, Putrajaya International Convention Centre, and Putra Mosque.



At the closing ceremony, Ms. Jacqueline Chaze Malunga, the class representative and a Zambian diplomat, delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of the participants. A montage of the participants' activities throughout the two weeks was presented. The ceremony ended with the participants, resplendent in their beautiful and colourful national dress, performing *Rasa Sayang* and joined by all the guests.



MTCP: Crisis Management Course for Senior Officers 2019

The Centre organised its second MTCP course for the year from 23 to 30 June. The *MTCP: Crisis Management Course for Senior Officers 2019* was attended by 18 foreign participants from Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Georgia, Lao PDR, Mauritius, Nigeria, Oman, Palau, Palestine, Samoa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka,

Ukraine, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe, as well as four senior officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia.

The programme was designed for the senior diplomats emphasising on topics related to Crisis Management, inter alia *Strategic Thinking in Crisis Situations; Crisis Negotiations; Media Response in Crisis Management*, and *Breaking the Corruption Chain*. They also participated in two panel discussions titled *Malaysia's Economic Diplomacy* and *Malaysia's Aviation Crisis*. The speakers/panellists were serving officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Malaysian Investment Development Authority, Ministry of Primary Industries, as well as former ambassadors, namely, Dato' Dr. Fauziah Mohd. Taib, Dato' Iskandar Saruddin, and Dr. Azhari-Karim. A visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and various landmarks including the Putra Mosque, Millennium Monument, and Putrajaya International Convention Centre was also arranged as part of their study visit to Putrajaya. They were also taken to Batu Caves, Royal Selangor Pewter Centre, Central Market, and Kuala Lumpur Tower during the weekend, which enabled them to witness for themselves the vibrancy of Kuala Lumpur.

During the closing ceremony, Ms. Shireen R.S. Far, the class representative and a Palestinian diplomat, delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of the participants. A montage of the participants' activities throughout the eight days was shown prior to everyone enjoying a wide spread of hi-tea. Ambassadors from Ukraine, Georgia, Egypt, Palestine and representatives from the embassies and high commissions of Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe were present at the ceremony.



Considering the positive feedback and the attendance by members of the diplomatic corps during the closing ceremony, the course was a success for the Centre and IDFR.

MTCP: Economic Diplomacy Course for International Participants 2019

The Centre concluded its third and final MTCP course for the year – the *MTCP: Economic Diplomacy Course for International Participants 2019* – on 31 July. The two-

week programme was held from 17 to 31 July 2019, and was attended by 18 foreign participants from Bangladesh, Brazil, Brunei, Cambodia, Cabo Verde, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, Solomon Islands, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe, as well as four officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

The course was designed to enhance the participants' knowledge on economic planning and policies, negotiations, investments, and trade, as well as provide them with an exposure to Malaysia's efforts in nation building towards transforming its economic growth, governance, and social development through lectures, discussions, simulation exercises, and study and networking visits. The topics covered include *Malaysia's Foreign Policy*, *Malaysia in ASEAN from the Economic Perspective*, *Malaysia and the WTO*, *Malaysia and the Belt & Road Initiative*, *Navigating the U.S.-China Trade Wars from the Economic Diplomacy Perspective*, *International Negotiations*, and *Global Trends in International Sustainable Finance*. The participants also visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Petroliaam Nasional Berhad, World Bank Group, as well as AirAsia Berhad, where they met and interacted with the Group Chief Executive Officer, Tan Sri Tony Fernandes. They also participated in IDFR's annual Cultural Appreciation Day, held on Tuesday, 23 July, and were taken on tours of Kuala Lumpur, Melaka, and Selangor during the weekends.



The Closing and Certificate Presentation Ceremony was held on Wednesday, 31 July. Present were representatives from the embassies and high commissions of Cambodia, Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, and Timor Leste, Heads of Centre of IDFR, as well as several guest speakers for the course. Mr. Helder Paulo Machado Silva, the class representative from Brazil, delivered a vote of thanks on behalf of the participants.

Based on the participants' feedback, they had benefitted from the programme and looked forward to maintaining and enhancing the network and camaraderie forged during the course.

Ambassador Lecture Series 1/2019

To commemorate the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Malaysia and China, the Centre organised a lecture titled *45th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations*

between Malaysia and China: Reflecting on the Past for a Prosperous Future on 19 September 2019. Held under the Ambassador Lecture Series, the speaker was His Excellency Bai Tian, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malaysia.

H.E. Bai Tian commenced his lecture by dividing the main theme into four subtopics: *China's development; China's foreign policy towards neighbouring countries; the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); and China-Malaysia relations.*

With regard to China's development, H.E. Bai Tian said that China is now the second largest economy and the largest trading country in the world. Its growth has contributed more than 30 per cent to annual world growth, with a GDP of USD 13.6 trillion in 2018.



China's foreign policy towards neighbouring countries is based on four keywords: friendship, good faith, mutual benefit, and inclusiveness. Guided by these keywords, the mutual trust between China and its neighbouring countries has strengthened and deepened the convergence of interests.

As for the BRI, H.E. Bai Tian described it as a platform for all-round cooperation, with aims of promoting a balanced, sustainable world economy as well as common prosperity for all. In order to achieve that, China is enhancing five connectivity areas: policy, infrastructure, trade, finance, and people-to-people.



In terms of China-Malaysia relations, H.E. Bai Tian explained that both countries have carried out mutually beneficial cooperation and have subsequently

gained from this bilateral friendship of mutual respect, equality, and harmonious coexistence. Moreover, it is an example of how big and small countries with different national conditions and political systems get along harmoniously, achieving win-win cooperation. He added that Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's two visits to China in less than ten months and his attendance at the 2nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing attest to the importance of China-Malaysia relations.

H.E. Bai Tian summed up his lecture by proposing that China and Malaysia become partners in implementing the BRI, in cultural and civilisational exchanges, in peaceful settlement of disputes and maintaining regional stability, as well as in promoting Asian values and upholding the international system.

The lecture was attended by approximately 70 guests, including officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and Malaysian

Investment Development Authority, members of several diplomatic missions, and representatives from the local academia.

IDFR Lecture Series 2/2019

On 3 October, the Centre organised the last IDFR Lecture Series for 2019 titled *Humanitarian Diplomacy and the Humanitarian Development Nexus: A New Frontier*. The lecture was delivered by Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus, President of MERCY Malaysia, and was held to enlighten about MERCY Malaysia's recent activities in providing humanitarian aid, enhancing medical care and other essential humanitarian services in crisis areas.

Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal shared MERCY Malaysia's efforts in human and capital development, which has now reached a reasonable rate of growth with many local Malaysian-based humanitarian partners and private corporations joining the bandwagon in terms of funding. However, more is needed with the increasing number of disasters, conflicts, and humanitarian emergencies worldwide.



Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal elaborated that a number of conflicts are rising steadily by the day, with climate change related incidents becoming more intense and frequent. Countries like the Maldives and Pacific Island states are very much vulnerable in the near future as rising sea levels can submerge these countries and the risk of displacements of civilian population is real. The phenomenon of El-Nino and El-Nina has also affected many states with flooding and drought causing severe problems with food securities. Typhoon Nargis that hit Myanmar was a wakeup call as sea water submerged millions of acres of rice planting farming areas that also affected the supply of rice in neighbouring export countries. He added that wars and conflict in Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq have also displaced millions of people in and outside of



these states; an average of approximately 100 people are killed daily in such conflicts and a third of the population are living in poverty. The destruction of such warring state economy has pushed unemployment levels to as high as 60 per cent. Many historical sites vital for the tourism economy in these states were also badly damaged due to the war.

In addition, Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal stressed that aid, relief and development programmes, and peacebuilding are dependent on each other for a successful humanitarian assistance. He added that humanitarian assistance has also developed into a much complex matter as new technology must be used to help in crisis situations.

Hence, contributions in terms of financial assistance, technology, and human capital from the private sector are very important. The understanding of these new crisis and its development in contrast to traditional relief practices is vital. Therefore, a new nexus and approach to handling humanitarian relief and aid is important.

With regard to future directions, Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faizal emphasised that persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act and to put the interests of people in need must however fit with the ideal fundamental principle for humanitarian efforts. It is only by putting humanitarian diplomacy first in day-to-day activities that the vision to help people in need can be effectively realised.

Economic Diplomacy Series 2/2019

The speaker for the Centre's lecture under its Economic Diplomacy Series was Tan Sri Datuk Dr Kamal Salih, Chairman of the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER). Held on 29 October, the lecture was titled '*What Must be Done to Achieve Vision 2030?*'

Tan Sri Datuk Dr Kamal commenced his lecture by explaining that in the 1970s, Malaysia started at a similar economic level with countries such as South Korea. However, along the way, the country has fallen behind the Asian Tigers – South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore – because Malaysia deindustrialised prematurely or lost in terms of competition for foreign investments to its neighbours due to the latter's lower unit labour costs or their higher labour productivity. He added that Malaysia aims to become like South Korea, who is a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Hence, Vision 2030, which is an extension of Vision 2020, is the Government's commitment to make Malaysia a nation that achieves sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution across income groups, ethnicities, regions, and supply chains. Under this Vision, ten quantitative targets were set, with emphasis on gross domestic product at a growth of RM3.4 trillion in 2030 and SMEs and micro businesses to contribute 50 per cent to GDP, among others. Tan Sri Datuk Dr Kamal further added that the Government is confident in reaching the targets, by focusing on high impact industries such as the aerospace industry, digital economy,



and high-tech farming. However, he added that Malaysia must enhance its efforts to counter corruption in order to maintain the trust of investors and partners as corruption can affect economic growth.



Tan Sri Datuk Dr Kamal also shared some of the work that MIER is doing with regard to achieving Vision 2030. He expanded on MIER's Research Programme which consists of eight clusters including the

Growth, Distribution & Macroeconomics (TIGER) Cluster, Technology and Innovation Cluster (The Malaysian Innovation Hub), and Financial Economics and Fiscal Policy Cluster.

The lecture was attended by approximately 78 guests, including officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, members of several diplomatic missions, and representatives from the local academia.

Forum on Global Issues

The inaugural *Forum on Global Issues* was held on 5 November. Held in the format of panel discussions to discuss selected current global issues impacting Malaysia's national interests, the half-day programme centred on the topics of *The Impact of Climate Change* and *Palm Oil: Countering the Negative Narrative* deliberated by local experts from various organisations.

The panellists for the first panel discussion were Professor Dr. Joy Jacqueline Pereira, Principal Research Fellow at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's Southeast Asia Disaster Prevention Research Initiative and Vice-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group 2 on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability; and Encik Ahmad Farid Mohammed, Undersecretary for the Climate Change Policy Division, Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change. The discussion was moderated by Dato' Dr. Mohd. Yusof Ahmad, a former diplomat and one of IDFR's Distinguished Fellows. Among the key takeaways from the discussion were the risks posed by global warming of 1.5°C are greater for present-day conditions, and it is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if global warming continues to increase at the current rate. Action to reduce and eliminate emissions of greenhouse gases would need to start as soon as possible if we want to limit warming to levels that will not undermine future wellbeing. Malaysia's Policy on Climate Change, Malaysia's Development Plan, Mitigation Related Policies and Plans as well as Malaysia's commitment under the Paris Agreement through Nationally Determined Contribution were also discussed.



The panel discussion on *Palm Oil: Countering the Negative Narrative* saw the participation of Dr. Zainab Idris, Deputy Director General of the Malaysian Palm Oil Board and Dr. Ruslan Abdullah, Director for Science & Environment of the Malaysian Palm Oil Council, and the session was moderated by Dr. Azhari-Karim, a former diplomat and author of several books including *New Narrative on Malaysian Foreign Policy* (2019)

and *Repositioning Malaysian Foreign Policy* (2012). Among the main points covered were Malaysia's commitment towards sustainability and it is putting in place various environmental measures and also implementing policies towards sustainable palm oil cultivation. In addition, it was indicated that the various campaigns were orchestrated to discredit palm oil which is the only vegetable oil certified as sustainable out of 17 vegetable oils. Furthermore, oil palm is not the main driver of deforestation as alleged by some parties as it accounts for only 0.31 per cent of world's agriculture land as opposed to livestock which accounts for 71.27 per cent. Malaysia also does not utilise the slash and burn technique causing transboundary haze as it practises a zero burning policy.

The event saw the participation of officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change, and Ministry of Primary Industry; representatives from the diplomatic missions; and lecturers and researchers from universities; among others.

Reflecting the Past: Malaysia-China Relations...The Undocumented

On 6 December, the Centre held a sharing session with two prominent figures who had assisted Malaysia in building a strong relationship with the People's Republic of China. They are Tun Michael Chen Wing Sum, Deputy Chairman of Malaysian South-South Cooperation Berhad and former *Yang di-Pertua Dewan Negara*; and Dato' Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, President of Malaysia-China Friendship Association and former Malaysian Ambassador to China. The title of the session was *Reflecting the Past: Malaysia-China Relations...The Undocumented* and was moderated by Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, Undersecretary of the South and Central Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Held at the Ministry, the talk focused on the relationship between Malaysia and China which began in 1971. Tun Michael Chen shared about how his journey to China started circa the 1970s. He was entrusted by Tun Abdul Razak to meet top Chinese officers to initiate contact in view of establishing diplomatic ties between China and Malaysia because he had gained the confidence and trust among the Chinese when he was the

President of the Malaysian Table Tennis Association. Tun Michael succeeded in laying the groundwork for further negotiations on the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. He cited that the Malaysians at that time, however, were not keen on having diplomatic ties with China. Nonetheless, Tun Razak was determined that the two countries needed to be friends, and in 1974, the Prime Minister received an invitation from Premier Zhou Enlai, Prime Minister of China, to visit Beijing, which marks the start of the historic diplomatic ties.

On the current Malaysia-China diplomatic relations, Dato' Abdul Majid, who served in China for a total of 12 years; first as an officer from the Prime Minister's Department and later as the Malaysian Ambassador to China, shared many of his valuable experience in working with the Chinese government. He applauded Malaysia for building ties with China 45 years ago that managed to solve many issues that could not have been resolved if not due to this friendship. He mentioned that managing relations with China is important in the coming years as there is an economic power shift that is focusing on Asia, which Malaysia could also benefit economically from being friends with China. Dato' Majid also urged Malaysia to learn from China's strategies especially on the open door policy and policy reforms that had brought them to the world map today.

The session was attended by more than 100 officers from the Ministry. Judging from the active Question and Answer session and feedback from the audience, the talk succeeded in disseminating 'behind the scene' information about the diplomatic relations between Malaysia and the People's Republic of China. ■



Centre for Leadership, Negotiation and Public Diplomacy

CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP, NEGOTIATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The Centre for Leadership, Negotiation and Public Diplomacy has been tasked as the leading centre for training in the areas of leadership, negotiation, and public diplomacy.

The Centre's flagship annual training – the *Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses* – oversees training in foreign policy, international diplomatic practices, security, and administration as well as management matters for future staff of our Malaysian Missions abroad.

The Centre also organises the Media Workshop. The workshop is aimed at preparing civil servants for the new dynamic age of ICT advancements and social media challenges of the 21st century. As public diplomacy gears into the digital age, such training is essential for Malaysian diplomats. This course was tailored specifically for junior and also senior officials from the Ministry and other government agencies.

Another flagship training provided by the Centre was the *International Negotiation Workshop*. The training puts a strong emphasis on building the art of diplomatic negotiations and problem solving with the interest of the nation in mind.



SPKM: Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses (Series 1 to Series 5)

The course is a mandatory course designed for government officers and their spouses to enhance and develop their diplomatic, administrative, and social etiquette skills as well as to expand their knowledge in international diplomatic practices applicable in their future postings. This is in line with the directive under a revised

Surat Pekeliling Am Bilangan 2 Tahun 2018 Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia (SPKM) di Luar Negeri dated 8 November 2018 and the decision from the first meeting of *Jawatankuasa Penyelarasan dan Pemantauan Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negeri* on 23 September 2009.

In 2019, IDFR successfully organised five series of the course. Series 1 was held from 5 to 14 March; Series 2 from 8 to 15 April; Series 3 from 8 to 17 July; Series 4 from 23 to 27 September; and Series 5 from 14 to 23 October. A total of 325 officers from 24 ministries and government agencies and their spouses, attended the course.

The course covered various aspects of management and diplomatic practices including aspects of diplomacy, administration, culture, security, integrity, protocols and work ethics. Among the modules for the course were lectures on *Malaysia's Foreign Policy; Cross Cultural Awareness; Grooming and Social Etiquette; Fine-Dining; Protocol and Consular Works at Mission; Auditing and Finance Matters; and General Administrative and Asset Management at Mission*. The participants also benefitted from briefings on *Enhancing Personal Security, Counter Terrorism 101, and Counter Espionage* delivered by the Special Branch Division, Royal Malaysian Police, the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT), and the Research Division, Prime Minister's Department.



To make the course current and relevant, two new slots were introduced in Series 5, namely, *Promoting Malaysian Palm Oil* by the Malaysian Palm Oil Board and *SPLN Accounting* by the Accounts Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Pursuant to the Cabinet's decision to rationalise Malaysian mission and agency offices and its representatives abroad with effect on 1 August 2019, a briefing on the rationalisation plan was delivered by Mr. Shaiful Anuar Mohammad, Undersecretary of Human Resource Management Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Leadership Course for Mid-Level Diplomats

Realising the growing importance of leadership skills, IDFR once again organised the *Leadership Course for Mid-Level Diplomats*, from 18 to 20 June. A total of 14 participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, mainly the Principal Assistant Secretary at Directorate levels, attended the course. Specially designed for the Mid-Level Diplomatic officers from

grades 44 to 52, this course helps to develop the participants' leadership, administrative, and organisational management skills and prepare them for responsibility, authority, and substance of becoming leaders in their respective organisations or groups.

The course aimed at preparing the participants on matters related to their roles and duties in managing staff and subordinates while they are assigned at the Malaysian Missions abroad. It also aimed to identify leadership potentials in each participant, increase the understanding and knowledge on various concepts, theories, and practical styles of leadership, as well as to improvise their diplomatic leadership while representing Malaysia in the international platform. The course was also designed to equip the participants with effective organisational management.

Throughout the three-day course, the participants were equipped with necessary leadership skills to lead the Malaysian Missions abroad. Overall, the course received positive feedback from the participants who had participated actively during the course. The consultant was able to display his mastery of the subject and had allowed interactive activities to take place to simulate leadership practices. Mr. Aiyub Omar, Head of the Centre, delivered his closing remarks and presented the certificates to the participants during the closing ceremony on the last day of the course.



International Negotiations Workshop 2019

The workshop was organised from 1 to 3 July, with the objective to develop and enhance the participants' self-confidence and effective negotiation and communication skills. Designed to expose the participants to the negotiation skills in the global setting as well as to share the experiences and the advanced knowledge on international negotiations, this workshop also served as an additional knowledge for the participants before they will be directly involved in any negotiating exercises representing their organisations, especially in the international platform.



Throughout the workshop, the participants were exposed to the scope, process, preparation, and techniques of effective negotiations. Among the methods used were case studies, presentations, and role plays to instill understanding of international negotiations in the participants. It also touched on intercultural awareness, communication, and strategies to achieve a win-win bargaining and levels of a successful negotiation. To complement the theories learnt, Mr. Shaharuddin Onn, Deputy Director General of Maritime Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also invited to deliver his lecture titled *Negotiations from a Practitioner's Perspective*.

The workshop was attended by 28 participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Water, Energy and Natural Resource, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and the Royal Police of Malaysia.

Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 2019

As the main goal of interaction is to influence the public thinking at the international level and promote one's national interest, effective public diplomacy activities and media skills help to promote and contribute towards a better understanding of Malaysia's foreign policy, and trade and economic policies, both regionally and internationally.



In line with this, IDFR successfully organised *Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 2019* from 27 to 29 August at Vistana Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. The workshop was attended by 25 participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Royal Malaysia Police, Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources, Forest Research Institute Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysian Palm Oil Board, and IDFR.



The aim of this workshop was to raise awareness among government officials about the role of public diplomacy in promoting and defending national interests. In addition, it served as an exposure, preparation, and information sharing to middle-level officials, grades 44 to 52, in handling questions and

answers during media press conferences and interview sessions in media simulations. The simulation exercises were conducted by Datin Yusanani Yushak, a well-known professional media consultant in Malaysia. Indeed, this workshop is vital for mid-career and senior officials of any Ministries and government agencies whose nature of work involves the handling of media and public diplomacy. The idea behind the workshop was to ensure that the government officials know how to handle difficult questions from the media without embarrassing themselves and their respective organisations.

Throughout the three-days, the participants had gained a lot of information and obtained the necessary skills required to better communicate and handle the media effectively within the context of public diplomacy and advocacy. Furthermore, the course helps to increase their awareness of public diplomacy and make them understand the importance of public diplomacy in promoting Malaysia's interests. The workshop ended on a high note with a Closing and Certificate Presentation ceremony on the last day. ■

Centre for Languages and Cultural Diplomacy

CENTRE FOR LANGUAGES AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

The focus of the Centre for Languages and Cultural Diplomacy is two-fold: languages and cultural diplomacy. The language courses conducted by the Centre are English, Arabic, and German. As for cultural diplomacy, the Centre seeks to explore and deliberate on the intertwining elements in culture and diplomacy, brought together through lecture series, workshop, and panel discussions. The language courses conducted are for both local and international participants. The local participants are officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other Ministries, and Government agencies involved in foreign relations. The cultural diplomacy lecture series and workshop, on the other hand, reach out to a wider audience, made up of government officials, the private sectors, diplomatic corps, non-governmental organisations, academia, and university students. In 2019, the Centre conducted a total of 19 programmes under languages and cultural diplomacy lecture series.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Say it Right: A Course on Pronunciation (Series 1 and 2)

The first series of this course was conducted from 19 to 21 February, attended by 13 participants from the Ministry of Health, Department of Skills, Royal Malaysian Police, Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, Royal Malaysian Custom Department, and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission. The second series was conducted from 3 to 5 September 2019 with 20 participants, among others, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister's Department, Ministry of Energy, Science and Technology, Parliament Malaysia, IDFR, and Royal Malaysian Custom Department.



The main objectives of this course were to raise the participants' awareness on the rhythm and pattern of the English language and improve their pronunciation skills to enable them to communicate confidently in English. The module for this course mainly focused on the common challenges Malaysians encounter as non-native speakers of the language – forming sounds that are not found in their mother tongue. The participants were introduced

to the rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns of the language and given the opportunity to practise these patterns through games, songs, role-plays, and simulations. It was evident that the interactive sessions were helpful in providing them with the flair and confidence to use the language and the drive to further improve their spoken communication in English.

Presentation Skills at the Workplace

The course was conducted from 11 to 14 March, attended by 25 participants from various ministries and government agencies, among others, Ministry of Education, Selayang Municipal Council, Youth Skill Development Division, Prime Minister's Department, Malaysian National News Agency (BERNAMA), and Ministry of Health. The main objectives of the course were to help the participants enhance their public speaking skills and build their confidence to speak eloquently in public.

During the course, participants were exposed to the various aspects and techniques in presenting at the workplace. They were trained to have the ability to pace their speech and use their voice to create impact in their delivery through the use of stress, intonation, pacing, and pausing. They were also introduced to the strategies to conquer nervousness and speaking anxiety, systematic ways to field different types of questions, and the approach to deal with audience.

The participants gave favourable feedback to the course. They were of the view that the course materials were well planned and sequenced accordingly. The course contents were easy to absorb and could be adapted to suit different types of public speaking and presentations, and many found the course beneficial and managed to enhance their presentation skills.

Fundamentals of English Language for Administrative Assistants

The course is conducted as an initiative towards improving the English communicative skills among the support staff (Grade 17–24) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Wisma Putra). The initiative to conduct the course was based on the growing awareness on the need to improve the English proficiency of government officials, especially those serving the Ministry locally and abroad. The course was successfully carried out from 16 to 18 April, attended by 17 participants.



The three-day course received positive and constructive responses from the participants; i.e. from Wisma Putra, IDFR, and Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT). On the final day, participants were requested to answer a questionnaire on the needs to enhance English proficiency among the staff of Wisma Putra. The data collected would be tabulated and analysed to further improve on the content, pedagogy, and

teaching methodology of the future English language proficiency courses conducted by the Centre. This short course was effective as a kick-start for the staff of Wisma Putra to equip and instil in them with good English communication skills and confidence to communicate in the language.

Practical English Language Usage for Executive Officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

As a continuous effort to improve the level of English proficiency among the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Centre has organised an English proficiency course aimed for the Executive Officers (Grade 29–36) of the Ministry. This three-day course was conducted from 23 to 25 April at the Institute, with 14 participants in attendance. The participants were from the Department of Bilateral Affairs, Department of Multilateral Affairs, Department of Management Services, Department of Policy Planning and Coordination, ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat, Department of Protocol and Consular, IDFR, SEARCCT, and Department of Maritime Affairs.



Throughout the course, the participants were exposed to the four language skills area of listening, speaking, reading, and writing of English. At the end of the course, the participants were assessed on their language proficiencies using the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR), an instrument used to measure the proficiency of second language learners of English. Besides determining the proficiency levels,

the framework could also be used to set the target as well as interpret language achievements of language learners. IDFR believes that this course could equip officers of the Ministry with the necessary English language abilities to carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.

Grammar Made Easy (Series 1 and Series 2)

The first series of the *Grammar Made Easy Workshop* was attended by 15 participants from various divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies, among others, the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission, Social Welfare Department, Road Safety Department, and Cure and Care Vocational Centre. It was conducted from 25 to 27 July. The second series was conducted from 24 to 26 September with 19 participants comprising of support staff from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Land, Water and Natural Resources.



Grammatical accuracy in spoken and written communication is an essential skill at the workplace. In light of this, the course aimed to improve and enhance the participants' language proficiencies with regard to the concepts of English grammar in the contexts of work. During the workshop, the participants were exposed to the correct

grammatical structure of English and were given the opportunities to integrate the English grammatical rules through hands-on activities such as role-play, socialising, discussions, and exchange of information. The participants were very receptive of how the workshop was designed and material used. They found the contents easy to grasp and found the workshop beneficial and able to enhance their grammatical abilities in presenting information verbally and in the written form.

The ABC of Writing – Write Accurately, Briefly, and Concisely

This four-day course on the *ABC of Writing – Writing Accurately, Briefly, and Concisely* was held from 22 to 24 October for 9 officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Selayang Municipal Council.

The aims of this course are to expose the participants to the grammatical elements of how the language is structured in writing and develop the participants' competence and skills in writing, to enable them to apply the principles of writing and enhance their ability to draft, write, and edit their written work. They were also guided on the fundamentals of the language to enhance their ability to write effectively. In general, the content of the module and the teaching methodologies used during the course were constructive. Most participants highlighted that they have benefitted a lot from the course especially in sentence construction and the mechanics of writing, giving them the ability to write in English confidently.

Practical English Language Usage for Junior PTD Officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The *Practical English Language Usage for Junior PTD Officers* course was conducted from 5 to 7 November. The three-day course was attended by 23 junior PTD officers from various divisions in Wisma Putra.

The course aimed at enhancing the participants' proficiency and confidence level in using the language, particularly at the work place. Emphasis was given to the four language skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing, paying particular attention to the correct use of grammar especially in the areas of tenses, subject-verb agreement, and sentence skills. Awareness raising activities were carried out to further enhance the participants' communicative skills. On the whole, the participants found the course beneficial to them and were eager to immerse themselves in all the activities and exercises planned.

English Language Module for Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD)

The above module is part of the language component of the *Diploma in Diplomacy* programme for 22 officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The module focused on enhancing the officers' English linguistic skills through confidence-building, accuracy, and fluency activities. The aim is to empower the officers to use the language confidently and effectively in their daily activities.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ARABIC

Arabic Level I

This course was conducted from 7 February to 23 April on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm. The 11 participants who attended the course were from the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission, Royal Malaysian Police, Malaysia Timber Industry Board, Forestry Department, Peninsular Malaysia, IDFR, and APSM Sdn. Bhd., a private institution. The objective of this part-time evening course was to equip the participants with the basic rudiments of the Arabic language, pertaining to words and phrases on greetings, introducing oneself, and expressions to convey wishes and preferences. This course gave the participants the opportunity to master the skills of listening, speaking, and understanding basic conversation in Arabic.

At the end of the course, the participants who went through the course showed a commendable grasp of the language during their oral presentation, and was of the opinion that the course was beneficial in helping them to understand the benefits and importance of learning Arabic.



Arabic Level III

This course is offered to participants who have completed the Arabic Level II course, held every Wednesday and Thursday from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m., for 42 contact hours spanning 4 months. This course, conducted from 4 September to 21 November, was attended by officers from the Ministry of International Trade and Industries, Office of the Negeri Sembilan State Government, National Transplant Resource Centre, Ministry of Health, Royal Malaysian Police, and SEARCCT.

The objective of this 42 hour part-time course is to impact and equip participants with a better understanding of the Arabic language, with emphasis on speaking, reading, and writing. The participants who successfully completed this course hopefully would continue to further their studies in the language.

GERMAN

German Level I

The above course was designed for beginners who wish to acquire basic German language skills. The *German Level 1* course was conducted from 10 September to 19 November with 14 participants from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of International Trade and Industries, Royal Malaysian custom, Embassy of Zimbabwe, SEARCCT, Ministry of Science, Technology, Environment and Climate, and IDFR. The class was carried out twice a week from 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm for a total of 42 hours.

The objective of this part-time evening course was to equip the participants with the basic rudiments of the German language, pertaining to words and phrases on greetings, introducing oneself, and expressions to convey wishes and preferences. This course gave the participants the opportunity to master the skills of listening, speaking, and understanding basic conversation in German.



At the end of the course, the participants who went through the course showed a commendable grasp of the language demonstrated through their understanding and ability to read and comprehend short simple interactions in German, and was of the opinion that the course was beneficial in helping them to understand the benefits and importance of learning German.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE MODULES FOR *DIPLOMA IN DIPLOMACY*

The *Arabic* and *German* language courses are part of the foreign languages module for the *Diploma in Diplomacy* Programme conducted for officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The aim of these intensive foreign language courses is to equip the officers with basic knowledge of the targeted language and better insights into each culture, in preparation for them to cope with the requirements of travelling and working in an Arabic and German speaking environments. In 2019, the span of the language class was for 90 contact hours spread from February to August. The course served as a good foundation for the participants to develop their competencies in the languages and instil in them an interest to further acquire the languages. At the end of the course, the officers showed a commendable grasp of the languages learnt.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY PROGRAMMES

Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series 1/2019

The first Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series for 2019 was held on 10 April 2019, with a former Ambassador of Malaysia, Ambassador Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad, as the speaker, speaking on *Culture and Art: A Diplomatic Experience*. This *Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series* is an avenue to raise awareness and enhance understanding on the approaches of cultural diplomacy in promoting peace and stability at the national, regional, and global level. Ambassador Dato' Mohd Yusof postulated that his interest in foreign art and culture sparked very early in life and was further consolidated through his 22 years of experience travelling the world as a Malaysian diplomat.

In his lecture, the definition of culture and art was emphasised as broad, almost endless and that numerous things can be regarded as culture and art, depending on how one sees them. According to Ambassador Dato' Mohd Yusof, "art is regarded as the creation and manifestation of something beautiful and ecstatic either in a visual or behavioural form while culture inculcates these forms is the way of life one chooses to live - with aims of making it interesting and entertaining." Thus, culture and art is inseparable, as



a shadow to a body. Art and culture as it is, enriches our lives naturally as it continues to evolve and develop without losing its originality and becomes a significant aspect around which human civilisation has evolved from the dawn of time.

Ambassador Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad also shared his observation that culture and art has the potential to be a diplomatic tool in developing relations

between countries, proceeding in various forms, as proven since the beginning of time up until this era of the fourth industrial revolution. Indeed, culture and art has never lost its charm. People's knowledge also broadens from the various cultural interaction of the world. In fact, it is also seen promising as an economic tool, income and revenue generating, especially for the tourism industry. The second highlight of the lecture was on how culture and art was represented through the people and their way of life: the level of adaptability, tolerance, and respect for life and nature. He also highlighted the representation of culture through performance and visual art. In a nutshell, Ambassador Dato' Mohd Yusof Ahmad has brought forward that not only has culture and art sparked his interest in becoming a diplomat and experiencing diversity around the world but more importantly it was the exposure that has made him a better informed and cultured person.

This lecture was well-attended by 120 participants and amongst the attendees were officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador of Thailand, and representatives from the Embassies of Cambodia, Philippines, and Laos, as well as the Dean for School of International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), and other academicians; the Diploma in Diplomacy, IDFR Master, SPKM participants of 2019; together with students from Universiti Teknologi Mara and UUM.

MTCP: Intercultural Awareness and Diplomacy Course 2019

The Centre organised a two-week *Intercultural Awareness and Diplomacy Course 2019* held from 15 to 25 July. This course, funded by the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), was attended by 23 participants from 20 countries. The participants were from Argentina, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Cambodia, Cameroon, Gabon, Georgia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, Palau, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.



The course aimed to expose junior to mid-career diplomats under the South-South Cooperation initiative, to the aspects of cultural values, beliefs and perceptions between

diverse cultural groups, and the aspects of intercultural communications. The aspects of intercultural communications were emphasised to raise the participants' awareness on how the psyche of a society could determine the way people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds interact with each other.

Among the special focus areas given were *Cultural Diplomacy within the ASEAN region*, *Cross-cultural Awareness*, *Cultural Innovation*, *The Role of Culture in Enhancing Bilateral Relations*, *Language and Diplomacy*, and *Cultural Dimensions in Negotiations*. In addition, there were also lectures on *Cross-Cultural Communication*, *Cross-cultural Psychology*, *Culture and Media*, and *Creative and Artistic Thinking*. These modules have enlightened the participants on the role of culture in international relations and how cooperation between Governments could be achieved through cultural diplomacy.



Cultural Appreciation Day 2019

In order to actively promote the spirit of “unity in diversity”, IDFR for the fourth year organised its *Cultural Appreciation Day* (CAD) on 23 July. The event was officiated by the Honourable Datuk Wira Marzuki Yahya, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia.

The event was attended by a culturally diverse crowd, which included several Heads of Mission and representatives from the foreign missions in Kuala Lumpur, officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other government agencies, representatives of think-tanks, members of the media, academicians, and students of higher learning institutions. The participants from the two MTCP courses: the Intercultural Awareness and Diplomacy Course, and Economic Diplomacy Course for International

participants 2019 showcased their cultures and arts. The MTCP participants from Zimbabwe, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Bangladesh, Brazil, Mauritius, Lao PDR, Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Timor-Leste, Georgia, Oman, Nigeria, Turkmenistan, Palestine, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Gabon, Palau, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, and South Sudan wore their traditional costumes to the event. The *Diploma in Diplomacy 2019* course participants promoted the diverse



cultures of Malaysia through local artwork, food, and the traditional costumes they wore of the different races in Malaysia. Cultural exhibitions, performances, food samplings, and traditional games were among the highlights at the 2019 CAD.

The Malaysian culture was also showcased through a welcoming dance - *Rebab Mahkota* and other traditional dance performances - *Rampaian*

Melayu from *Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negara*, followed by a traditional Malaysian instrumental medley performance - *Caklempong* by students from SM Sains Alam Shah, which captured the attention of many visitors that day. This event has proved, to a certain degree that cultural diplomacy is an important tool to further strengthen the spirit of multiculturalism and foster closer ties between a culturally diverse people. It has also enhanced understanding on the aspects of culture from other parts of the world that we come across in the pursuit of global peace and security.

Workshop on Intercultural Communication, Awareness and Diplomacy

The Centre welcomed 14 participants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Housing and Local Governance, Ministry of Education, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Public Service Department, Ministry of Entrepreneur Development, and IDFR to the *Workshop on Intercultural Communication, Awareness and Diplomacy* held at IDFR, from 18 to 20 September.



The three-day workshop aimed at raising and enhancing awareness on the aspects of cultural diversity, understanding on the connection between culture and diplomacy, and exposing them to the management of cross-cultural communication. Another aim of the workshop was for participants to understand and appreciate that intercultural diversity has positive implications to individuals as it eases communication, builds confidence and trust, and breaks down barriers. During the workshop, the participants were also exposed to the notion of cultural diplomacy as one of the many tools of public diplomacy and soft power that includes the “exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding”.

This workshop also focused on a practical approach to communication from an intercultural perspective and enhanced the participants' intercultural awareness and skills. This will enable them to assimilate and understand better the underlying assumptions affecting communication and behaviour. Issues, challenges, and ways in managing cross-cultural differences were presented through interactive lectures, activities, role-plays, and simulation exercises.

MTCP: Cultural Diplomacy for International Participants 2019

The Centre conducted a two-week course on *Cultural Diplomacy for International Participants* held from 29 October to 8 November 2019. This course is funded by the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), attended by 15 international participants from Argentina, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Cuba, Lao PDR, Palestine, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, and Zimbabwe. The aims of the course are to create mutual understandings among the 15 participants pertaining to culture and values towards fostering better cooperation and understanding among states, the use of cultural diplomacy to promote national interest, and the importance of cultural diplomacy as a tool of soft power in promoting long-term relations and international trust.

The course was conducted with modules on *Malaysia's Foreign Policy, Nation Branding and Cultural Diplomacy, Conceptual Framework on Culture and Diversity, Cultural Dimension in Negotiation and Mediation, Malaysia's Investment Policy, Halal as a New Source of Economic Growth, and Cross-cultural Psychology*, among others. Throughout the course, the participants learnt through interactive lectures, group discussions, simulation exercises, case study, and went on a state cultural awareness visit to Melaka. Besides classroom lectures and interactions, the participants were also taken on cultural tours within Kuala Lumpur. They visited Putrajaya and had the opportunity to study the development of the Federal Administrative Capital of Malaysia and the Intelligent City of Cyberjaya. Other than visits to Putrajaya and Cyberjaya, the participants also visited the Kuala Lumpur Craft Complex, where they had the opportunity to dabble in Batik painting and at the Malaysian Tourism Centre, they gained insights into the different ethnic cultures of Malaysia. During the walkabout in Kuala Lumpur, they were taken to visit the National Palace and Batu Caves, the site of a Hindu temple, and shrine a popular tourist attraction in Genting Highlands. At Kuala Lumpur Tower, the participants had a bird's eye view of Kuala Lumpur from the revolving restaurant, and learnt more about Malaysia's economic growth when they visited Petronas at the Petronas Twin



Towers. These modules and visits have helped the participants to better understand the importance of soft power in terms of cultural diplomacy in the global arena.

Knowledge Management Programme

Knowledge Management is a new programme introduced into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre was given the mandate to run an awareness-raising campaign on it. The first awareness-raising campaign on *Knowledge Management* was successfully carried out on 1 November, held during the Friday Morning Session in Putrajaya, at Auditorium WP1, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The objectives of the Friday Morning Session were to give early exposure to the staff of the Ministry on what *Knowledge Management* is all about and get them to better understand the importance of *Knowledge Management* as the impetus towards greater achievements within an organisation.

The speaker for the Friday Morning Session on *Knowledge Management* was Dr Khairil Hizar bin Mohd Khuzaimah from the Enterprise Content and Knowledge Management Unit, the Public Works Department, with a vast experience on the subject matter, and in attendance were 137 staff of the Ministry. Overall, those who attended the session found the talk beneficial and a good platform to instil awareness into *Knowledge Management* initiatives.

Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series 2/2019

The second Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series conducted by the Centre was held on 8 November at Cedar@15, Level 15, Impiana KLCC Hotel Kuala Lumpur, jointly organised with the Closing and Certificate Presentation Ceremony for the *MTCP: Cultural Diplomacy For International Participants Course 2019*, with 85 in attendance, including Malaysian government officials, foreign mission representatives, policy makers and analysts, academicians, non-governmental organisations, and also from the private sectors.

The speaker was Malaysia's Celebrity Chef, Dato' Chef Ismail Ahmad, one of the Malaysia's top chefs with more than 30 years of experience in the culinary industry. Among his repertoires as Malaysia's acclaimed chef are stints as host of culinary shows on Malaysian television such as *Aroma*, *Sri Murni*, *Hey Good Cooking*, *Wok and Roll*, and *Ala-Ala Kampung*, among others, and as Malaysian food ambassador at international culinary events.

During the talk, Dato' Chef Ismail spoke on *Cultural Diplomacy: Fostering Friendly Relations through Food* and shared his views on how food could be used to foster friendships and instil a sense of kinships among diverse group of people. In other words, the lynch pin to get people to build relations. The talk ended with a cooking demonstration on how to make Malaysia's traditional dessert "*Roti Jala*" served with chicken curry and also "*Onde-Onde*". He also invited two MTCP participants, one from Cambodia and one from Azerbaijan to try their hand at making "*Roti Jala*". Both participants clearly enjoyed the experience of making "*Roti Jala*" and the rest of the guests were able to comprehend that food could also be a tool of soft power towards peace and security at the global arena. ■



Centre for Competency Enhancement

CENTRE FOR COMPETENCY ENHANCEMENT

The Centre organises two flagship programmes annually – the Diploma in Diplomacy programme and the Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy.

The *Diploma in Diplomacy* programme is compulsory for all junior Administrative and Diplomatic Officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare them for their first postings at Malaysian Diplomatic Missions abroad. Conducted full time on an annual basis at the Institute, the programme endeavours to mould and equip these young officers with the essential skills and knowledge of effective diplomats.

The other flagship programme is the *Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy*, a collaborative programme between IDFR and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, which commenced in 1999. Through this programme, the Centre aims to provide opportunities to civil service officers, private sector professionals as well as fresh graduates from within Malaysia and abroad to build on and further enhance their knowledge, skills, and experience not only in diplomacy, foreign policy, international relations, and strategic theories but also in practical applications.

Ultimately, the Centre envisages moulding competent and inquisitive individuals who are better aware of the shifting global political and economic climate, and who are able to contribute their newly-acquired scholarship to either their workplace or the academia.

Diploma in Diplomacy 2019



Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) is a compulsory training programme that must be successfully completed by all junior Administrative and Diplomatic Officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prior to being posted to Malaysian Diplomatic Missions abroad. In 2019, the programme was held from 11 February to 23 August where a total of 21 junior officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister's Department underwent the programme on a full-time basis at IDFR.

The six-month programme aims at fortifying the participants' skills and knowledge in the field of diplomacy and international relations. Besides, the programme also creates a learning platform to inculcate the right attitude, mindset as well as values in the participants to better equip themselves on matters pertaining to the roles, responsibilities, and dynamics of Foreign Service in the new era. The modules of the programme were specially tailored to focus more on *Diplomatic Skills*, *Diplomacy*, and *International Relations* whereby the methodology of the programme was not limited to interactive classroom sessions alone. Several simulation sessions, role play exercises, and familiarisation trips were also incorporated as part of IDFR's initiative to deliver a training programme that is relevant and impactful.

Among the major highlights of the programme is the *Regional and International Affairs Module* which exposed the participants to pressing international issues through a simulation exercise on the United Nation's Security Council meeting. The participants were also exposed to the *Media Skills Module* which consisted of a simulated press conference on specific issues related to Malaysia. The module challenged the participants to display effective presentation and media-handling skills. Additionally, the participants had the opportunity to visit the Malaysian Diplomatic Missions in New Delhi, Jakarta, and Manila as part of the *Mission Attachment Module* to learn and familiarise themselves with the roles and responsibilities of diplomats abroad. This eight-day internship programme broadened their horizon especially through the hands-on experience acquired through life at missions abroad.

Similarly, strong emphasis was given to language mastery, particularly English. Besides, participants were also exposed to basic lessons on a foreign language of their choice – Arabic, French, or German. Resultantly, most of the participants had good grasp of the basic conversation as well as the culture of the chosen language. Nevertheless, their commitment to promote the Malaysian culture was also put to test through the *Cultural Appreciation Day* where they had to set up booth representing the cultures from various states in Malaysia.



Last but not least, the participants were also tasked to organise various events throughout the programme, such as *Teh Tarik Session with KSU*, *Study Visit to State Secretariats*, *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Outreach Programme at State*, *Iftar with IDFR Staff*, and *Roundtable Session with the Association of Former Malaysian Ambassadors on the New Malaysia's Foreign Policy Framework*. The *Teh Tarik Session with Secretary*

General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was held on 14 March at the Press Conference Room in Wisma Putra. During the event, the Secretary General, Dato' Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, shared his vision and expectation for the DiD 2019 participants as well as his experience gained throughout his diplomatic career.



The *CSR and Outreach Programme* consisted of activities such as engagement with local people and students and study visits to wildlife centres, state secretary offices, and key industrial areas in Sarawak and Pahang. *Round Table Session with the Association of Former Malaysian Ambassadors on the New Malaysia's Foreign Policy Framework* was held on 27 June where the guest speakers for the event were Tan Sri Othman Hashim, former Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Dato' Ibrahim Abdullah, former Malaysian Ambassador to France. Both speakers shared their experience as diplomats, offering advice and tips to the junior diplomats on ways to develop a successful and colourful career path in the Foreign Service.



The pinnacle of the programme was the Graduation Ceremony, held on 11 October at Le Meridien, Kuala Lumpur which was graced by the Deputy Foreign Minister, the Honourable Datuk Wira Marzuki Yahya. This event was also attended by Dato' Sri Muhammad Shahrul Ikram Yaakob, the Ministry's Secretary General, former Malaysian ambassadors and high commissioners, undersecretaries of the Ministry, representatives from the Public Service Department, DiD lecturers and speakers, IDFR's Distinguished Fellows, as

well as the family members of the graduates. Three special awards were conferred, namely the Minister of Foreign Affairs' Award, Secretary General of Foreign Affairs' Award, and Director General of IDFR's Award.

Ms. Syarifah Nor Amirah Syed Shamsudin was presented with the Minister of Foreign Affairs' Award for Overall Best Student; Mr. Mohd Shazmee Eddy Mohd Shah was awarded with the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs' Award for Leadership, and Mr. Muhammad Haidas Muhammad Sharif Song received the Director General of IDFR's Award for Academic Achievement.

Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy

The *Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy* is a collaborative programme between IDFR and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. This programme aims at providing a comprehensive understanding of the core issues related to the theories and practices of strategy and diplomacy. It prepares and equips students from diverse academic backgrounds with the ability to explore the relationship between strategy and diplomacy within the context of the changing global environment. Both compulsory and elective courses are offered in the programme, in addition to the requirement of writing a 30,000 word dissertation.

The programme requires all students to attend classes encompassing strategic and security issues, diplomacy, interstate relations, foreign policy, international political economics, international law, defence policy, and regional issues. Besides that, all students are also given the opportunity to participate in seminars and round table discussions with experts and prominent figures organised by IDFR and UKM.

The 2018/2019 Master of Social Science students, comprising of 7 Malaysian students and 4 international students from Japan, Spain, and Yemen completed and obtained their *Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy* in August. The new batch of 2019/2020 Master students, consisting of 6 Malaysian students and 3 international students from Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen attended the orientation programme at IDFR on 3 September. The students had the opportunity to have a discussion with Dato' Mohd Zamruni Khalid, the Director General of IDFR, during the welcoming ceremony at the institute.

IDFR warmly welcomes the new Master students to the IDFR family!

Protocol and Etiquette Course for IDFR Staff

This course was held on 12 November at Royale Chulan Bukit Bintang Hotel involving the participation of 39 staff of IDFR. The aim of the course was to expose IDFR staff to the fundamentals of protocol and etiquette, bearing in mind that IDFR is the esteemed training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which often organises many official events.



The course was conducted by Madam Rahimah Yeop, Learning and Development Director at Jendela Ilmu Solutions. Throughout the course, the participants were taught on the basic of protocol and etiquette that must be observed in various functions. Different types and levels of protocols were highlighted encompassing international, federal, and state protocols as well as observing protocol and etiquette in daily situations. Participants were also exposed to other elements of protocol relating to addressing the VIPs, seating arrangements, and dress codes. ■

Management Services Division

MANAGEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

Management Services Division provides support and administrative services to IDFR and ensures the practicality and efficiency of all management and operation activities of the Institute. The Division is made up of three sections, namely:

- Administration, Finance, and Human Resource Section
- Library and ICT Section
- Corporate Affairs Section

ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE, AND HUMAN RESOURCE SECTION

The section manages the day-to-day matters related to IDFR's general administration, assets, finance, and human resource.

Staffing

As of 31 December 2019, only 95 posts were filled while the remaining 40 were still vacant. Statistics pertaining to the posts by rank or grade are shown in Table 1.

Grade	Posts	Staffing	Percentage Filled (%)
Top Management			
Director General Premier Grade B (Open)	1	1	100
Head of Centre Premier Grade C (Open)	3	0	0

Grade	Posts	Staffing	Percentage Filled (%)
Professional and Management			
Grade 54	10	7	70
Grade 48 - 52	21	10	48
Grade 41 - 44	33	16	49
Support Group			
Grade 29 - 01	67	61	91
Total	135	95	70

Table 1: Staffing as of 31 December 2019

Staff Achievement

In 2019, 3 staff were awarded the Excellent Service Award by the Ministry. The list of award recipients is shown in Table 2.

No.	Name	Division
	Excellent Service Award 2019 (The certificate presentation was held during the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Excellent Service Award Ceremony on 9 October 2019)	
1.	Mr. Muhammad Jaafar Bin Abdul Karim	Management Services Division
2.	Ms. Norhashikin Binti Hassan	Management Services Division
3.	Ms. Mazulina Binti Mat Jusoh	Management Services Division

Table 2: List of Excellent Service Award recipients

Financial Allocation and Expenses

IDFR received an operating budget of RM8,906,500.00 in 2019. Its total operating expenditure for the year was RM8,794,959.23 (98.75%), leaving a balance of RM111,540.77 (1.25%).

Year	Operating Budget (RM)	Actual Expenses (RM)	Expenses In Percentage (%)
2019	8,906,500.00	8,794,959.23	98.75%

Library and Information Technology Section

The Library was set up to provide information and reference services especially for the Institute's staff and course participants. The services have also been extended to the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysian Ambassadors at Missions, researchers as well as the Foreign Missions in Malaysia.



The Library has a complete collection of materials relevant to IDFR's core business, including in international relations, diplomacy, and strategic studies. It continues to improve its services by enhancing its collection and providing an efficient and effective reference service. In 2019, the Library continued initiatives to inculcate reading habits



among the staff and course participants with the *Everyone Can Borrow* reading campaign. This book loan programme, with a door-to-door concept, has successfully increased the book loan statistics. The *Lets Read Together for 10 Minutes* and *Let's Share@IDFR* were also organised in 2019. These programmes aim to nurture a reading culture among the IDFR community. It is hoped that through these programmes, reading will become a daily habit. Other programmes organised by the Library were Monthly Excellent Reader's Award, Visits to Kuala Lumpur International Book Fair, the IDFR's Library Friendly Card, Mini Exhibition titled *62 Years of Independence*, and a Familiarisation Tour to IDFR Library for Diploma In Diplomacy (DID) Participants.

The ICT Unit provides services which include policy development, planning,

and project management to ensure the deployment and support of secured, reliable, and robust business applications, e-services, and infrastructure to the end users in IDFR. It is also responsible for strategising and deploying ICT solutions in line with the Electronic Government initiatives, through close collaborations with the various users and stakeholders.

In 2019, the Unit conducted a few sessions on ICT technology updates, in collaboration with the technology provider. The objective of the programme was to evaluate the latest technology in the market to be considered in the upgrading of IDFR's ICT infrastructure. The Unit also organised an *ICT Training on Portal Management* in collaboration with MAMPU to enhance the competency of the IT administrator.

Corporate Affairs Section

The Corporate Affairs Section, among others, coordinates courtesy calls and visits to the Institute, facilitates requests for collaborations with the Institute, extends invites and press releases to the media, and produces the Institute's periodical publications – the *Annual Report*, *Diplomatic Voice*, and *Prospectus*.



On 2 July, the Section coordinated the visit from the Foreign Service Academy (FSA) of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, headed by Ambassador Syed Masud Mahmood Khundoker, Principal of the Academy,



and accompanied by six other trainee officers of the Academy. The delegation, who was on a study visit to Malaysia from 26 June until 3 July as part of the Academy's 24th Specialised Diplomatic Training Course, was warmly received by Ambassador Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, the Acting Director General and other senior officers of IDFR. They were later given a briefing on the roles and functions of the Institute, as well as the programmes offered by IDFR.

Over the course of the year, the Director General received courtesy calls from members of the diplomatic corps. The courtesy calls were made by, among others, His Excellency Dr. Adel Mohamed Ali Ba Hamid, Ambassador of the Republic of Yemen to Malaysia on 15 February; His Excellency Manuel Balaguer Salas, Ambassador of Argentina to Malaysia on 27 February; His Excellency Ardasher Qodiri, Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan on 29 August; and Ms. Maram Anwar Jaafar Alsaleh, *Chargé d'Affaires* of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain on 3 October.

Another activity coordinated by the Section and assisted by other Sections was IDFR Retreat 2019 held on 16 February, at the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), Kepong. The objectives of the programme were to foster team spirit, increase trust among the staff, and provide an opportunity for IDFR's staff to get to know each other better, in order to work better together. The programme concluded with prize giving ceremony and a photography session. ■

In and Around IDFR



Courtesy call by His Excellency Ardasher Qodiri,
Ambassador of the Republic of Tajikistan to Malaysia



Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah
at the Roundtable Discussion for Youth Groups



Courtesy call by His Excellency Dr. Adel Mohamed
Ali Ba Hamid, Ambassador of the Republic of
Yemen to Malaysia



Courtesy call by His Excellency Manuel Balaguer
Salas, Ambassador of Argentina to Malaysia



Panel of Distinguished Fellows Meeting on 20 December





IDFR Staff at the Hari Raya Celebration



Participants of the Workshop on Intercultural Communication, Awareness and Diplomacy



H.E. Bai Tian, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Malaysia, at the Ambassador Lecture Series



Datuk Mohamad Sadik Kethergany's Farewell on 25 April







Participants of the MTCP: Intercultural Awareness and Diplomacy Course 2019



German language course for DiD participants



The guest speakers for Workshop on Intercultural Communication, Awareness and Diplomacy



Closing Ceremony for the MTCP: Economic Diplomacy Course for International Participants 2019

Appendix

APPENDIX

2019 Programme Participants

Centre for Political Studies and Economic Diplomacy

No.	Courses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
1.	<i>Strategic Analysis Course for Malaysian Participants</i>	11	11	-
2.	<i>MTCP: Diplomatic Training Course for International Participants 2019</i>	20	2	18
3.	<i>MTCP: Crisis Management Course for Senior Officers 2019</i>	22	4	18
4.	<i>MTCP: Economic Diplomacy Course for International Participants 2019</i>	22	4	18
No.	Discourses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
1.	<i>Ambassador Lecture Series 1/2019</i>	70	62	8
2.	<i>Economic Diplomacy Series 1/2019</i>	66	55	11
3.	<i>Economic Diplomacy Series 2/2019</i>	78	69	9
4.	<i>IDFR Lecture Series 1/2019</i>	49	44	5
5.	<i>IDFR Lecture Series 2/2019</i>	77	70	7
6.	<i>Forum on Global Issues</i>	76	69	7
7.	<i>Reflecting the Past: Malaysia-China Relations...The Undocumented</i>	139	139	-
TOTAL		625	524	101

Centre for Leadership, Negotiation and Public Diplomacy

No.	Courses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
1.	<i>SPKM: Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Home-Based Staff and Spouses (Series 1 to Series 5)</i>	325	325	-
2.	<i>Leadership Course for Mid-Level Diplomats</i>	14	14	-
3.	<i>International Negotiations Workshop 2019</i>	28	28	-
4.	<i>Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 2019</i>	25	25	-
	TOTAL	392	392	-

Centre for Languages and Cultural Diplomacy

No.	Courses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
1.	<i>Say it Right: A Course on Pronunciation (Series 1 and 2)</i>	33	33	-
2.	<i>Presentation Skills at the Workplace</i>	25	25	-
3.	<i>Fundamentals of English Language for Administrative Assistants</i>	17	17	-
4.	<i>Practical English Language Usage for Executive Officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs</i>	14	14	-
5.	<i>Grammar Made Easy (Series 1 and 2)</i>	34	34	-
6.	<i>The ABC of Writing - Write Accurately, Briefly, and Concisely</i>	9	9	-
7.	<i>Practical English Language Usage for Junior PTD Officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs</i>	23	23	-
8.	<i>English Language Module for Diploma in Diplomacy</i>	22	22	-

No.	Courses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
9.	<i>Arabic Level I</i>	11	11	-
10.	<i>Arabic Level III</i>	5	5	-
11.	<i>German Level I</i>	14	14	-
12.	<i>Foreign Language Modules for Diploma in Diplomacy</i>	22	22	-
13.	<i>MTCP: Intercultural Awareness and Diplomacy Course 2019</i>	23	-	23
14.	<i>MTCP: Cultural Diplomacy for International Participants 2019</i>	15	-	15
15.	<i>Workshop on Intercultural Communication, Awareness and Diplomacy</i>	14	14	-
No.	Discourses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
1.	<i>Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series 1/2019</i>	120	103	17
2.	<i>Cultural Diplomacy Lecture Series 2/2019</i>	85	57	28
3.	<i>Cultural Appreciation Day 2019</i>	320	258	62
4.	<i>Knowledge Management Programme</i>	137	137	-
TOTAL		938	769	169

Centre for Competency Enhancement

No.	Courses	Number of Participants	Malaysian Participants	International Participants
1.	<i>Diploma in Diplomacy 2019</i>	21	21	-
2.	<i>Master of Social Science in Strategy and Diplomacy</i>	9	6	3
3.	<i>Protocol and Etiquette Course for IDFR Staff</i>	39	39	-
TOTAL		69	66	3



**Institute of Diplomacy and
Foreign Relations (IDFR)**
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia
Jalan Wisma Putra
50460 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

 www.idfr.gov.my

 info@idfr.gov.my

  @IDFRMalaysia

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