

ASYMMETRICAL SECURITY WORKSHOP IN SINGAPORE

The ARC Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security's (CEPS's) security program component at the Australian National University (ANU), co-hosted a workshop in Singapore on 01 October 2008 entitled "Exploring New Dimensions of Asymmetrical Security." The Department of Political Science of the National University of Singapore (NUS) was the event's other sponsor. Both CEPS and the NUS conducted the workshop under the auspices of the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) to which, both the ANU and the NUS are affiliated.

The workshop focused on selected problems of counter-terrorism, criminal justice and human security. It reviewed how links between Australian and Singaporean institutions concerned with these issues could be strengthened. The event was organised by Professor William Tow, Chief Investigator of the CEPS Security Project and Professor of International Relations at the ANU with his NUS counterparts, Associate Professors Bilveer Singh and Lee Lai To.

The workshop was 'power-packed' in terms of the reputation and expertise of its participants. It included representatives from the academe and the police forces of Australia and Singapore. The Australian delegation was composed of CEPS Deputy Director Peter Grabosky, Professor Michael Wesley, CEPS Chief Investigator and Director of the Griffith Asia Institute, Professor Simon Bronitt, the Director of the National Europe Centre and concurrent Associate Director of the Australian Centre of Military Law and Justice of the ANU College of Law, AFP National Manager for Policy and Future Studies Judith Lind, and Federal Agent Peter Crozier, AFP Liaison and Counsellor at the Australian High Commission to Singapore.

On the Singapore side, the workshop was joined by the NUS Political Science Department Head, Professor Terry Nardin, Ms Jolene Anne Jerard of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, Mr Shafqat Munir of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Relations, and members of the Singapore National Police. Other distinguished participants who attended were Professor Kiichi Fujiwara of the Tokyo University, Professor Jack Donnelly of the Graduate School of International Studies of the University of Denver, USA, and Major General (Ret) ANM Muniruzzaman, the President of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies.

The organizers anticipate that this workshop will foreshadow a larger conference to be sponsored by IARU and to be convened in Singapore within the next two years. It will deal with a much broader scope of issue areas, including terrorism, insurgency movements generated by religious and ethnic problems, and economic disparities. Although it was conducted on a national holiday in Singapore, the workshop was well attended by NUS postgraduates and other invited guests.