



## Provisional programme

# Asia and the rules-based international system: perceptions, challenges and ideas for change

Monday 13 – Wednesday 15 March 2017 | WP1537

### To be held in Singapore

The term ‘rules-based international system’ (RBIS) is often used to denote the international norms, laws and institutions that have helped to shape, influence and regulate relations between countries since the end of the Second World War. The more succinct ‘international order’ and ‘international system’ are other terms used to characterise this global governance architecture. There is wide agreement in any event that this global governance architecture has contributed significantly to international peace and prosperity.

In the 21st century Asia and Asian countries have gradually assumed much greater prominence on many issues that are critical to international security and economic development. It is consequently important for Asian countries and others that are major security and economic actors in the region to exchange views and thinking regarding the role of the rules-based international system and its contribution to regional stability, security and economic growth.

There have largely been more critiques of shortcomings of the current rules-based international system than concrete proposals for reform. This meeting will attempt to encourage a shared understanding of how the rules-based international system might evolve and thereby contribute to driving continued economic development in China and other Asian countries, as well as increased regional and global stability. What could a redesign of international rules and institutions look like? Is a redesign needed or can adjustments be made within the framework of existing rules and institutions?

This Wilton Park meeting will:

- Examine and compare understandings of the evolution of the international rules-based system and what it means for resolution of disputes that affect regional stability.
- Consider the role of existing and new institutions such as AIIB and how international and regional security architecture might evolve.
- Discuss how to tackle global issues that heavily affect economic growth, such as corruption, trade, transparency, rule of law and accountability.

In association with:



## Monday 13 March

1900

Participants arrive

Reception followed by Conference Dinner in Sarong I and II

Dinner speaker:

**Walter Woon**

David Marshall Professor of Law, National University of Singapore; Dean, Singapore Institute of Legal Education; former Attorney-General and former Ambassador, Singapore

## Tuesday 14 March

0900

### Welcome and introduction in the Saffron Ballroom

**Robert Grant**

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

**Daljit Singh**

Senior Research Fellow and Coordinator, Regional Strategic and Political Studies Programme, ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore

0915-1045

### 1. The role of the international system in Asia

Over the past three decades, Asia has experienced remarkable economic growth and the absence of major interstate armed conflict. To what extent can this peace and prosperity be attributed to the role played by the rules-based international system? What role have Asian states played in the development of current international rules? What elements of RBIS have been most important in enabling it to contribute to Asian peace and prosperity? Are there ways in which these elements can be explicitly recognised, protected, enforced and propagated? Are there proposals for how rules and norms might evolve to maximise security and economic benefits for the region? What is the interplay within the system between rules, institutions and power?

**Truong Thuy Tran**

Deputy Director, Institute of East Sea Studies, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam; Director, Foundation for East Sea Studies, Hanoi

**Steven Everts**

Senior Advisor, European External Action Service (EEAS), Brussels

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1300

### 2. Visions for Asia's future

What visions for Asia's future do regional states have? How would they like to see the region evolve in terms of relations between themselves, relations with external powers and institutional architecture? What benefits does the rules-based order provide to different states; smaller, less powerful ones as well as major powers? Do Asians have sufficiently shared cultures and values on which to base a proposed evolution in the rules-based order? If so, what are those cultures and values and how would they be translated into rules and institutional development that could support security and prosperity? If not, then what mechanisms do Asians need/want to have in place for a functional international system to operate? Do they even feel a rules-based international system is necessary? Is there an alternative? What would it look like?

**Rahimah Abdulrahim**

Executive Director, The Habibie Center, Jakarta

**Wang Dong**

Associate Professor, School of International Studies, Peking University; Secretary General, Pangoal Institution, Beijing

**Colin Willett**

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Washington DC

**Abhijit Singh**

Senior Fellow, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi

1300-1430

Lunch served in the Kwee Zeen Restaurant

1500-1630

### 3. Confidence and security building initiatives

Does East Asia need some form of crisis management system? What goals might such a system have? What might it look like? What kinds of crises would it address? What are initial measures that could be taken towards building it? What institutions might be involved? Could greater information sharing and transparency help avoid accidental confrontations and build confidence?

**Ian Storey**

Senior Fellow, ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore

**Li Nan**

Senior Research Fellow, East Asia Institute, National University of Singapore

**Satoru Mori**

Professor, Hosei University, Tokyo

1630-1715

Group photograph followed by tea/coffee

1715-1900

### 4. Regional economic development

What does the concept of inclusive economic development concretely mean for the region? How can rules and institutions most effectively support inclusive economic development? What trading conditions and relationships can best support regional economic development? What role can the Belt and Road initiative play in this regard? What are respective understandings of corruption, transparency and accountability, how they interrelate and how they may affect stability and prosperity? What infrastructure investment is the region looking for and how can these needs best be met? What is the scope for collaboration between different multilateral investment organisations (Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank, Asian Development Bank, World Bank)?

**Danny Quah**

Professor of Economics, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

**Takaaki Asano**

Research Fellow, The Tokyo Foundation, Tokyo

**Chen Chenchen**

Research Fellow and Deputy Director, Macroeconomics Department, Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, Renmin University of China (RDCY), Beijing

1900

Reception followed by dinner, served in Sarong I and II

Wednesday 15 March

0900-1030

## 5. Peacekeeping and conflict prevention: what impact on conceptions of sovereignty?

Is there a tension between conceptions of sovereignty and the needs of modern peacekeeping operations as well as conflict prevention initiatives? Is the notion of 'responsibility to protect', for example, in accordance with the more traditional idea of non-intervention?

### **Dino Patti Djalal**

Founder, Foreign Policy Community of Indonesia (FPCI), Jakarta

### **Shaun Narine**

Associate Professor, St Thomas University, Fredericton

1030-1100

Tea/coffee

1100-1300

## 6. Working groups on aspects of the rules-based international system in Sarong I and II

### **Group 1**

#### **The role of culture and values in Asia's future**

#### **Co-chairs:**

#### **Mely Caballero Anthony**

Associate Professor, Head, Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore

#### **Nerida King**

Assistant Director, South East Asia Strategies, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra

### **Group 2**

#### **Rules and institutions: can Asians develop a shared vision for the region?**

#### **Co-chairs:**

#### **Vannarith Chheang**

Chairman of Advisory Board, Cambodian Institute for Strategic Studies, Phnom Penh

#### **James Kim**

Director, DC Division, The Asan Institute for Policy Studies, Seoul

### **Group 3**

#### **Confidence and security building measures**

#### **Co-chairs:**

#### **Euan Graham**

Director, International Security, Lowy Institute for International Policy, Sydney

#### **Cheng-Chwee Kuik**

Associate Professor, National University of Malaysia, Bangi

### **Group 4**

#### **Trade and investment**

#### **Co-chairs:**

#### **Sarah Yueting Tong**

Senior Research Fellow, East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore

#### **Guy de Jonquières**

Senior Fellow, European Centre for International Political Economy and Associate, London

1300-1430

Lunch served in the Kwee Zeen Restaurant

1430-1530

## 7. Working group report back in plenary in the Saffron Ballroom

1530-1600

Tea/coffee

1600-1610

## 8. eQuestionnaire

Completion of online eQuestionnaire

1610-1715

## 9. Conclusions: what is the shared understanding of how the benefits of the rules-based system can be protected and strengthened?

What identifiable measures for progress and reform can be drawn from the discussions? What can be done with them? What can be done to increase regional security, stability and prosperity in Asia?

### James Loi

Partner, The Asia Group, Washington DC

### Zhang Ruizhuang

Professor and Dean, Academy of International Studies, Nankai University, Tianjin

### Siew Mun Tang

Head, ASEAN Studies Centre, ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore

1730

Participants depart

**This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.**

**This is an invitation only conference.**

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