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Woo Wing Thye

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GOOD FRAGMENTATION VERSUS BAD FRAGMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL ORDER

ASEAN in 2017 is deservedly celebrating fifty years of impressive achievements in socio-economic development. The good luck from being in this celebratory mood is that Malaysia and other ASEAN countries are now more likely to have the self-confidence to recognise the emergence of new, unfamiliar challenges to their continued development, and would hence come up with bold effective solutions to these challenges.

First, significant domestic reforms are required in several ASEAN countries where their internal situations are increasingly characterised by the horror trinity scenario of economic stagnation, social polarisation, and political instability. To exorcise this horror trinity by doubling down on the existing policies would only entrench these ASEAN members in the middle-income trap. The way forward requires that their actions be guided by enlightened self-interests than by self-denial.

Second, a New International Normal is emerging, and ASEAN has to act collectively to help shape the ongoing drastic reconfiguration of the international security and economic architecture to a more benign form. For example, de-globalisation is occurring because “globalisation” has become a pejorative word to a large segment of the world’s population. As international trade and inward foreign direct investment have been the fundamental forces behind the Malaysian economic miracle since the founding of Penang in 1786, de-globalisation is a threat to the national security and national prosperity of Malaysia. All other Southeast Asian countries are similarly threatened unless the emerging New International Normal is forced on to a new trajectory. Enlightened self-interest should unite ASEAN on this task.

All other Southeast Asian countries are similarly threatened unless the emerging New International Normal is forced on to a new trajectory. Enlightened self-interest should unite ASEAN on this task.

I will use this Introduction to the third issue of *Compass*, the annual publication of the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia (JCI) at Sunway University, to elaborate on the second set of reforms because most analyses on the future of ASEAN have focused on the required internal reforms for each ASEAN member. The choice of this focus should not be misunderstood to mean that I perceive the governments of most ASEAN countries (e.g. Thailand) to be on track to resolve these problems. There have been too many unfortunate examples where internal debate over these issues has either been suppressed by repression or hidden from view by populist sloganeering.

It is clear that popular dissatisfaction with different aspects of globalisation has played an important part in the unexpected victories of the Brexit movement in the United Kingdom and Donald Trump in the United States. The British public could accept the free movement of goods and capital but could not countenance the free movement

of people because of its threat to ethnic identity and wage level. The American working class and middle class in the Rust Belt had a lot to be resentful about: the loss of their manufacturing jobs to foreign imports and to relocation of production plants abroad, the unresponsiveness of the conservative political class to their need for adjustment assistance, the contemptuousness of the liberal political class towards their values relating to guns and religion; and the blow to their national pride from the decline in the international standing of the United States.

Globalisation was seen as the process that brought many of these ills to American shores and also as the process that strengthened many of America’s enemies. The deepening and widening of US interaction with China were perceived to be responsible for a significant part of the United States’ problems. After all, even the ever-reasonable Ben Bernanke, former chairman of the US Federal Reserve, had identified surplus savings from China as one of the key factors in the meltdown of US financial markets in 2008. Finally, China was also seen as the quiet ally of the overly-aggressive North Korean regime and of the highly antagonistic Iranian theocracy, both of which constantly threaten the destruction of US allies.

US President, Donald Trump, has stayed true to many of his key campaign promises so far — albeit in sometimes inscrutable ways. He confronted China at the beginning of his term by speaking with the Taiwanese President, but he then also ended former president Barack Obama’s pivot to Asia by pulling the United States out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Trump’s gutting of the TPP is unfortunate because it denies the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Australia the option of adopting the formally neutral position of being in both the US-led TPP and the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), effectively pushing these countries into de facto alliance with China.

For good measure, Trump also declared the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Climate Treaty, expressed strong approval for Brexit, proposed rollbacks of prudential supervision of financial institutions and removed regulations on fossil fuel industries. This vacuum in global leadership is threatening to unravel globalisation.

Even though it is true that the governance of globalisation by the major powers and international agencies has often been incompetent and unfair in many ways, we urge that the rollback of globalisation be resisted because we know that globalisation-induced socioeconomic problems can be solved without deglobalisation. Deepening globalisation does not require the less developed countries to fall even further under the thumb of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which acted as the collector of Latin American debt on behalf of the US banks in the 1980s and which mishandled the Asian Financial Crisis in the 1990s. Deepening globalisation also does not require the strengthening of the two-decade trend in international trade agreements that favours multinational corporations at the expense of less developed countries (e.g., the Investor-State Dispute Settlement Mechanism removes the adjudication of commercial disputes involving foreign investors from domestic courts to external private arbitration bodies).

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In the face of the US withdrawal from global roles, major countries in the G20, including China, should step up to the plate and change the governance of the international economy for the better, to prevent deglobalisation. We must keep in mind the conclusion of Charles Kindleberger in his 1973 magisterial book *The World in Depression, 1929–1939* that the mechanism responsible for the depth and length of the 1929 Great Depression was deglobalisation: ‘When every country turned to protect its national private interest, the world public interest went down the drain, and with it the private interests of all’.

The fundamental insight in Kindleberger’s book is the hegemonic stability thesis. The ultimate reason the world experienced the Great Depression rather than a great recession, according to Kindleberger, was the absence of a benevolent hegemon during the period 1929–39 who was able and willing to stabilise the international system by assuming the dual roles of consumer of last resort and lender of last resort.

The essence of the hegemonic stability thesis is that whenever the global economy is hit by sizeable shocks, it becomes unstable unless some country intervenes to stabilise it. The United Kingdom played that stabilising role in the nineteenth century and up to 1913, but, by 1929, it had declined to middle-power status and no longer had the overwhelming economic power to hold back collapsing global demand

and to mobilise others to join countervailing actions. The United States in 1929 was not yet big enough to be the global hegemon, but, even if it had been, it was not mentally willing to take on that role. It was only after World War II that the United States became the unchallenged global hegemon and developed the mindset to play that role.

A global hegemon no longer exists in 2017 because the size of the Chinese economy measured in PPP dollars is now as large as the US economy. Will China emerge as the global hegemon in 2060 if it succeeds in catching up to the US standard of living by that time? The answer is no. If India maintains its present pace of economic catch-up, its economy in 2060 will be at least as big as China’s. In 2060, the standard of living in India might still be lower than in China, but the Indian population will be significantly larger, making India’s GDP as large as China’s.

In brief, the world from this point would no longer have a monopoly economic power that could act as the global hegemon. A multipolar world is the New International Normal: China–United States–European Union in 2017 and India–China–United States–European Union in 2060. From the lens of the hegemonic stability thesis, this is a terrible development because a leaderless world is prone to adopting self-defeating protectionism. The world is now facing the challenge of Karl Marx’s (1852) observation that ‘History repeats itself, first as tragedy and then as farce’.

The most common outcome in a situation of oligopolistic distribution of power is the division of the world into spheres of influence because of the security concerns of each major power. The present squabbles in Ukraine and the South China Sea could be the beginning of this process. However, the future need not be a replay of the past; and it would be a lack of imagination if we were to allow this to occur.

With the right regional arrangements and interregional agreements in place to address the security concerns of each major power, a new form of benign globalisation could emerge. The sphere of influence of each major power could become a geographical cluster for economic development and not a geographical cluster for economic exploitation (as between Africa and Europe in the nineteenth century) or a geographical cluster for political domination (as between Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the twentieth century). Given the existence of economies of scale in production, every geographical cluster must practise open regionalism in order to maximise economic prosperity.

Each major power would be the chief funder of economic institutions in its own geographical cluster—for example, the European Stabilisation Fund, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Inter-American Development Bank. The existence of competing/complementary regional institutions means there are multiple independent analytical centres in the world instead of a monopoly international financial institution and a monopoly international development bank. This outcome would minimise the possibility of wrong diagnoses and/or the wrong prescriptions, avoiding a repeat of the mistakes made by the IMF and the World Bank in the past.

Existing global institutions such as the United Nations and its agencies, and the G20 will have the additional tasks of regional coordination to ensure global economic integration, and of regional coordination to ensure an adequate supply of global public goods. They will lead in fighting climate change and species extinction, stopping nuclear proliferation and international terrorism, stabilising the international monetary system by broadening the choice of reserve currencies to reduce currency risks from globalisation, and getting the world to agree to a worldwide minimum tax rate on capital to prevent a race to the bottom in financing social safety nets.

The New International Normal necessarily means the political and economic fragmentation of the post-World War II global order. There is, however, good fragmentation as well as bad fragmentation. Good fragmentation protects globalisation in a setting of effective collective leadership. Bad fragmentation is the situation in which Kindleberger's hegemonic stability thesis applies and Marx's dictum on repetitive history rules. Being neighbours and traditional friends of China and India, ASEAN must remind these two countries that they have a moral obligation to make collective global leadership work because it was their rise that have contributed to the end of the hegemonic stability provided by the United States.

In a multi-polar world, the business-as-usual outcome is the partition of the world into competing spheres of influence where de-globalisation is the by-product. However, if enlightened self-interests prevail in the major countries, the outcome will instead be geographical clusters for sustainable economic development based on the principle of open regionalism.

In a multi-polar world, the business-as-usual outcome is the partition of the world into competing spheres of influence where de-globalisation is the by-product. However, if enlightened self-interests prevail in the major countries, the outcome will instead be geographical clusters for sustainable economic development based on the principle of open regionalism. The world is likely to be now at the critical point where each of the major powers is choosing either to be enlightened enough to act according to its long-term interests or to be cynical and continue to play the usual zero-sum realpolitik game. The outcome of benign globalisation in a multipolar world need not be a dream, especially when ASEAN members act collectively to help establish regional arrangements and interregional agreements to address the security concerns of each major power.



Professor Fukunari Kimura

ASEAN AND EAST ASIA ARE THE KEY TO RETAINING THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER

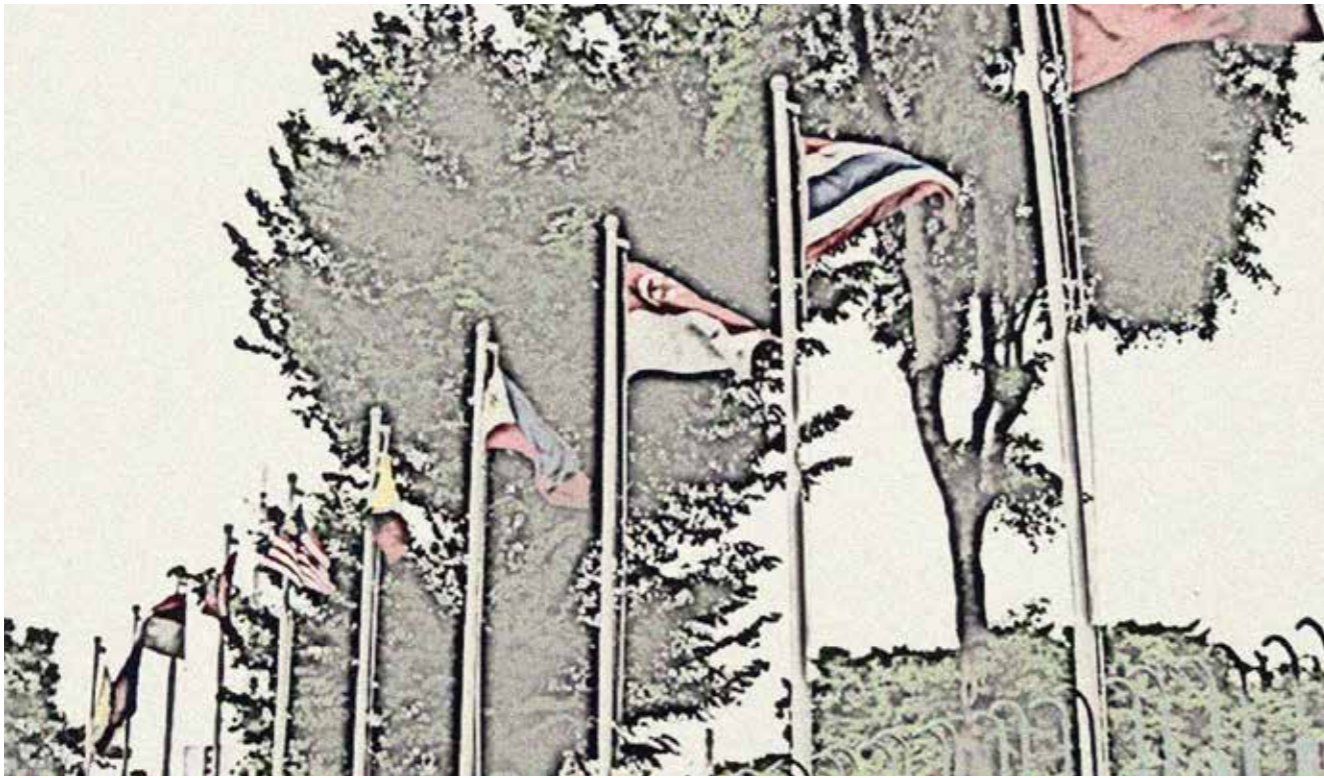
**FUKUNARI KIMURA
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Since Mr. Trump's election as the President of the United States, not only Americans but also people all over the world have faced plenty of uncertainties. Trade policy is one of the focal points of concern. Perhaps we should not take Mr. Trump's statements on Twitter too seriously. However, his staff for trade issues has not fully been assigned yet, and thus we still have to prepare ourselves for all sorts of dangerous scenarios.

Mr. Trump's perception on international trade seems to be terribly out of date, based on the image of old trade regime under the first unbundling or the industry-to-industry international division of labour. Foreign direct investment is understood as an all-or-nothing choice, rather than sharing production activities across the national border in international production networks. His obsession with bilateral trade balances as well as his sense of "fairness" look like mercantilism of a few centuries ago. Micro trade dispute instruments such as anti-dumping will surely be activated, and furthermore the basis of policy discipline under the World Trade Organization (WTO) may be nullified. The first

test would be the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Now ASEAN is one of the few regions where political leaders can openly advocate the importance of freer trade and investment. ASEAN and developing East Asia have adopted development strategies of aggressively utilising global value chains (GVCs) since the mid-1980s. Going beyond simply hooking themselves to slow-moving and slow-changing GVCs as observed in typical natural resource based and labour-intensive industries, countries in the region have participated in quick and time-sensitive production networks and have even started forming industrial agglomeration. In these processes, ASEAN has achieved sustained rapid economic growth and poverty alleviation at the same time. This region is regarded as the one being most advanced in taking advantage of GVCs for economic development.



In the second unbundling where the production process is determined by the international division of labour, not only goods but also ideas, know-how, investment, and training also move across national borders. Deeper liberalisation in trade in goods, trade in services, and investment as well as international rule making are essential for pursuing effective utilisation of GVCs.

Under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) agenda, trade in goods has by now been substantially liberalised by almost total tariff removal and a number of trade facilitation measures. Policy cooperation in development agenda has narrowed development gaps, which includes economic institution building, infrastructure development, small and medium enterprises development, disaster management, energy cooperation, and others.

Some liberalisation agenda such as services are delayed. Services actually support GVCs, and consist of essential elements of urban amenities. Local players in services have more chances to reach the frontier of new business models than in the manufacturing sector. In order to step up from upper middle income to fully developed economies, the importance of services liberalisation must be understood by policy makers and the public.

Mr. Trump's withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement has hurt it. However, the other TPP negotiating countries should work for a 12 minus 1 TPP. Article 30.5, which states that the ratification in the United States is essential, should certainly be amended. The key is whether the revision of the current text can be minimised or not. Japan has already ratified TPP and thus can go with the current text. Latin American countries that already have FTAs with the United States may also commit themselves.

The attitude of Australia and New Zealand, which may not be quite happy in the conclusion of TPP on government procurement and intellectual property right protection, would be critical in this aspect.

It is important for ASEAN to keep the momentum for freer trade and investment. The year 2017 is the 50th anniversary of ASEAN, and some symbolic advancement is required. One of the candidates would be the conclusion of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). This could present a notable advancement of ASEAN centrality in East Asian economic integration.

The negotiation over RCEP began in 2013 as an ASEAN initiative with 10 ASEAN countries and six free trade agreement partners, namely, China, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India. It went slowly, however. One of the reasons was India's passive attitude toward trade liberalisation. China pretended to be positive but was also reluctant in committing further liberalisation. ASEAN could not effectively unite to push the initiative.

However, the incentive scheme of negotiating countries may change now. Sending a message for freer trade and investment would become crucial to the whole East Asia as well as to the world. One idea would be to reorganise negotiations into two tiers, try to complete the first tier as soon as possible, and set the second tier as a built-in agenda for further liberalisation and advanced rule-making.

The voice of ASEAN and East Asia is extremely important in the midst of the current confusion of international economic order. Together with the establishment of healthy democracy, we must keep the world open.



Dr. Chong Kok Boon

VITALITY OF RESEARCH-INSPIRED TEACHING IN MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITIES

KOK BOON CHONG

Malaysian higher education institutions (HEI) have experienced mushroom growth rates since the 1990s following the amendment of higher education regulations, especially the 1996 Private Higher Education Institution Act (Act 555). Act 555 allowed a number of teaching colleges to be upgraded to university and university college status; and is part of the Malaysian Government's ambition to make Malaysia an education hub to attract international students.

There has been a large growth in the number of unemployed graduates. The Malaysia Education Blueprint-Higher Education (MEB-HE) sets out an ambitious vision for transforming HEI in Malaysia. It aims, amongst other things, to nurture, "future-ready graduates," by design and not by chance.

However, MEB-HE has overlooked and ignored much of the reality on the ground including the shortage of competent academics, lack of research capacity and higher learning culture. This will hinder its ability to achieve its targets. This article focuses on one of these gaps, namely the essential issues of research and higher learning and their roles in university education.

THE STATE OF UNIVERSITIES IN MALAYSIA

A university is a community of teachers and scholars who are dedicated to advancing knowledge and searching for the truth through questioning extant authorities. This clearly distinguishes the university from other sub-domains of HEI so that a university is not just limited to granting academic degrees but also to advancing knowledge through research and higher learning.

Generally speaking, Malaysian universities and university colleges are teaching-centric higher education institutions. The vast majority of academics do not do research. These unqualified academics deliver teaching by flipping the books and have no capacity to link the teaching with the latest development in the field.

Some general misconceptions of research and teaching in Malaysian universities are:

- (i) that research is a kind of time and money wasting luxury which should be limited to postgraduate research degree programmes or undergraduate final-year projects;
- (ii) that the sole purpose of research is that it should have commercial value and be marketable (10th Malaysia Planning) and;
- (iii) that teaching, especially for undergraduates, should follow the well-established knowledge base in the preferred textbooks and not be based on new or innovative ideas from the latest research literature.

Of course there is also a cohort of competent academics in Malaysia dedicated to research striving to nurture higher learning amongst students. However, there is a perception that many competent academics are often side-lined by the university administrators.

WHY RESEARCH AND RESEARCH-INSPIRED TEACHING (RIT) IS VITAL

In the early 19th century, Wilhelm Von Humboldt proposed teaching processes in universities that must be supported and guided by the latest research output. This model, known as the “Humboldtian” University, strives for academic freedom in research and promotes the exchange of ideas for both academics and students. It emphasises that these activities must be free from interference from restrictive authorities such as political, ideological, economic or religious groups. It serves as a fundamental framework of the modern university which is practised by many leading academia, i.e. Harvard University, Tokyo Imperial University and others. These universities have integrated teaching and research in the arts, sciences and humanities to create a framework for comprehensive knowledge and understanding.

Generally, the focuses are on the instrumental benefits of RIT which reflect and make use of the academics’ expertise and disciplinary research to benefit student learning and outcomes. The argument for RIT is that the effectiveness of teaching delivered by a research-expert in the field significantly outperforms those who are research-novices. The expert, in mastering the content of the syllabi through research, can structure the curriculum around the content of the subject and package the disciplinary theories, concepts and methods more effectively. The expert also has the capacity to justify the rationale of the topics, explaining the needs of a particular theory, its development chronologically and intellectually, as well as its links to derivative situations and the necessary modifications needed. All of these help to improve the speed and depth of learning.

The benefits of RIT go beyond the fundamentals of course design. Research-active academics can also utilise their current research problems and output to complement the well-developed knowledge in textbooks. This often leads to situations which expose students to many open-questions

contrary to the accepted wisdom of the textbooks. Research-active experts embrace thought-provoking discussion and exchange of ideas with the students and contrasts to teaching-centric pedagogies which often play to conformity and authority. RIT will not be restricted to the research output applicable to teaching and learning but will also adapt the teaching to fit research. Thus, the research-teaching nexus is multi-dimensional and centred on learning for both students and academics.

This type of inquiry-based teaching needs experienced researchers to transfer their skills in the process of inquiry and integrate it into students learning activities. This will minimise the division of teacher and students and deliberately serve to improve communication and interaction between research, teaching and learning. Experience shows that students are proud of their achievements and able to see the disparity of the textbooks and real world applications. Moreover, they are motivated to come up with possible solutions. This significantly improves the students’ interests in pursuing knowledge and helps them to act as researchers, mastering and creating capacity through which they can apply the knowledge. In addition, students will learn how knowledge is being produced and how the knowledge acquired has been codified. A final, crucial insight of this element of RIT is that students will also learn professional ethics from their experienced researcher-mentors.

One of the trends of democratisation of HEI is that more universities have been established across the world in the past three decades leading to fierce competition in the higher education sector. Malaysian HEI have similar experiences for similar reasons. These include decreasing international students from neighbouring countries due to Malaysian institutions not being competitive to other overseas university campuses which are mushrooming in ASEAN countries, amongst other things.

Employers are looking for candidates who can adapt to new things at a reasonably fast pace and be able to offer new ideas in solving workplace problems. Those graduates that have embraced RIT will be equipped and trained to be creative and innovative problem solvers. They will be amongst the first candidates the employment market is scouting for. As a consequence, the RIT approach will boost the profile of universities from the perspective of both undergraduate and postgraduate students, making them more attractive to prospective students.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPLEMENTED?

The current situation for Malaysian universities, is that industrial and/or corporate funding for research is very difficult due to the perception that it is a waste of money. The Ministry needs to reform Malaysian universities, both public and private.

First, the Ministry must grant true autonomy to the universities, as well as revise the higher education law and other relevant acts to restore academic freedom.

Second, the recruitment of the academics should be purely meritocracy-based. The meritocracy in recruitment should

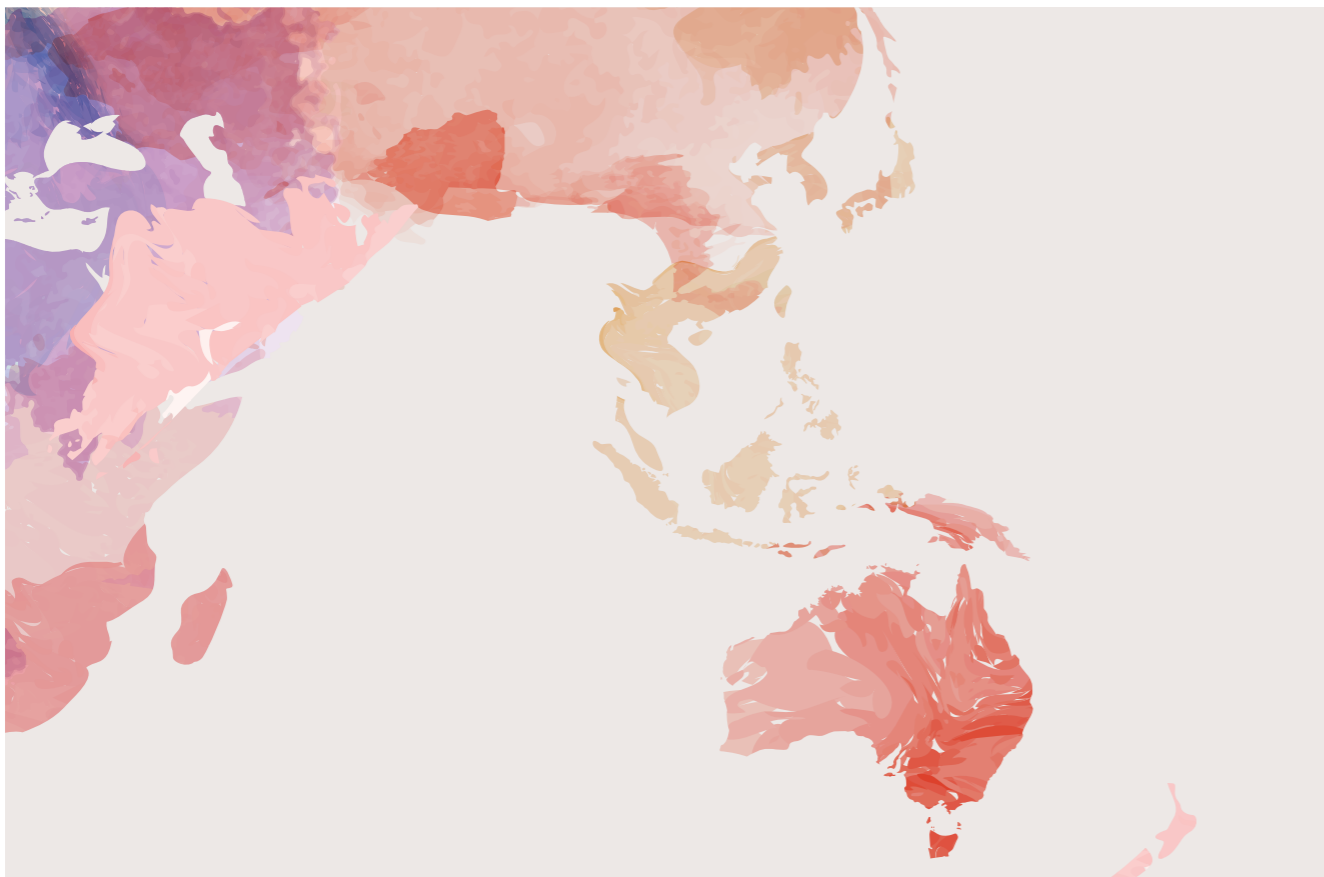
also apply to the appointment of the senior executives and leadership of the university.

Third, universities in Malaysia should emulate the best practices of the top leading academia around the world in which the University Senate plays an important role in governance and safeguarding the academic freedom in both teaching and research. A majority of the members of the university senate should be elected representatives of academics.

Fourth, the Government should have policies to encourage industrial and corporate investment in joint-research with universities via tax incentives. The Government should also ensure equal opportunity for all universities and academics in accessing and securing research grants, with assessment purely based on the merit of the ideas in the proposal.

Fifth, the Government should institute RIT in the universities. RIT is a master framework to enable students to become independent learners. Once students have learned how to ask questions, the students have learned how to acquire information and solve problems.





BANKING IN ASEAN - A TIME FOR INTEGRATION

MARK LEE KIAN MENG

Even as the South China Sea dominates ASEAN's evolving geopolitical centre-stage, the world has kept a firm gaze on another imperative - ASEAN's journey towards greater economic and financial integration. Decade-long reforms after the 1997/98 financial crisis are paying off with resilient economic growth, macroeconomic stability, a burgeoning middle class and 620-million strong consumer base, growing cross-border business expansion and investment potential.

Recognising this, ASEAN leaders pledged to create a single market and production base with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour and freer flow of capital by 2015. Having substantially delivered on those targets, a renewed ASEAN Economic Community 2025 (AEC 2025) vision was endorsed towards, among others, achieving a highly integrated and cohesive economy. With intra-regional trade at only 24% of ASEAN's total trade compared to more than 60% in the European Union (EU), the case for financial integration is strong to further realise ASEAN's growth prospects. Financial integration also supports ASEAN's

dense production networks as signified by its high intra-regional trade intensity index, which surpasses that of the EU.

Back in 2003, ASEAN had the foresight to craft a plan for financial integration in the areas of Financial Services Liberalization (FSL), capital market development, capital account liberalisation and currency cooperation. While the impetus for a single ASEAN currency has waned, policymakers tenaciously ploughed on and finally opened up the way in 2015 for regional banking integration. This will be achieved through an ASEAN Banking Integration Framework (ABIF) facilitating the expansion of indigenous Qualified ASEAN Banks (QABs) serving markets across ASEAN. Policymakers also deserve to be lauded for recently positioning the social agenda of financial inclusion in step with banking integration and AEC 2025.

ASEAN'S GAME-PLAN FOR BANKING INTEGRATION – MADE TO MEASURE PRUDENCE

The design of ABIF and implementation approach to date has the "ASEAN Way" written all over it. ASEAN member states are at different stages of economic development and have highly diverse financial sectors, primarily in terms of depth and institutional capacity. Concomitantly, the FSL strategy

accords members with flexibilities for pacing liberalisation, setting preconditions, considering domestic policy objectives and national regulatory discretion in the event of systemic risk or macroeconomic instability.

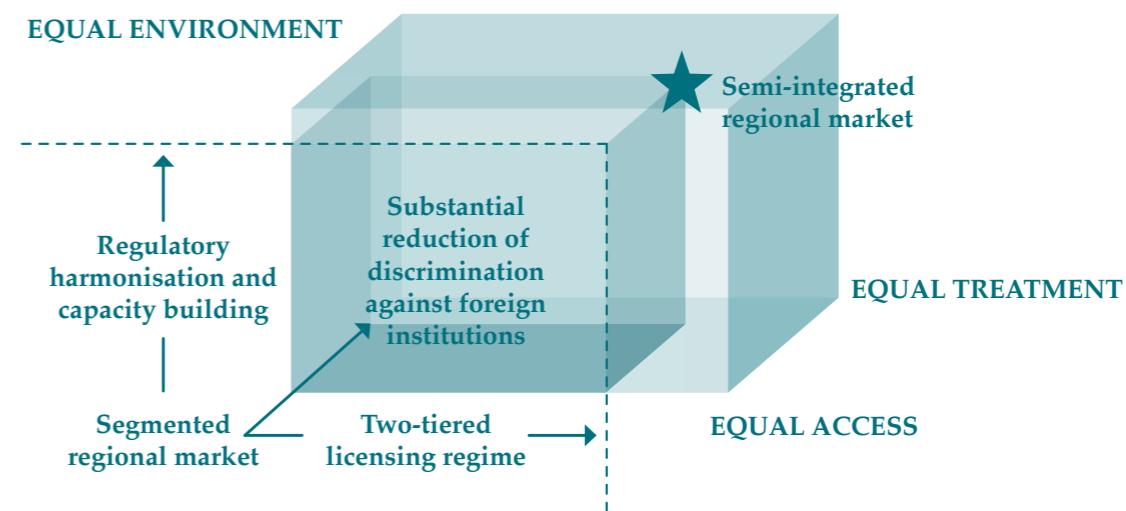


Illustration 1: The ASEAN Banking Integration Framework

Source: Combined ASEAN-ADB study on Assessing the Financial Landscape and Formulating Milestones for Monetary and Financial Integration in ASEAN, 2013

Four key observations on ABIF stand out. Firstly, ABIF's current end game by 2020 is one of semi and not full integration, signifying the measured approach taken by ASEAN policymakers. Secondly, ASEAN adopts the "Minus-X formula" (Article 21(2) of ASEAN Charter), which state that countries ready to liberalise can proceed first while others join in later. What this means is implementation of ABIF by the better-prepared ASEAN-5 countries ahead of the Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (BCLMV) grouping, and widening of disparities should capacity building efforts fade into the background.

Thirdly, ABIF may benefit only a limited number of QABs. To gain full access to ASEAN banking markets, QABs are required to meet sufficiently stringent criteria to relieve the prudential concern of member states.

The fourth point delves into the supervision of QABs. ASEAN has chosen to adopt a bilateral approach towards implementing ABIF as member states negotiate with one another on the basis of readiness and reciprocity. Consequently, oversight of banking groups will be based on one-to-one networks among national regulators, rather than supervisory arrangements over QABs that converge at the regional level. Moreover, risks across different jurisdictions may emerge when "host" authorities relinquish deeper supervision of QAB branch operations to "home" regulators (in the QAB's originating country). QABs may exploit or fall through these regulatory cracks when expanding rapidly across borders.

ABIF lays down a raft of preconditions including regulatory harmonisation, cross-border resolution of regional financial institutions, development of national credit rating agencies, consumer protection frameworks and lastly, an overall monitoring structure. While ASEAN policymakers acknowledged the daunting task of regulatory harmonisation that infringes national sovereignty, ABIF glosses over the need for robust supervisory mechanisms to govern regional QABs by suggesting that "cooperation among national supervisors may help relieve stability concerns and may require new regional arrangements...as collective responses to external shocks". In 2011, planners had also considered the key prerequisite of an ASEAN-wide deposit insurance scheme prior to introducing ABIF, but this failed to make the final cut in 2013.

Over and above the design of ABIF, what is the driving force behind the creation of QABs? The benefits of integrating banks in an ASEAN environment of freer capital flows are clear, namely an enlarged customer base for banks and lower costs for users from increased competition and efficiencies. In essence, these activities facilitate the transfer of funds from saver to borrower states with the greatest potential to harness capital productively and accelerate regional economic growth. What is less obvious and more debatable is whether banking integration will, on balance, result in greater regional financial stability with the emergence of strong regional banks and more developed financial infrastructure.

Based on a combined ADB-ASEAN study in 2013 for monetary and financial integration, it appears that therein lies ASEAN's core motivation - for ABIF to build global ASEAN champions by "nurturing the growth of large competitive banks with a foothold in global banking through mergers and acquisition of small banks", since "only three Singaporean banks and one Malaysian bank (by size) rank in the top 100 global commercial banks." This vision represents precarious trade-offs between advancing QABs into too-big-to-fail territory and preserving regional financial stability.

How will QABs shape up going forward? Several broad dynamics are worth noting. ASEAN banks will continue to remain in the financial sector mainstream in spite of advances in capital markets. As a whole, these banks have an inward proclivity for conservative, less risky structures with product offerings that are relatively straightforward due to regulation and underdevelopment. Thus, QABs will likely track ASEAN's broad development and integration trajectories to grow its business lines of trade credit, infrastructure financing, and corporate and investment banking. This sits well with the post-Global Financial Crisis clarion call by ASEAN regulators to keep to the basics of financial intermediation rooted in real economic activity. Lastly, state ownership of ASEAN commercial banks are prevalent for historical or public policy reasons, which in turn solidifies national interests and undercuts regional integration efforts.

EUROPE IS NOT SO DIFFERENT AFTER ALL

Much like ASEAN, Europe's single market and financial integration in the 1980s and 1990s were aimed at building competitiveness within Europe and externally with the rest of the world, accompanied by the same set of trade-offs ASEAN is facing. EU's overall approach to integration rested on a series of compromises that allowed national governments to retain as much autonomy as possible within the integrated financial space, driven by the process of banking regulatory harmonisation via the First and Second Banking Directives in 1977 and 1989 respectively.

In essence, ASEAN employs the same banking integration toolkit of minimum harmonised standards and mutual recognition across borders. The key difference is calibration in the depth of integration and oversight mechanisms, as ASEAN adopts more stringent minimum standards to limit the number of QABs. In the case of EU, relatively lower standards mean freer entry of a larger number of banks across different markets via passporting. Also, drawing from EU's experience where local banks continued to survive among regional giants, ASEAN policymakers envision a two to three tier market structure whereby some domestic institutions will continue to serve local markets. This suggests that protectionist policies for politically linked segments of ASEAN domestic banking markets, akin to the German Landesbanken, could feature prominently in ABIF negotiations.

A closer look at the political economy of EU's financial integration reveals the growth of regional universal banks juxtaposed against the static mode of national supervision. There came a stage during Europe's journey where private actors were increasingly drafted into the policymaking space to advance financial integration. Industry and lobby groups were the driving force behind eventual formulation of the Financial Services Action Plan in 1999 followed by the Lamfalussy Process, which legislated the consultative dynamic to EU-wide rule making. Incessant lobbying saw EU's large financial institutions grow in power and legitimacy to re-write the rules of the game and generate risks from greater concentration and moral hazard.

In as much as the European crisis was attributed to its single currency, the failure to build regional institutions to oversee large and dominant financial institutions was clearly the other culprit in the plot. The contemporary image of Europe grappling to construct a banking union (regional banking regulation, supervision, resolution and deposit guarantee schemes) illustrates how complex and politically charged this effort is. Banking supervision ultimately comes down to subjective judgments that have serious implications for credit provision, economic growth and jobs, all core issues of national interest. Dividing losses from bank insolvencies serves up another multifarious quandary.

For ASEAN, even if financial services lobbying is largely absent, judging by the ABIF process it looks set to repeat Europe's failure to build robust regional institutions for sustainable banking integration. ASEAN governments favour limited institutional structures that ultimately fail to impose discipline on member governments to adhere to commitments. The existing regional bureaucracy is represented by the ASEAN Secretariat, which relies more on moral suasion than authority to enforce agreements or expose non-compliance. Essentially, ASEAN's modus operandi is one of non-intrusive, inter-governmental mechanisms for decision making, as well as enforcement and adjudication that emphasise flexibility and consensus.

While ASEAN policymakers recognise the need for infrastructure building, resulting proposals to support ABIF only go so far as to enhance regional mechanisms to monitor and track overall progress, rather than the fundamental creation of common institutions with strong mandates to oversee QABs. Recommendations to strengthen supervisory colleges (which congregate different national supervisors), beef up the ASEAN Secretariat or expand the role of the ASEAN Macroeconomic Research Office also seem to fall short of up-scaled regulatory expectations. Raden Pardede, the Vice Chairman of Indonesia's National Economic Committee, lays bare ASEAN's domestic political realities as well as the criticality of regional institutions when asking, "In times of crisis, would the Singaporean government be willing to bail out a Malaysian bank?"

DEVELOPMENTS, TRADE-OFFS AND THE WAY FORWARD

The next milestone for ASEAN banking integration is for at least one bilateral ABIF agreement each to be in place among the ASEAN-5 by 2018. While Malaysia has made headways by signing on with Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand to delineate market access and operational flexibilities of QABs, overall progress across the region remains slow. Yet, ASEAN is adept at managing the protectionist tendencies of member states under the guise of non-interference, consensus and bilateral means – it is the same for banking integration. The

rules of the game may prolong implementation, but will not fully render ABIF and QABs ineffective. Meanwhile, patience wears thin for pan-ASEAN global banking aspirants coping with saturating domestic markets, overhang of regulatory compliance and disruptive threats from the mainstreaming of financial technologies. Beyond this opportunity loss, of greater concern is how lags in banking and financial sector integration affects intra-regional trade towards achieving AEC 2025.

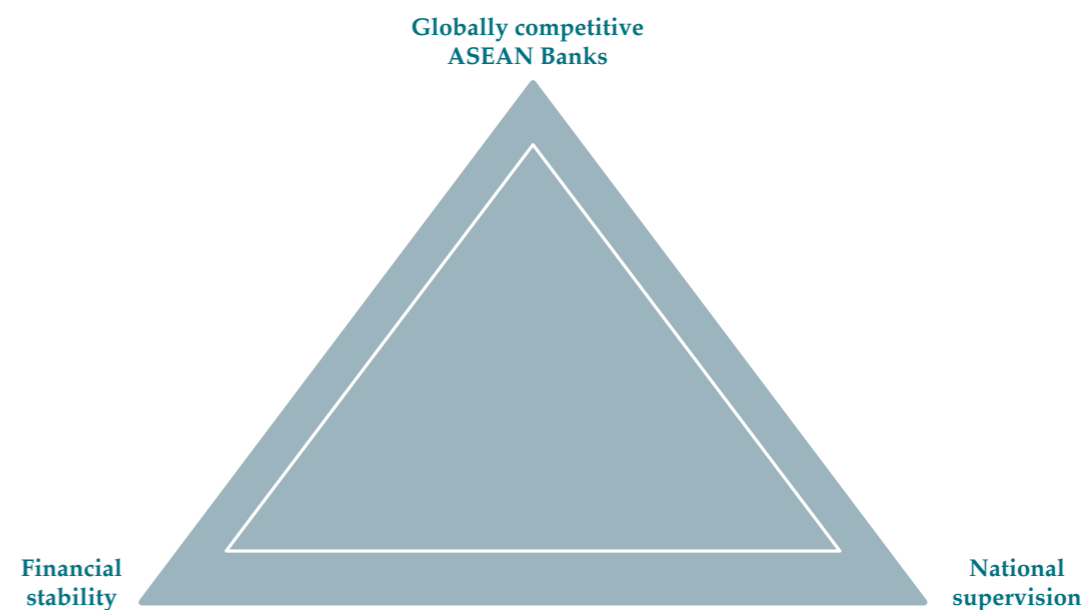


Illustration 2: The trilemma of ASEAN Banking Integration

At day's end, ASEAN's banking integration comes down to trade-offs. Given ASEAN's way of working, prudent approach and broadly conservative landscape for banking, will it be able to work around the trilemma? Put another way, will ASEAN's national regulators and regional cooperative structures be able to continue governing the rise of ambitious regional QABs? If yes, how much will ASEAN have to moderate its vision for globally competitive ASEAN banks in order to preserve financial stability?

While ASEAN may be doing all the right things to exercise prudence and establish contextual safeguards, it needs to take to heart EU's crucial mismatch of national oversight for regional banks that evolved into powerful, dominant and behemoth institutions. If Europe has taught ASEAN anything, it is that political battles for regional structures to supervise, regulate, resolve and insure deposits of cross-border banks is one worth fighting for sooner rather than later.



Dr. Ooi Kee Beng

AS A MATTER OF FACT, ALL FACTS ARE CONDITIONAL

OOI KEE BENG IS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF ISEAS-YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE, SINGAPORE AND SENIOR FELLOW AT JEFFREY CHEAH INSTITUTE FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA. HIS RECENT BOOKS INCLUDE *THE EURASIAN CORE AND ITS EDGES: DIALOGUES WITH WANG GUNGWU ON THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD* (ISEAS 2015).

With the world caught up in the reality show we call the Trump Presidency, it is important for those of us who are not Americans to retain some distance to the partisanship of their domestic politics. No doubt there is much to be learned from how the campaigning went last year, and how the first 100 days of the presidency is currently developing.

What seems clear is that the liberals in American society had somehow trapped themselves in an echo chamber somewhere along the way. With Barack Obama as president for eight years, triumphalism crept in to such a degree that rationality became a suspect. Once rationality is seen to be a partisan game, that smarty pants play, then all discussion and debate breakdown.

What interests me here is the advent of the term “alternative facts.” It is laughed out, mainly because it was publicly coined by someone known to be a defunctive talker and a blatant apologist—Trump’s advisor Kellyanne Conway. The term was first used to defend Trump’s former press secretary

Sean Spicer, who had megaphoned his boss’s ridiculous claim that the presidential inauguration was attended by a record-sized audience. Conway claimed that Spicer was just stating “alternative facts”.

A counter-claim—an alternative hypothesis, as it were—is totally legit. What is not legit is to make a claim without supporting evidence, or even suggestions of how such evidence can be found. Alternative facts need alternative evidence, and cannot simply be a stubborn rejection of a popularly accepted fact.

TWO WAYS TO REJECT A FACT

Seen from a social-scientific point of view, a fact can always be questioned because any empirical inference will always have beliefs, habits and assumptions underlying it. No empirical statement is entirely without non-empirical content, and all knowledge, most clearly social knowledge, is tentative and conditional.

Now, some facts are more likely to be questioned than others, but it still remains the case that a factual statement can be rejected in two basic ways—first, through the existence of evidence to the contrary, and second, through variances in the understanding and acceptance of the concepts used to state that fact.

Beyond that are two further points to consider. For one thing, the requirements for when a claim has been proven beyond reasonable doubt can vary greatly in different communities, times and contexts. That is why it is so important for scientific standards to be maintained. That is why young men and women have to cultivate their way through thick books for several years in universities to develop a good sense of what scientific thinking means and why experimental criteria must be met.

The scientific project that characterises our age is therefore about the search for as universal an agreement as possible on methods that can provide us with cumulative certainty about the world as much as it is about the accumulated facts themselves. The methods and the facts are inseparable. This is always a work in progress, the strength of which lies in adopting a humble stance and in the willingness to accept being in error. The underlying wisdom here is the realisation that in having means by which one can identify a factual mistake, one can cast it aside and need no longer be misled by it.

FACTS PRESUPPOSE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

Secondly, related to this is the centrality of the collective. To make sense, the notional trappings of a claim must be intuitively perceivable by the audience to which the claim is proposed.

This condition can often clash with the scientific method. Although there are respected organisations formed in modern times for scientific debate, apart from universities and think tanks, biases and earlier assumptions can very often be as powerfully defended by them as by any religious body.

Charles Darwin did not rush to publish his findings and ideas for fear of how society would reject them, and it was only when he realised that Russell Wallace was on the same track that he hastened to overcome this dread of ridicule, and submitted his manuscript for publication. There are many other such cases in the history of science. We know, for example, of Galileo Galilei backtracking on his astronomical findings to save his own skin. Very understandably.

The collective is always relevant. A society that is not given to scientific thinking will therefore consider what constitutes a fact in ways that are very different from a society that is more empirically minded and technological in spirit. Being modernised, as understood in the early days of human modernity, was to have a mind that was groomed to think of knowledge as tentative, human and expedient, and not eternal, external and divine.

In the Social Sciences, it is clearly much harder to reach agreement on any claim that challenges received beliefs, habits and assumptions. Sociological and social concepts, and psychological and political notions vary greatly within a country or a society. Stated facts are often clothed in the nomenclature and the jargon of a certain approach to knowledge, limiting their usefulness and their claim to universality.

The Study of Man and his Society differs from the Study of Nature in that statements made in the former are necessarily much more general, much more value-based and so, much more contested. The human arena, in truth, is one of conflict, and criteria for objectivity within it are hard to find.

As is often quoted, the first victim of war is the truth. But even in times of peace, amity is but a relative term, and knowledge, whether in the guise of science or not, most times cannot avoid being a weapon. The situation in each society varies greatly as well, making it more difficult to venture general statements across societies, or between sub-cultures. Instead of being an argument against the validity of the social sciences, this fact of vulnerable objectivity in the social sciences should convince us all the more that statements about society and mankind should as a rule, undergo thorough social review and examination.

ESCAPING INTELLECTUAL CAPTURE

This is why mechanisms for serious public discussions about society by its members are so vital to its development and survival. It is the apparent nature of power to limit and steer discussions so as to determine what the facts are which it wishes to define that society.

Maintaining a good standard of journalism and a high level of education have therefore been considered essential to a society’s ability to resist intellectual capture from within and without. What is sadly noticeable in most of Asia’s developing countries is that the standard of journalism is painfully low; the education system is geared towards technical subjects and not towards those disciplines that are known to develop independent thought; and the punishment for critics of governments are dauntingly harsh.

The crisis that the United States is going through now will put its institutions to the test. We can expect its journalists to go on the warpath against what they see as the rise of irrationality in the public sphere; we can expect its university students to embrace activism to a degree not seen since the Vietnam War, and we can expect its judiciary to resist attempts to undermine its honoured traditions.

A large segment of American society has no doubt been feeling ignored by what should have been an inclusive society, and whether the institutions can manage to bridge the divides will be interesting to watch. There are signs though that it may be too late, and what awaits instead are arguments and conflicts more than discussions and discourse integration.

What are we to learn of this? In Malaysia, divisive discourses had been the norm for a long time. Journalism had been neutered for decades, the judiciary equally so, and the education system allowed to deteriorate.

The advent of the Internet and the many technological means of communication and discussion that it brought may have changed the way people access news, makes news and disseminate facts, but we have yet a long way to go before Malaysians can factually say that they have escaped the intellectual capture that they have suffered for so long.

As always, much of the work will have to be done by the next generation.



Seppo Honkapohja

THE EU FACES ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL THREATS AS BRITAIN PREPARES FOR MEMBERSHIP VOTE

SEPPO HONKAPOHJA IS A BOARD MEMBER OF BANK OF FINLAND AND FORMER PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL MACROECONOMICS, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

The countries of the European Union (EU) are recovering from the financial crisis, but there are significant risks from developments overseas and at home, including the impending UK referendum on whether to stay in the European Union, Bank of Finland economist Seppo Honkapohja warned at a lecture organised by the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia (JCI).

Professor Honkapohja said that the Euro area had experienced a gradual recovery since 2013 with the overall economy growing at about 1.5% a year, but Greece – which was on the brink of bankruptcy in 2009 – had “barely recovered” he said, while other Mediterranean nations, like Italy and Spain, were growing more slowly than their northern neighbours. The extremely low inflation in the EU, was a strong indicator of Europe’s slow recovery, he added.

But Europe’s challenges are not only economic, Professor Honkapohja told the audience at Sunway University. It also faces political risks: from the flow of refugees across the Mediterranean and the UK’s June referendum on whether to remain part of the EU.

“Businesses are saying they are postponing plans,” Professor Honkapohja said. “The British economy is one of the largest in the European Union and their departure would definitely spark a lot of difficulty and turbulence.”

The UK referendum will take place on June 23rd with opinion polls suggesting the outcome is too close to call. If Britain does vote for exit, under the Treaty of Lisbon it will have two years to negotiate the terms of its departure. “Negotiations are likely to be tough,” Honkapohja warned, noting that the EU’s 28 states are the destination for almost half of the UK’s exports. “There will be consequences for trade arrangements not only in the EU, but in other countries around the world.”

Professor Honkapohja pointed out that US President Barack Obama had spoken strongly in favour of Britain remaining within the EU and questioned whether Brexit – leaving the union – would really be in the best long-term interests of the UK.

“It is naïve for the UK to think that this a straightforward thing to do,” he concluded. “In some sense the UK is isolating itself. Countries which operate in isolation usually do badly.”



Mari Pangestu

REIMAGINING SOUTHEAST ASIA

MARI PANGESTU SERVED AS INDONESIA’S MINISTER OF TRADE FROM 2004 TO 2011, AND AS MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CREATIVE ECONOMY FROM 2011 UNTIL OCTOBER 2014

A stronger Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is crucial for the countries of Southeast Asia if they are to address effectively slowing growth, economic reform and the rise of big-power rivalry in the region, and Indonesia must lead the way, former Indonesian Trade Minister Mari Pangestu, said at a dinner talk organised by the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia (JCI).

“ASEAN has always been strong when Indonesia takes the lead role,” Pangestu told the invited audience. “Indonesia must find the political will to take the leadership role.”

Now a Professor at the University of Indonesia, Pangestu outlined five challenges facing the region: slower global growth over the next 3-5 years, a shift in trade to services from goods, the restructuring of China’s economy, the decline in commodity prices and increased rivalry between the world’s big powers.

Pangestu noted that the impetus to change within ASEAN and its member states had often come at the most difficult of times, whether with the economic recessions of the mid-80s, the creation of the World Trade Organization, the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997/98, or the wake of the 9/11 attacks on New York. ASEAN had also mobilised in response to China’s emergence onto the world stage by agreeing to establish the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), across ten nations and 622 million people.

“Bad times lead to good policies,” she observed.

Pangestu, who was Trade Minister in Indonesia from 2004 – 2011 and Minister for Tourism and the Creative Economy from 2011 – 2014, argued that the current economic climate

and the decision by some ASEAN countries, including Vietnam and Malaysia, to join the US-led Trans-Pacific Partnership, appeared to be acting in a similar way.

Focusing on Indonesia, she noted that while President Joko Widodo’s government was quite protectionist when it took office in 2014, it embarked on a series of major deregulatory moves in September 2015 and signalled its wish to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) the following month. Pangestu said that if the TPP were to become operational – it still requires the approval of the US Congress – Indonesia risked losing out. In industries such as shoe manufacturing Vietnam’s tariff would be zero while Indonesia, outside the pact, would have to pay 17%, she said.

Given the changing economic landscape, ASEAN countries should also “accelerate, deepen and broaden the economic integration that it is doing,” she said. ASEAN declared the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), a single market with a combined GDP of \$2.6 trillion, at the end of December 2015. Ultimately, the AEC is supposed to establish a single market and production base across the region, but countries have struggled to implement some of its provisions, particularly on the opening up of services and the mutual recognition agreements for professionals. ASEAN’s poorer members – Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam – have also been given longer to implement the plan.

Nevertheless, recent shifts in Indonesia’s approach were encouraging for the regional bloc, Professor Pangestu concluded.

“I am cautiously optimistic,” she said. “I cannot imagine a Southeast Asia without ASEAN.”



From left to right: Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah AO, Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Razak, Professor Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid.

MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER LAUNCHES THE JEFFREY SACHS CENTER ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



In September of 2015, world leaders gathered for a special summit at the United Nations in New York to adopt Agenda 2030, which includes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs continue the work of the Millennium Development Goals which focused on ending extreme poverty, hunger and preventable diseases while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, as well as peace and justice. The SDGs take on the challenges of ensuring more equitable development and environmental sustainability with the key goal of mitigating the dangers of human-induced climate change in mind. The goals are complex and interconnected; often the key to success of any one goal will involve tackling issues associated with another goal.

The SDGs serve as a rallying call for all members of the global community to come together with the vision to improve life for future generations, as part of Agenda 2030's goal of leaving no one behind. These goals also provide 169 detailed targets for all countries to adopt in accordance with their

own domestic agenda as well as to deal with the pressing issues of our time. The SDGs provide an all-encompassing agenda, as they tackle the root causes of poverty and promote collaboration and unity to make a positive change for people and the planet. "Supporting roll out of the 2030 Agenda is a top priority for UNDP," said United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Administrator Helen Clark. "The SDGs provide us with a common plan and agenda to tackle some of the pressing challenges facing our world such as poverty, climate change and conflict. UNDP has the experience and expertise to drive progress and help support countries on the path to sustainable development."

On the 9th of December 2016, Malaysia took a tremendous step in the global effort to promote sustainable development by launching the Jeffrey Sachs Center (JSC) on Sustainable Development, the first of its kind in Asia, at Sunway University Malaysia. The Center was established in collaboration with the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network through a gift of US\$10



Professor Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid

million (about RM45 million) from the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF), by far the largest financial commitment focused on the education and implementation of the SDGs following the adoption of the 17 goals by 193 member states of the United Nations (UN) in 2015.

The Jeffrey Sachs Center will be the regional hub for deepening technical knowledge in sustainable development and developing linkages with leading universities and think tanks around the world to generate research and policy. In addition, it will curate some of the world's best curriculum on sustainable development.

THE LAUNCH AND CONFERENCE OF THE CENTER

A one-day conference was held in conjunction with the launch of the Jeffrey Sachs Center on Sustainable Development. The theme of the conference was "Moving Decisively Forward on Sustainable Development Now." With speakers that included Professor Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid, Professor Daniel Schrag, Professor Angelo Riccaboni, Professor Xue Lan and Professor Jeffrey Sachs.

Professor Woo Wing Thyne, the Director of The Jeffrey Sachs Center, in his opening speech for the conference, emphasised the three themes of sustainable development: economic

dynamism, social inclusion and the sustainability of natural environment.

Malaysia's goal for economic dynamism should be the restoration of high growth from before the Asian financial crisis, the reduction of poverty as well as inequality among its ethnic groups and industrialisation. On the matter of social inclusion, he said that the Malaysian government has been proactive in addressing inequality among ethnic groups but intra-ethnic inequality, and inequality caused by uneven development among the states remain unaddressed.

He concluded with a vision of the Center playing a pivotal role in assisting with the problem of implementation through engagement and training programmes with the government.

The first keynote speaker, Professor Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid, Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of Malaysia spoke on "Walking the Talk on Implementing the SDGs: A Case for Malaysia and Southeast Asia". He started with the example of Malaysia's fight against poverty. The establishment of the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) scheme in 1956 gave rubber and oil palm smallholdings to the rural poor as a way for people to break free from the vicious cycle of poverty. FELDA's success in poverty alleviation in Malaysia was acknowledged by various eminent scholars.



Professor Daniel Schrag

Through many years of research and development, Malaysia has become a top producer of rubber and oil palm; commodities have helped reduce rural poverty dramatically. Zakri suggested that the SDGs be integrated into the planning framework through several strategies, such as accelerating human capital development, pursuing sustainable and resilient growth, and enhancing inclusiveness towards an equitable society. In concluding his presentation, Zakri said, "Sustainable development is about finding the right balance between protecting our natural heritage and ensuring socio-economic progress, including the eradication of poverty."

Professor Daniel Schrag, Director of the University Center for the Environment, and Director of the Laboratory for Geochemical Oceanography at Harvard University, in discussing "Climate Change and Sustainable Development: Opportunities for the Developing World", began by describing examples of diminishing natural barriers to climate change, such as the Greenland ice sheets, Arctic sea

ice and Antarctic ice shelves. Speaking on the carbon cycle, he warned that more than half of airborne carbon dioxide will stay in the atmosphere 1,000 years from now; a third will still be there a staggering 20,000 years from now. He cautioned the audience, saying "We are making decisions about energy technology today that will not just affect our children and our grandchildren, we're talking about tens of thousands of years, on the scale of massive ice sheets, sea level rise of metres, tens of metres of sea level rise." Schrag added that a non-fossil economy is essential for our planet's future and the point of this is not just to reduce emission but to get it to zero.

He concluded by emphasising the importance of continuing next generation clean technology research to reach a non-fossil economy in spite of the present commercial unviability. In Schrag's opinion, biofuels are the best possible replacement for fossil fuels but we must seriously consider the trade-offs in terms of biodiversity and food security.



Professor Angelo Riccaboni

Following Professor Daniel Schrag, Professor Angelo Riccaboni, Chair of SDSN Assembly and Rector of the University of Siena, focused on "Food Systems for Sustainable Development: Innovations are Needed." He began his presentation talking about the agri-food, sector often overlooked in implementing Agenda 2030. He described how agriculture is impacting the environment and the environment is affecting the agricultural sector. Emphasising its enormity, he says that currently 2 billion people worldwide are employed in the food sector, 30 percent of all energy is used in the food sector and 70 percent of fresh water used in agriculture. With a growing world population, the challenge will be to go from research to innovation to solution as quickly as possible. He spoke of three issues confronting us: the almost 800 million people who are underweight while 2 billion more are obese; the coexistence of hunger alongside tremendous food waste with 30 percent of all food produced wasted; that agriculture is carried out

for purposes other than food, such as cereal crops, that are also employed as animal feed and biofuels.

The goals, according to Riccaboni, should be to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, preserve biodiversity, increase water and energy efficiency, and most importantly, create jobs. Some key issues in achieving these goals would be understanding intersectionality with other issues like water and energy, the need for more information and research on the food sector, coordinated public policies and global leadership on food and ultimately, public awareness of the great impact of food on the environment. He said, "What is good for your health has a lower impact on the environment and is also good for the planet." Riccaboni ends with a number of ways to introduce innovation in the food sector, for instance; promoting business culture in the small farms, mobilising and educating consumers on better food practices and capacity building.





Professor Xue Lan

Professor Xue Lan, Member of United Nations University Council and Dean of the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University, Beijing, discussed "Policy Challenges in Implementing Sustainable Development Goals." He explained that SDGs must be implemented as a system and not a collective of individual goals because achieving the goals are technically complex, whereby countries have different developmental priorities, and goals can either be complementary to or competing with one another. Expounding on some of the limitation to implementation, he cites financing, government capacity and, national and international coordination as some of the barriers in achieving the goals. Using China as a case study, he describes the major transformations in China since the opening of its economy in 1979. He says, "in spite of these events, their development challenges in recent years continue to be their overreliance on a labour intensive economic development model, a pollute-first-clean-up-later attitude towards the environment and growing social inequality." He elaborated on solutions in place, such as government initiatives (Chinese Government's 13th Five Year Plan and the 'War on Poverty' policy) and innovation in low carbon technologies by discussing how they can be improved. He concluded by saying that implementation needs a number of elements, namely political will coupled with sound analysis, clear policy direction from the top level and flexibility for local implementation.

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the UN SDSN and Chairman of the Jeffrey Sachs Center on Sustainable Development, spoke on "What Does Sustainable Development Really Mean?" He first showed the various effects of man-made climate change, from massive tropical storms to the driving extinction of a number of Great Ape species. Sachs believes that sustainable development entails four great transformations: low carbon energy transition, sustainable cities, sustainable agriculture and land use, and access to quality healthcare and education. "Of all of these objectives, and of all of the complexities, I think education is the most important of all of the Sustainable Development Goals because if we are not able to think clearly or understand each other, we will not be able to be peaceful, nor will we be able to reflect and find solutions," he said. Sachs went on to describe the challenges of sustainable development in ASEAN, including the kind of mind-set, institutions, values and systems necessary to achieving the SDGs. Professor Sachs ends by reiterating the tasks of the Jeffrey Sachs Center on Sustainable Development for the ASEAN Region:

- 1 Quality Education: Master's in Development Practise, Courses for the SDG Academy and New Textbooks for the SD Global Library
- 2 Applied Research: Ecosystems, Biodiversity, Smart Urban Systems



From left to right: Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Tan Sri Dr. Ir. Ahmad Tajuddin Ali, Dato' Sri Idris Jala, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO, Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Razak, Professor Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Tan Sri Datuk Seri Razman M. Hashim, Tan Sri Dato' Dr. R.V. Navaratnam

- 3 Advisory and Training with Business and Government
- 4 Cutting-Edge Demonstration Projects with Potential for Scaling Up

The day came to a close with the launch ceremony and speeches by Professor Sachs, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO and our Prime Minister, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Razak.

Professor Sachs said that the Center will be an important part of the world's drive towards achieving the SDGs through its work on education, applied research, coordination with governments and innovation. "This partnership signals the vision of Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO, in recognising that sustainable development is the defining challenge of our times," he said.

Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO, Founding Trustee of the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation and Founding Chancellor of Sunway University, said the realisation of these goals is not the sole responsibility of governments but requires

the commitment of all segments of society. "It is the vision of this Center to change the mindset of people towards sustainable development in our daily lives," he said. "We were truly delighted when Professor Sachs agreed to lead the Center, being a world-renowned authority on sustainable development and a tireless campaigner in the effort to end poverty. "I strongly believe that a developed nation is measured not just by its economic statistics, but also through its contribution to the world of ideas and commitment to ensuring a more sustainable and equitable world. It is my hope that setting up the Jeffrey Sachs Center here will help establish Malaysia as a leader in driving the sustainability agenda for the region and, indeed, the world."

In his speech, Prime Minister Najib lauded the establishment of the Jeffrey Sachs Center, which will be taking on a lead role in supporting the government in advancing the SDGs. "The pioneering Center we open today will be a hub for research and policy practice; creating world-class programmes to train a new generation of students, practitioners and policy leaders and in developing linkages with universities, industries, government bodies, NGOs and social enterprises around the world in sustainable development," he said.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE JEFFREY SACHS CENTER ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

The Jeffrey Sachs Center on Sustainable Development is currently focused on three pillars: education, outreach and applied research. In the area of education, we will be launching a world class master's programme and an executive training series, both on sustainable development. We have planned a series of regional events as well as a number of workshops in order to communicate the SDGs to various stakeholders and the public at large. Demonstration projects currently in the pipeline will encompass areas such as power, transportation, water and waste management.

MASTER'S PROGRAMME AND EXECUTIVE TRAINING

The Master's in Sustainable Development Practice programme will serve the purpose of training and equipping tomorrow's leaders with the knowledge and skills to implement sustainable solutions and policy in the ASEAN region and eventually across the world. It will cover topics such as Sustainable Energy, Water Management, Industrial Ecology, etc. These subjects will equip students with both the technical know-how as well as social and policy frameworks to formulate solutions for making the best of available technologies.

An executive training programme is currently being developed. Targeted at professionals and leaders from both the public and private sector, it will educate participants on their potential role in furthering the cause of sustainable development and equip them with the tools necessary for them to reach their fullest potential. The executive training will include discussions on sustainable management and operations, as well as sustainable urban practice.

OUTREACH EVENT AND WORKSHOPS

In April, we will host a meeting of the ministers of the ten Southeast Asian Nations to discuss their commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals. This meeting will provide insights on the ministers' experiences in implementing the goals in their respective nations. We hope to see this meeting foster solidarity and cooperation among the ASEAN nations towards realising Agenda 2030.

The Center also has planned a number of workshops focused on specific topics of technical interest. These are aimed at public and private sustainable development practitioners who are dedicated to areas such as sustainable energy, green transportation and waste management.



APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Center has begun research on alternative power sources and how can they be best optimised for commercial viability while leaving the smallest carbon footprint possible. Plans are underway to design and develop an energy strategy that will see urban as well as rural communities taken off the national grid. Employing a combination of solar energy, battery storage and steam reformed hydrogen gas; the Center hopes to start a trend in the energy sector that will move towards almost zero-carbon power generation.

In the area of sustainable transportation, the Center is exploring the viability of hydrogen fuel cell motorbikes from a technical and commercial standpoint. The option of utilising solar energy to hydrolyse water in order to generate hydrogen for these bikes offers the possibility of an almost zero carbon transportation system. Two studies on eco-mobility will be carried out starting with Sunway City. These studies will look into the feasibility of a bicycle sharing network and enhancements of the existing pedestrian infrastructure.

Being situated in Sunway City offers the unique opportunity to further research in the area of water bodies. The Center is currently working with the National University of Malaysia (UKM) to study and develop solutions to remediate the water of the Penaga River which runs through Sunway City. This project will encompass both a technical and social aspect. As the river runs along residential and industrial zones, it will be paramount to educate the public on the importance of keeping the river clean. A project on sustainable lake management, studying the water bodies within Sunway City is also being planned for the near future.

Waste management will be another area of study, given location of the Center in an urban setting. Recycling food waste, while it appears rather trivial, is a large contributor

to greenhouse gas emissions. A study will look into the measurement of emissions from food decomposition and projects will be implemented to demonstrate how this problem could be best addressed, whether by sending the excess edible food to those in need, using it as compost, or various other means.

In January of 2017, Sunway City was awarded the prestigious Low Carbon City Award at the ninth Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP) Awards for Planning Excellence. Looking to the future, the Sunway Group has expressed their continuing support for green initiatives within Sunway City. The Center hopes to see this support develop into a partnership that will transform Sunway City into a "living lab" where new technologies and ideas can be implemented, leading the way in sustainable development.

OTHER INITIATIVES

The Center looks forward to collaborating with various government agencies and research institutes to collect and compile the data necessary for the SDG Index Dashboard as part of a global initiative to hold nations accountable on their progress in addressing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The SDG Index is aimed at helping countries identify priorities for implementation and close the gaps in order to achieve the goals by 2030.

In addition to that, the Center will begin developing a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for the online learning portal, SDG Academy. The SDG Academy is an initiative of the SDSN Association and aims to provide high-quality, massive open online education on sustainable development. It will work with member institutions and partners of the SDSN to produce a comprehensive core curriculum, equipping the next generation of "Sustainable Development Practitioners" to take on the complex challenges facing our planet.



WHO IS JEFFREY SACHS?

Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs has had a truly illustrious career, from being economic advisor to various nations to leading initiatives to eradicate poverty across the globe. He has demonstrated an immense compassion for the poor and a fervour for preserving our planet for future generations. His leadership in these initiatives have earned and continued to earn him international renown and respect; he was twice named as one of "Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People."

Sachs, already an academic star in the making, was promoted to the position of Full Professor at the age of 28, one of the youngest in Harvard's history. He has more than thirty years of experience advising heads of state and governments on economic strategy and reforms in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

Sachs started his career working in African countries at a national and regional level on the matter of Africa's poverty in the mid-1990s. He worked with senior officials from the Clinton Administration to significantly enhance market access to the US for qualifying Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries through the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). He has lobbied African leaders to promote smallholder agriculture and to fight high disease burdens through strengthening primary health systems. His

pioneering ideas on investing in health to break the poverty trap have been widely applied throughout the continent. His experiences in Africa provided a valuable foundation during his time to expand to international regions in the fight for a more equitable world.

In 2002, Sachs became the Director of the Earth Institute of Columbia University. As Director, he leads a university-wide organisation of academics and professionals from natural-science and social-science disciplines, in conducting cutting-edge research on all aspects of earth systems and sustainable development. He has consistently advocated for inclusion sustainable development in tertiary education, and helped to introduce the PhD in Sustainable Development at Columbia University, the first of its kind in the United States.

Since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Sachs has been considered by many to be the premier academic and practitioner of the MDGs. He played a pivotal role in scaling up the financing of health care and disease control in the low-income countries to support MDGs 4, 5, and 6 when he was chair of the WHO Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. He worked with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and senior officials from the Bush Administration to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB through a number of initiatives. Sachs



Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Photo Credit: Earth Institute, Columbia University.

was assigned by Secretary-General Kofi Annan to chair the UN Millennium Project and developed a concrete action plan to achieve the MDGs. In September 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted the key recommendations of the UN Millennium Project at a special session. Among them were recommendations for rural Africa that are currently being implemented and documented in the Millennium Villages.

Sachs currently directs the Millennium Villages Project, which operates in ten African countries and covers more than 500,000 people. The Project aims to address the root causes of extreme poverty, taking a holistic, community-led approach to sustainable development. The Project has recorded significant breakthroughs in raising agricultural production, reducing child stunting, and cutting child mortality rates, with the results described in several peer-reviewed publications. Some of the key concepts are now being applied in nations like Nigeria, Mali and many others countries to help support national anti-poverty programmes.

In addition to that, Sachs is Co-Founder and Chief Strategist of Millennium Promise Alliance, an international non-profit organisation solely committed to accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the eradication of extreme poverty, hunger, and preventable disease. Sachs is also one of the Secretary-General's MDG Advocates, and a Commissioner of the ITU/UNESCO Broadband Commission for Development.

His deep knowledge in addressing poverty and pertinent questions of development has given him the opportunity to work closely with many international organisations, including the African Union, various regional development banks, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), UNAIDS, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria, just to name a few.

In 2012, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), with Sachs as its Director. The SDSN was tasked with mobilising scientific and technical expertise from academia, civil society, and the private sector in support of sustainable development problem solving at local, national, and global scales. This Network will accelerate joint learning and help promote integrated technical and policy approaches to the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges confronting the world. In the near future, the SDSN will deploy pilot projects and implement solutions to sustainable development challenges and assist countries in creating sustainable development pathways.

Since then, he has served as Special Advisor to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the Sustainable Development Goals. He continues to be a champion of the Masters of Development Practice (MDP) in order to train future leaders for the cause of sustainable development. His efforts have led to a number of major universities around the world to offer this programme. He remains a leading commentator on global issues like economic development, strategies of economic reform, macroeconomic policy, climate change and the end of poverty due to his vast experience throughout the years.

Sachs, with his recent appointment as the Chair of the Jeffrey Sachs Center on Sustainable Development at Sunway University, Malaysia will bring to it his years of experience with economic and sustainable development coupled with a deep compassion for the poor and disadvantaged. His outstanding reputation among world leaders puts him in a prime position to play a leadership role in bringing nations together to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

JEFFREY CHEAH INSTITUTE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA EVENTS – FROM JAN 2016 TO MAR 2017

Date & Type of event	Topic	Speakers
14 January 2016 Forum	The World Economy in 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Woo Wing Thye, President, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia, Sunway University Professor Kuan Chung-Ming, University Chair Professor, Finance Department and Economics Department and Director of the Center for Research in Econometric Theory and Applications, National Taiwan University
25 January 2016 Forum (In collaboration with G25 and Islamic Renaissance Front)	Is Political Islam a Threat to Democracy?	Mr. Mustafa Akyol , author and columnist for Turkish newspaper Hürriyet Daily News, the website Al-Monitor: The Pulse of the Middle East, and a monthly opinion writer for The International New York Times.
26 January 2016 Webcast	TPPA and Malaysia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> YB Charles Santiago, Member of Parliament for Klang Professor Sufian Jusoh, World Trade Institute and Institute for Malaysia and International Studies Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
28 January 2016 Forum	Universities to Survive the Current Uncertainties Through Innovation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Tan Sri Dr Ghauth Jasmon, Board Member of Sunway University, Former Vice Chancellor of University of Malaya and Founder President of Multimedia University. Mr. Vincent Wong Wai Sang, CEO, Malaysia Innovation Hub and former Political Secretary, Department of National Unity, Prime Minister's Department.
4 February 2016 Webcast	ISIS in Malaysia	Dr. Maszlee Malik , Assistant Professor at the International Islamic University, Malaysia
7 March 2016 Seminar (Jointly organised by Sunway University)	Mobilising Diversity to Achieve Academic Excellence	<p>Panel of speakers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Tan Sri Dr Ghauth Jasmon, Board Member of Sunway University, Former Vice Chancellor of University of Malaya and Founder President of Multimedia University Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Australian National University, Australia Karen Welsh, Counsellor (Education and Science), Australian High Commission, Malaysia Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor, Sunway University

JEFFREY CHEAH INSTITUTE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA EVENTS – FROM JAN 2016 TO MAR 2017 (cont'd)

Date & Type of event	Topic	Speakers
24 March 2016 Conference	East Asia in 2016: Searching for Solutions to Domestic Socio-Economic Problems, Big-Power Rivalry and Climate Change	<p>Southeast Asian Situation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Dato' Dr. Tan Tat Wai, Research Professor, Sunway University Professor Chalongphob Sussangkarn, former Minister of Finance, Thailand; and former President of Thailand Development Research Institute Professor Tan Sri Dr Ghauth Jasmon, Board Member Sunway University, former Vice Chancellor of University of Malaya, Founder President of Multimedia University Professor Mari Elka Pangestu, Former Minister of Trade, Indonesia <p>Northeast Asian Situation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Emeritus Wang Gungwu, Chairman, East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore Professor Dwight Perkins, Harold Hitchings Burbank Professor Emeritus of Political Economy, Harvard University Professor Woo Wing Thye, President, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia, Sunway University Professor Yoon Young-Kwan, Professor, Seoul National University, and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, South Korea
24 March 2016 Dinner Talk	Reimagining Southeast Asia	Professor Mari Elka Pangestu , Former Minister of Trade, Indonesia
23 April 2016 Forum	The European Economy: Policies, Prospects and Problems	Dr. Seppo Honkapohja , Member of the Board, Bank of Finland
13 May 2016 Public Lecture	The 2016 Sarawak Elections: Team Adenan and Other Stories	Professor James Chin , University of Tasmania / Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia, Sunway University
30 May 2016 Forum (In collaboration with G25 and Islamic Renaissance Front)	Islam and the Secular State	Professor Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im , Charles Howard Candler Professor of Law, Emory University, USA
21 June 2016 Seminar	Seminar on Expanding Private Higher Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Ghauth Jasmon, Senior Fellow, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia; Board Member, Sunway University Professor Mansor Fadzil, President / Vice-Chancellor, Open University Malaysia
1 August 2016 Forum (In collaboration with G25 and Islamic Renaissance Front)	Toward a Political Theory of Sectarianism: The Salience of Authority over Theology	Associate Professor Dr Nader Hashemi , Associate Professor of Middle East and Islamic Politics and Director, Center for Middle East Studies, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver
12 August 2016 Forum (In collaboration with Malaysian Economic Association)	Effectiveness of Parliamentary Committees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rt Hon Norman Baker, Former Minister of State, Home Office and Minister of Transport, United Kingdom Hon Anna Burke, Retiring Member of Australian Parliament, and former Speaker of the House of Representatives Hon Jon Erizal, Member of Indonesian Parliament

**JEFFREY CHEAH INSTITUTE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA EVENTS –
FROM JAN 2016 TO MAR 2017 (cont'd)**

Date & Type of event	Topic	Speakers
22 September 2016 Seminar (In collaboration with Center for International Development at Harvard University)	A New Development Strategy for Southeast Asia based on the Expansion of Production Network and Preferential Trade Agreements	Professor Fukunari Kimura , Dean, Faculty of Economics, Keio University
4 October 2016 Seminar	University leadership and Governance: Achieving Greater Excellence in Malaysian Institutions	1. Professor Da Hsuan Feng , Director of Global Affairs and Special Advisor to the Rector of University of Macau (UMacau) and a Fellow of the American Physical Society. 2. Professor Alma Harris , Director of the Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Malaya 3. Professor Ghauth Jasmon , Senior Fellow, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia; Board Member, Sunway University; formerly Founder President of Multimedia University and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya.
5 October 2016 Seminar (In collaboration with Center for International Development at Harvard University)	Understanding the Slow Catch-Up Growth in Indonesia and Fixing the Problem	Professor Muhamad Chatib Basri , Professor of Economics, University of Indonesia
31 October 2016 Seminars	Malaysia's Growth Sustainability and Economic Transformation	1. Professor Datuk Dr Noor Azlan Ghazali , Vice- Chancellor, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Commonwealth Fellow of Financial Economics & Banking, the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) 2. Professor Yeah Kim Leng , Director of Economic Studies Program, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia; Professor of Economics, Sunway University Business School; Vice-President, Malaysian Economic Association
9 November 2016 Seminar (In collaboration with Center for International Development at Harvard University)	Efficient and Inclusive Urbanization in China Requires a Leading Role for the Big Cities	Professor Lu Ming , Distinguished Professor of Economics, Shanghai Jiao Tong University
18 & 19 January 2017 Forum (In collaboration with ASH Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School)	Asia Public Policy Forum: Improving Education Access and Quality in Asia	Panel 1: Creating a Vibrant Knowledge Sector • Professor Michael Woolcock , Harvard Kennedy School • Dr. Karndee Leopaiprote , C-ASEAN • Pak Daniel Suryadarma , SMERU Research Institute and Australian National University Panel 2: Balancing Access and Quality in Primary and Secondary Education • Professor Rajah Rasiah , University of Malaya • Dr. Deunden Nikomborirak , Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) • Professor Lant Pritchett , Harvard Kennedy School Panel 3: Balancing Access and Quality in Tertiary Education • Dr. Connie K. Chung , Harvard Graduate School of Education • Ms. Dam Bich Thuy , Fulbright University Vietnam • Mr. Mokhammad Mahdum , Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education

**JEFFREY CHEAH INSTITUTE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA EVENTS –
FROM JAN 2016 TO MAR 2017 (cont'd)**

Date & Type of event	Topic	Speakers
18 & 19 January 2017 Forum (In collaboration with ASH Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School)	Asia Public Policy Forum: Improving Education Access and Quality in Asia	Panel 4: Assessing and Improving Education Quality • Professor Xiao-Li Meng , Dean, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University • Dr. Nay Win Oo , Myanmar National Education Policy Commission • Professor Anita Lie , Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya Panel 5: Meeting Job Market Demand • Dr. Vu Quoc Huy , Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences • Professor Mayling Oey-Gardiner , University of Indonesia, AIPI (Indonesian Academy of Sciences) • Professor Tan Sri Dr. Ghauth Jasmon , Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia Panel 6: Understanding the Relationship Between Education and Development • Professor Satryo Brodjonegoro , Bandung Institute of Technology • Professor Chen Zhao , Fudan University • Professor Woo Wing Thye , Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia
10 February 2017 Seminar (Co-convended by the Centre for Higher Education Research, Sunway University and the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia)	Inequality in Higher Education. Meeting the Challenge in Malaysia	1. Dr. Graeme Atheron , Adjunct Professor, Centre for Higher Education Research, Sunway University; Founder and Director of NEON, UK 2. Professor Fauziah Md. Taib , Dean, School of Management, Universiti Sains Malaysia 3. Professor Tan Sri Ghauth Jasmon , Senior Fellow, Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia; Board Member, Sunway University; formerly Founder President of Multimedia University and the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya 4. Associate Professor Munir Shuib , Deputy Director, National Higher Education Research Institute, Universiti Sains Malaysia 5. Professor Glenda Crosling , Head, Centre for Higher Education Research, Sunway University
20 March 2017 Seminar	Globalisation Enters a New Phase: How is Southeast Asia to Adapt?	1. Dr. Ooi Kee Beng , Deputy Director ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore 2. Professor Woo Wing Thye , Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia
29-30 March 2017 Forum	Asian Economic Panel	1. Professor Dwight Perkins , Harvard University 2. Professor Woo Wing Thye , Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia 3. Muhammad Abdul Khalid , Former Khazanah Research Institute 4. Kwanho Shin , Korea University 5. Sarah Lynne Daway , University of the Philippines 6. Ming Lu , Shanghai Jiao Tong University 7. Miaojie Yu , Peking University 8. Li Shiyu , Renmin University of China 9. Naoyuki Yoshino , Asian Development Bank Institute 10. Yongseung Jung , Kyung hee University 11. Barry Eichengreen , University of California, Berkeley



From Left to Right: Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Mr. Jon Pettitt, Professor Jay Rosengard, Tan Sri Dato' Dr. R.V. Navaratnam, Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr Jeffrey Cheah AO, Dato' Seri Idris bin Jusoh, Professor Dwight Perkins, Mrs. Julie Perkins, Dr Elizabeth Lee, Tan Sri Datuk Seri Razman M. Hashim, Sarena, Professor Tan Sri Dr. Ghauth Jasmon

ASIA PUBLIC POLICY FORUM 2017 ON "IMPROVING EDUCATION ACCESS AND QUALITY IN ASIA"

The Harvard Kenney School ASH Center and the Jeffrey Institute on Southeast Asia jointly organised the day and a half conference themed "Improving Education Access and Quality in Asia" on 18 January 2017 at Sunway University, sponsored by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation. This forum brought together individuals providing access and developing a link between education and development and as said by Professor Graeme Wilkinson, with the aim of "considering how Southeast Asia can better engage with improving education access and guaranteeing quality with the view to ensuring economic and social progress."

The opening address of the sixth Asia Public Policy Forum (APPF) was presented by Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University and Professor Anthony Saich, Director of the Ash Center for Democratic Governance at the Harvard Kenney School. In the opening and welcome address, these Professors along with Professor Woo Wing Thye from the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia discussed the challenges facing the future of education in Asia and globally in the 21st century as well as how to deliver high quality education which meets the needs of society in a rapidly changing context.

"Asia is developing rapidly, both economically and socially, but development does require highly effective education systems with high levels of participation at primary, secondary and tertiary stages in order for nations to reach highly developed status and avoid what is often called the middle income trap. This of course brings about a major challenge in relation to affordability in ensuring high levels of participation and also in ensuring that the education is indeed of high quality and fit for purpose in the contemporary world."

*Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor,
Sunway University*

One major concern which was highlighted twice by both Professors was on how to prepare young people for a world of work in which traditional jobs are fast disappearing and being replaced by artificial intelligence, robotics and other technological advancements.

"All of us have a stake in the future of our education systems and need to ensure they really deliver what our nations require."

*Professor Graeme Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor,
Sunway University*

Professor Anthony Saich from the Harvard Kennedy School emphasised the need to "develop a highly trained and skilled workforce due to increase in globalisation, as well as the need to develop better and more flexible institutions." From his perspective, future challenges include how to absorb the increase of flow in people up the education ladder while meeting the demands of a highly competitive labor market. When speaking about the challenges of educational provision and development of human capital, Professor Anthony Saich highlighted the findings from the Growth Report which pointed out that "growth strategies cannot succeed without a commitment to equality of opportunity with respect to education."



From left to right: Professor Tan Sri Dr. Ghauth Jasmon, Professor Mayling Oey-Gardiner, Dr. Vu Quoc Huy, Professor Jay Rosengard

CREATING A VIBRANT KNOWLEDGE SECTOR

The first panel on "Creating a Vibrant Knowledge Sector" looked at how to improve the quality of the system that serves the people and examined issues of positive deviance and how one might work with local experiences to improve the understanding within local communities and look at what is possible to develop within those communities. Speakers for the first panel included Professor Michael Woolcock, Dr. Karndee Leopairote and Pak Daniel Suryadarma.

Professor Michael Woolcock from the World Bank and Harvard Kennedy School drew on the solutions explored at School and discussed the need to tap into the big standard deviations produced by complicated problems and encouraged to perceived them as a source of learning, recognising that someone somewhere has already provided a solution to that problem without the need of external expertise, therefore tapping into that form of expertise. Woolcock emphasised on inclusivity by helping citizens

be part of the decision making process as a result, all the problems can be prioritised by the people who have to live with the immediate consequences.

"We need a different way of thinking about what knowledge is and what it should be doing."

*Professor Michael Woolcock,
World Bank, Harvard Kennedy School*

Dr. Karndee Leopairote from C-ASEAN presented her paper on "Creating Vibrant Knowledge Sector," looking at the ASEAN region where she presented case studies from Thailand. Leopairote's presentation looked at how the knowledge sector can circulate information to create social and economic impacts on four specific levels; individual, institutional, community-city engagement, and cross-border collaboration in ASEAN. She also highlighted that it is not only institutions such as schools and universities that can contribute to a more vibrant knowledge sector, but also the private sector.

Pak Daniel Suryadarma of SMERU Research Institute and Australian National University presented on "Knowledge Sector for Policy in Indonesia: A Look at the Supply Side." Suryadama shared that high quality knowledge is necessary for sound policy making and that there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to transferring a certain policy from one country to another. With Indonesia as the primary case study, Suryadama discussed the main constraints facing suppliers of knowledge along with potential long-term solutions.

BALANCING ACCESS AND QUALITY IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The second panel moderated by Pak Toenggoel Siagian and Indonesian Scholar and Practitioner, brought about discussion of access and quality of primary and secondary education in Malaysia and Thailand as well as perspectives on whether there is a trade-off between quality and quantity when it comes to quality of education. Speakers at the second panel were Professor Rajah Rasiah, Dr. Deunden Nikomborirak and Professor Lant Pritchett.

Professor Rajah Rasiah from University of Malaya provided a local perspective on "Access and Quality of Secondary Education: The Malaysian Experience." Rasiah began his presentation with the approaches to education and changes in enrolment in secondary education and progression into tertiary education. He then proceeded to compare the access and quality of secondary education in Malaysia with other countries before he concluded with streaming into STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) disciplines. Rasiah came to the conclusion that while "Malaysia has achieved remarkable improvements in access to secondary education, and its progression towards tertiary education since independence, there is still room for improvement if compared with other upper middle income countries."

“The problem is not just that low average quality means the poor and disadvantaged are getting bad education, but also those country elites are actually, in global terms, having an incredibly mediocre education at best.”

Professor Lant Pritchett, Harvard Kennedy School and Center for Global Development

Dr. Deunden Nikomborirak from the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), presented on the topic of “Improving Education and Access and Quality in Asia.” Having provided a perspective on Thailand’s Education Policy, quality of education based on PISA scores and the evaluation system, Nikomborirak presented the resistance factors along with solutions to Thailand’s need to improve the quality of education without affecting access. From the Harvard Kennedy School and Center for Global Development, Professor Lant Pritchett examined the topic of “Quality of Education: Is There a Tradeoff of Quality and Quantity?” Pritchett makes the distinction between schooling and education and through statistics and case studies presents the issue of while there has been massive expansion of schooling, globally; and that expansion has been remarkably uniform across countries of the world, the expansion of schooling has not always produced learning. He proceeds to highlight the important implications of this issue not only to the bottom the education distribution, but also the top, in the remainder of his presentation.

“Efforts must be taken to raise the quality of English, Science, Mathematics and Reading and that the monitoring and appraisal of quality of education must be made more accountable than what is done now.”

Professor Rajah Rasiah, University of Malaya

BALANCING ACCESS AND QUALITY IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

The third panel examined the critical issue of how to optimise the uptake of tertiary education and at the same time ensure that the education is of high quality. Moderated by the Vice-Chancellor of Sunway University, Professor Graeme Wilkinson shared his reflection on some challenges concerning access and quality in tertiary education, specifically on how countries can afford high access, higher education as well as how to manage the higher graduate unemployment rate as a byproduct of increased access of tertiary education. Speakers who presented on this topic were Dr. Connie K. Chung, Ms. Dam Bich Thuy and Mr. Mokhammad Mahdum.

First speaker, Dr. Connie K. Chung from the Global Education Innovation Initiative at the Harvard Graduate School of Education discussed her research which focused mostly on the quality aspect of the topic. After presenting the social, political and economic changes of the 21st century, and a framework for 21st century education, Chung proceeded to share cross-country findings where her research involved looking at the curriculum frameworks of six countries and analysing the frameworks it against the competencies proposed in the compendium of research conducted on the topic of what skills students need in the 21st century. Chung’s research also included the study of 7 programmes that practise 21CC as well as an analysis of 50+ organisations globally that teach 21CC and 10 in-depth case studies. The main themes which came out in this presentation was the need to shift the definition of quality education, access and equity are critical components of quality equation and the notion that life-long learning is not just about seeking knowledge, but more importantly, wisdom, character and resilience.



Dr. Connie K. Chung

From Fulbright University Vietnam, Ms. Dam Bich Thuy shared the story of the 23 year-long struggle to get Fulbright University to become the first independent, private, not for profit Vietnamese institution to be established. Main themes which came out of her talk included the necessity of ensuring certain prerequisites were met in order to achieve high quality university. Aspects mentioned included academic freedom, autonomy with the curriculum, with recruitment of students, staff and professors. Included in the struggle was 12 years of negotiating a governance system of school which was acceptable as well as convincing parents in Vietnam that liberal education is something worth pursuing. Fulbright University is hoping to see its first class in June 2018 and only then can they determine whether they have been successful in establishing an institution with high quality education.



From left to right: Mr. Mokhammad Mahdum, Ms. Dam Bich Thuy, Dr. Connie K. Chung, Professor Graeme Wilkinson

Mr. Mokhammad Mahdum from the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP), under the Ministry of Finance, is one of the biggest scholarship providers in Indonesia. Mahdum presented on “Balancing Access and Quality of Tertiary Education in Indonesia, particularly through LPDP.” According to Indonesia’s National Constitution, “At least 20% of national budget should be used for education to meet the needs of implementing national education.” Mahdum also mentioned that the number of demand of skill pool professional and competent workers in the private sector is indicating that it still remains vibrant; however, he proceeded to mention that “if Indonesia fails to design, prepare and provide adequate level of skill, knowledge, and experience it will disadvantage the transformation of economic sector significantly.” When it comes to providing greater access to education, Mahdum said the Indonesian law passed in 2012 on Higher Education mandates that 20% of tertiary education students ought to come from three segmented areas: frontier, outer, and disadvantaged area.

ASSESSING AND IMPROVING EDUCATION QUALITY

The fourth panel, moderated by Professor James Chin from the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia discussed the progress made and goals to be achieved to improve the education system in Myanmar and Indonesia as well as how to address the issue of learning assessments in higher education. Speakers included Professor Xiao Li-Meng, Dr. Nay Win Oo and Professor Anita Lie.

Professor Xiao Li-Meng from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University presented his paper on “Preparing Future Faculty to Teach and Assess Today and Tomorrow’s Students,” looking specifically at learning assessments. The speaker first addressed the issue of varied definitions and perception of learning assessments while emphasising how doing well in learning assessments can improve teaching as well as students’ learning. Xiao also discussed the changes in how students today gather information, specifically with the use of technology, as well as the dynamic shift between faculty and student. Xiao proceeded to elaborate on a retreat for the faculty centered

around the theme of “Are my students actually learning?” conducted in May 2013 which aimed at addressing issues such as assessment and evaluation tools and methods and best practices; identifying areas of training in assessment and evaluation for current and future faculty, and encouraging collaboration between schools, departments and individuals.

Dr. Nay Win Oo from the Myanmar National Education Policy Commission provided a local perspective on the current policies and efforts being made in Myanmar’s education system. The speaker introduced the Comprehensive Education Set Review (CESR), an assessment-like programme used in Myanmar’s education system. Based on recommendations from the CESR, Myanmar plans to undergo major transformation over the next few years in order to meet the goal of life-long learning and career aspirations of their students, youth and adults. The government’s key reforms in the coming years include the provision of quality, healthy placement for pre-school and primary education for all children, including those living in remote and rural areas, quality of technical and vocational education, as well as the establishment of a quality assurance system and the investment in training programmes to build capacity of technical specialists, managers, and those occupying leadership positions in institutions.

Professor Anita Lie from Widya Mandala Catholic University in Surabaya presented her paper on “Assessing and Improving Education Quality in Indonesia.” After providing insights on the Indonesian Education System including achievements made in the sector, which included increased enrollment in primary and secondary schools, higher access to basic education, teacher certification and improved remuneration, reduced adult illiteracy and increased human development index. Lie shared Indonesia’s educational targets to be achieved by 2019, including school readiness prior to primary school. Lie proceeded to share a study her and her team had done on a formative evaluation of a community-based professional development project for in-service teachers in three provinces in Indonesia. Lie concluded her presentation on what makes government invest in mass education, which is where she says research and policies come in.



From left to right: Professor Xiao-Li Meng, Dr. Nay Win Oo, Professor Anita Lie, Professor James Chin

MEETING JOB MARKET DEMAND

Professor Jay Rosengard from Harvard Kennedy School moderated the fifth panel session which discussed the challenge of ensuring education and relevant training enhances skills and knowledge of students relevant to job market demand. Dr. Vu Quoc Huy, Professor Mayling Oey-Gardiner and Professor Tan Sri Dr Ghauth Jasmon presented on this topic.

Dr. Vu Quoc Huy from the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences on "Meeting Job Market Demand: Challenges for the Vietnamese Tertiary Education Sector." Huy began by providing insights on key issues in Vietnam's job market mainly revolving around skills development. Huy also shared statistics on shared unemployment by level of training, skills gap versus occupational shortage, skill shortage, and a disconnected skill development system. The presentation concluded with practical recommendations such as address information barriers in rural and remote areas and provide adequate capacity investment in faculty training. Lastly, Huy reiterated the need for a strategic vision combined with an incremental and pragmatic approach to reform education and training systems to better meet the job market demand.

Professor Mayling Oey-Gardiner from the University of Indonesia presented on "Realizing the Indonesian Demographic Dividend Education as Social Investment," which provided a broader perspective on the Indonesian population, education and social investment. After highlighting Indonesia's demographic transition which included total fertility rate, infant mortality rate, and life expectancy at birth, Oey-Gardiner discussed the impact on the population age structure and the four mechanisms needed to achieve the benefits of demographic dividend. When it came to the topic of improving human capital and investing in education, Oey-Gardiner provided characteristics of Indonesia's education policies as well as statistics on the education composition of the workforce in the country. While "education has an important place in the Indonesian constitution as a right of all citizens and thus education fulfills a social function in society and is treated likewise in government," she says, "the trend of education and meeting job market demand are moving along in separate trajectories."



Professor Mayling Oey-Gardiner

Professor Tan Sri Dr Ghauth Jasmon presented on "Meeting Job Market Demand: The Current Malaysian Scenario," began his presentation by introducing the government's vision of being a high-income nation by 2020 and the Malaysian Education Blueprint, after which he shared statistics depicting Malaysia's key economic sectors. He then proceeded to discuss the varied economic situation in Malaysia in 2014, where the country experienced a vibrant economic situation; however, in 2016 the nation was affected by the global economic slowdown resulting in a less than optimistic economic performance outlook for 2017, according to the findings in the MIER report. Jasmon concluded the presentation with the OPEX cuts in public universities and the economic and social consequences it will have on the nation.

UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The sixth and final panel of the forum was moderated by Professor Dwight Perkins from the Harvard Kenney School, who introduced the panel by mentioning the complicated relationship between education and development which varies in terms of the education tradition of the counties involved as well as stage of development. The speakers for this panel included Professor Satryo Brodjonegoro, Professor Chen Zhao and Professor Woo Wing Thye.

The first speaker, Professor Satryo Brodjonegoro from the Bandung Institute of Technology explored the relationship between education and development in the Indonesian context; explaining the shift of the basis of the economy being driven from natural resources and abundant labor to innovation and human capital intensive. A key finding of a study conducted last year, showed an increase in non-routine analytic and non-routine interactive task for the future employees, as routine cognitive, routine manual and non-routine manual tasks will be replaced by artificial intelligence. Through evidence based research, Brodjonegoro demonstrated the major skills lacking are soft skills, combined with statistics showing the importance of soft skills to companies and the implications of these skill shortages thereby emphasising the need for a paradigm shift to an outcome based education, instead of input based education, and further investment in people and improving people capabilities and skills.



From left to right: Professor Woo Wing Thye, Professor Chen Zhao, Professor Satryo Brodjonegoro, Professor Dwight Perkins

Professor Chen Zhao from Fudan University discussed education and development in China looking specifically at education and inequality. Through his empirical studies, Zhao highlighted the urban-rural inequality and urban household inequality gap as a result of different educational levels and quality of education provided in rural and urban regions, emphasising that education is very important regardless of the two forms of inequality mentioned. Zhao also discussed the policy issues and consequences in both the rural and urban areas in relation to access to education and concluded with policy recommendations which included more fiscal support of education in rural areas and encourage the local technical and vocational schools to absorb migrant workers' children to also better meet the job market demand.

Professor Woo Wing Thye of the Jeffrey Cheah Institute emphasised the importance of good health to human capital formation for example, malnutrition in childhood years leads to lower IQ and hence prevents learning. He cautioned against a silver bullet approach to improving education and recommended a packet approach to increase access and quality in education. He added that the appropriate package of policies to support learning is different at each stage of economic development, and across countries. He concluded by pointing out that competition between private universities and public universities is key to building a world-class education sector, and hence the government should not favour the public universities in awarding research grants.

CONCLUSION

After a day and a half of presentations and discussions, the 2017 Asia Public Policy Forum concluded with remarks from Professor Jay Rosengard from Harvard Kenney School and Professor Woo Wing Thye of the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia, as well as a lunch reception.



From left to right: Professor Michael Woolcock, Dr. Karndee Leopaire, Pak Daniel Suryadarma, Professor Leong Choon Heng



Dato Latifah Merican Cheong

EFFECTIVENESS OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

LATIFAH MERICAN CHEONG
FOR THE MALAYSIAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION

The Forum on the “Effectiveness of Parliamentary Committees” organised by the Jeffrey Cheah Institute (JCI) in collaboration with the Malaysian Economic Association (MEA), was made possible by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF). The event held in on August 12th 2016 at Sunway University aimed to enlighten participants on different models of parliamentary democracy, and included presentations and analysis by an international community as well as panel of Malaysian parliamentarians and think tank experts. Speakers included the Hon. Anna Burke, a former Speaker of the Australian Parliament, the Right Hon. (RT) Norman Baker, a former member of parliament (MP) from the United Kingdom (UK) and the Hon. Jon Erizal, a member of the Indonesian Parliamentary Finance Commission and advisor to the Indian Parliament.

The Hon. Anna Burke was elected to the Australian Parliament from 1998 until 2016, where she served as the Speaker of the House of Representatives during the 43rd Parliament from 2012 to 2013. Rt Hon. Norman Baker had been a member of Parliament (MP) for Lewes in East Sussex from 1997 to 2015. He was Minister of State at the Home Office, responsible for Crime Prevention from 2013 to 2014, and was Minister at the Department for Transport from 2010 to 2013. Hon. Jon Erizal is a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives from 2014 until 2019, where he currently sits on the Commission on the economy, banking and finance. The Commission oversees the Ministry of Finance, the Indonesian Central Bank, the Ministry of National Development Planning, Indonesian Financial Service Authority and Commercial Banks and Financial services.

The MEA recognises that Malaysia has good economic fundamentals which are the result of decades of balanced and consistent macro-economic policies. However, good economic policies alone are not sufficient. It must be supported by strong governance to implement these policies. Hence, public dialogs on economic governance which MEA started in 2015 are intended to draw attention to the critical need for governance to prevail in all Malaysian public sector institutions. As in the corporate sector, good governance in the highest public institution, the Malaysian Parliament, must begin at the top. This will lead to a wide cascade effect to public sector ministries, agencies and institutions, as well as civil service sector. Accordingly, the MEA began the economic governance series with a public forum on parliamentary committees as a mechanism for parliament to exercise its oversight -which is the review, monitoring, and supervision of federal agencies, programmes, activities and policy implementation- over the Executive more effectively.

In this unique exchange between Malaysian economists, policy makers, educationists, civil society and parliamentarians from abroad, various perspectives of the effectiveness of parliamentary committees were discussed. The two-hour session brought out the values of parliamentary committees in encouraging efficiency of the MP's performance, was said to lead to better governance of the economy and country. Parliamentary committees have long functioned in developed countries and have proven effective in implementing stronger legislations as well as oversight of the public sector, particularly in terms

of accountability and ethical practices. Parliamentary committees are not only effective in the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy established a long time ago, but

“The transparency principle observed in parliamentary committees has been an effective tool in encouraging accountability in the management of the public sector.”

Latifah Merican Cheong

also in more recently established democracies of such that of India, Indonesia and Korea.

Parliamentary committees enable legislations to be debated thoroughly, and is where experts are called to validate the impact assessment results submitted by officials, and allows MPs to have substantial more time to consider the various implications of the legislations. The committees provide a mechanism for greater public scrutiny of bills, and avoid “political point scoring”, resulting in better legislation and its implementation.

Committees are of various types and may emanate from the House of Representatives or the Senate. Regular committees overseeing government departments have been able to keep the Executive in check through regular updates from the departments they oversee, conducting enquiry meetings with public servants, media and other relevant personnel. In both the UK and Australia, parliamentary committees shadow every department of the government, with some cross-cutting issues on areas such as finance, climate change and others. Generally, permanent committees include finance such as the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), legislations and oversight committees on important government agencies.

The PAC scrutinises the value for money which is achieved in terms of economic performance, efficiency and effectiveness of public spending. Given the broadening of the public sector in Australia, the PAC reach has been extended beyond government departments to also examine other public bodies as well as private sectors providing public services. In Indonesia in particular, the Finance Committee closely inspects the budgetary processes and expenditure. In this regard, both Indonesia and UK parliamentary committees conduct on-sight visits to better understand and validate reports as well as updates received by officials.

In some countries however, MPs can be burdened with a plethora of committees. A right balance is needed for MPs to be able to be effective in their roles. Committees can also appoint sub-committees. Membership of committees reflects party composition, and selection of members to various committees are based on expertise and seniority through a transparent process of nominations to committees observed by all parties. Chairmanship of committees is divided proportionately between the ruling and the opposition parties based on representation in parliament, however chairmanship of critical committees such as the PAC is usually given to the Opposition party, reflecting good governance principles. Procedures on chairmanship selection is designed to ensure “party whips” cannot influence the workings of parliamentary committees. Similarly, government officials are also prevented from having any influence on any committee. In the case of Indonesia, due to past circumstances, extra caution placed on selecting members with integrity. The addressing of corruption in governments has been effective due to the work of selected parliamentary committees.

The transparency principle observed in parliamentary committees has been an effective tool in encouraging accountability in the management of the public sector. It is also a very important tool for parliamentary committees to be effective. Investigative reports submitted to Parliament is also available for public scrutiny, creating pressure for parliamentary to make the appropriate decisions. In Indonesia and India, action is being taken to address the short comings of transparency to create more effective parliamentary committees.

An important revelation shared by the three MPs at the forum is was that committees may take the party line during early discussions of any issue. However, as more information and evidence are provided by officials and experts, MPs decisions are more consensual, based on what is optimal for national interest. This has been the greatest value of parliamentary committees in encouraging MPs from all component parties to act in the interest of the country.

Both RT. Hon. Norman Baker and Hon. Anna Burke emphasised that success of parliamentary committees is also highly dependent on several conditions being met. This includes the freedom of access to information, a free press which is able to report diverse views, and access to independent funding by parliament to build its own cadre of professionals able to advise MPs and to undertake research on investigations by committees. It is essential that parliament has its own administrative arm and is able to adequately support committees with research and other professional expertise. The quality of the professional support is key to making MPs perform effectively in parliamentary committees.

Overall, success of parliamentary committees is also dependent on the political will of parliamentarians in wanting to have better governments. Integrity is important and can be ensured through processes and procedures adopted by parliament in the conduct of its functions and responsibilities. Parliamentary committees and selected committees are tested to truly implement the concept of democratic governance, transparency and accountability.

THE JEFFREY CHEAH TRAVEL GRANTS

The Jeffrey Cheah Institute awarded ten travel grants in 2016. Among the projects awarded were: **Higher Education Reforms and Performance of Malaysia Education Systems (Than Lee Lee, Sunway TES)**, **The Chinese Community in Malaysia (James Chin, Sunway University)**, **Predicting the Emotion of a User Based on Walking Patterns (Juan Carlos Quiroz Aguilera, Sunway University)**, **Folic Acid Rice Fortification in Vietnam (Karin B. Michels, Harvard University)**, and **Make and Break: Connection and Isolation in Wa Special Region on the Burma-China Border (Andrew W. Ong, Harvard University)**.

Three doctoral students from Sunway and Monash University Malaysia earned the opportunity for further academic exchange between academics, scholars, and staff of the Harvard University in the United States. Generously provided by the Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grants, this is the third academic exchange which has taken place since the institution's establishment in 2014.

Doctoral candidate Jesslyn Leong Yoke Kiau received views by experts on her study and gained access to some of Harvard University's best collection of resources. Associate Professor Dr. Jeff Tan Kuan Onn used the grant to engage with experts in his field of study and learned of cutting edge projects at the University, and Pamudi Banjitha Abeynayake Senadheerage received invaluable constructive feedback from Harvard experts. These candidates were able to use their grant to take their research of the study of self-control and self-regulation of children's diet, Cancer Biology, and social network and the labor market outcomes, to the next level because of the Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grants.

From Harvard, Ms. Rebecca B. Choong Wilkins used the grant to complete her fieldwork on contemporary Peranakan culture, while Mr. Munjed M. Murad engaged with scholars about his research and interviewed Southeast Asian intellectuals on the Islamic Sciences of Nature.

Designed to further academic exchanges between Malaysia/Southeast Asia and the United States, this grant is eligible to students and staff at Sunway Education Group institutions (Sunway University and Sunway College, Monash University Malaysia) and Harvard University. The Travel Grants programme is coordinated by the Jeffrey Cheah Institute (JCI) and applications are invited twice a year. Further information is available on the JCI website, www.jci.edu.my.



Ms. Jesslyn Leong Yoke Kiau in front of the John Harvard statue at Harvard University

Ms. Jesslyn Leong Yoke Kiau, PhD candidate, Sunway University

Parent's Self-Control and Self-Regulation of Children's Diet

Ms. Jesslyn Leong's research focuses on "Parent's self-control and self-regulation of their children's diet." As a doctoral student, "I had never imagined I could possibly place my feet at Harvard... I was excited and eager to attain knowledge and gain wisdom from this world prestigious university," she said. The grant received assisted her in bringing her research to the next level through the expert views given on her study and the access given of Harvard University libraries and its extensive and varied collection of resources.

"Harvard teaching method integrates theoretical insights with interactive and practical exercises," she said, leading her to appreciate the Harvard teaching principle. Leong was able to gain perspectives from the experts on theories about healthy diet, guidelines on the food pyramid, and ways to make better food choices. Networking is a large component of these academic exchanges, one which Leong hopes will be lead to collaboration in the mutually interested research area between Sunway and Harvard University. Leong was presented with the opportunity of attending a dissertation defense session of a final year PhD at the University, where she learned that "self-confidence was pertinent for both presentation and question answer section."

With a wealth of information at their fingertips, it is no wonder that our grant recipients would utilise their time in between meeting Harvard's best minds to immerse themselves in one of the world's most prestigious libraries. "I spent enormous hours in Atkins Reference Room's computer workstation in the Widener Library to search the articles and dissertations that are relevant to my research work." The Harry Elkins Widener Memorial Library is the oldest and largest university library system in the United States and has one of the world's most comprehensive humanities and social sciences research collection spanning five continents and major research materials in over 100 languages collected worldwide.

Leong concludes her journey by describing how elevating the experience was. "This Harvard trip has enriched my exposure in my doctorate journey, broadened the network with the prominent researchers and enhanced the quality of the research work. With my journey ahead towards the final milestone viva voce, I definitely would be more inspired and confident."



Associate Professor Dr. Jeff Tan Kuan Onn at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

A/Prof Dr. Jeff Tan Kuan Onn, Associate Professor, Sunway University

Gene Therapy Through Virus-Mediated Delivery of Pro-apoptotic Genes to Eliminate Cancer and Drug-Resistant Cancer Cells

Associate Professor Dr. Jeff Tan used the grant to develop better understanding on cancer cell signaling mechanisms through research discussion and meeting with experts investigating Cancer Cell Biology at Harvard University and its affiliated institutions. When I asked him to describe his study, he said, "We are investigating different strategies, including gene therapy and oncolytic virus that can be used to activate cancer cells to undergo a physiological suicide mechanism or better known as Apoptosis (Programmed Cell Death)."

Dr. Jeff Tan also gained exposure to the cutting edge research projects and what he says, "may be considered by some researchers as pre-clinical studies," conducted at Harvard University as well as its affiliated medical institutions, such as Dana-Farber Cancer Institute - a world leader in adult and pediatric cancer treatment research. Dr. Jeff Tan learnt of the important areas of research which he says "might lead to development of better anti-cancer therapeutics." To translate research findings into potential anti-cancer treatment strategies, researchers have conducted investigations in research labs at the Massachusetts General Hospital. One such example as Dr Jeff Tan describes it is "using oncolytic virus, and agents that modified tumor microenvironment, including apoptotic stimuli, for cancer treatment in

experimental models." Dr. Jeff Tan also describes a case involving the exploration of therapeutic stem cells for cancer treatment.

When asked what the experience had given him, he responded "the experience has further reinforced my thinking that fundamental or basic research...is pivotal to development of treatment strategies for cancer."

Dr. Jeff Tan not only met researchers at Harvard University, but also attended research seminars, including research seminar presented by a Professor from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), known for its research and education in science and technology, and is commonly cited as one of the world's most prestigious universities. Dr. Jeff Tan who has a PhD Degree in Biochemistry from Iowa State University in the United States, and a MBA degree from the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, is currently an Associate Professor and Head of Cancer Biology Lab at Sunway University. "The travel grant has provided me the opportunity to learn from experts in Cancer Biology research and to explore research collaboration with senior research investigators from institutions affiliated with Harvard Medical School."



Ms. Rebecca B. Choong Wilkins

Ms. Rebecca B. Choong Wilkins Frank Knox Fellow, Harvard University

Against Hybridity: Nation States in Contemporary Peranakan Culture

Ms. Rebecca B. Choong Wilkins from Harvard University received the opportunity to visit Malaysia as part of the academic exchange. After graduating from Oxford University with a First-class degree in English literature, Wilkins worked as a journalist and financial analyst in London and Shanghai.

Wilkins used the travel grant to complete her fieldwork on contemporary Peranakan culture where her aim was to "untangle the influence of national identity on Peranakan communities," she says. "My research is in Sinophone studies. I look at the multiple languages and Chinese identities both within and beyond mainland China. In particular, I'm interested in the Chinese communities of Southeast Asia. As part of this, I began an ethnographic study on Peranakan Chinese communities."

Wilkins interviewed elders in the Peranakan Chinese community who experienced the formation of nation states in Southeast Asia. "My fieldwork focused on both the experiences of growing up in Peranakan families and of later becoming citizens in these new nation states. Our conversations ranged from the esoteric (Peranakan hair pins) to the epic (is Peranakan culture on the verge of extinction?)" Through this academic exchange, Wilkins interviewed two uncles of a prominent Peranakan scholar at Sunway University, sharing stories from their childhood. "The Foo

brothers, though somewhat bemused by my interest in their lives, recounted vivid, entertaining stories of growing up in Malaya during the Japanese invasion. Stranded with their mother in Penang where they were visiting family, for almost two years the brothers were separated from the rest of their family in Kuala Lumpur. In order to survive, every day their mother sent them out to their new neighbours to sell Peranakan puddings," she said. "The interviews were a fascinating opportunity to see how the founding of Malaysia and Singapore as nation states not only dislocated Peranakan identity, but also families."

Separately, she visited a Peranakan tailor who provided her fascinating insights on sartorial Peranakan traditions. "In Kuala Lumpur, I visited, Lily Yew a Peranakan tailor who over the years has inherited a trove of Peranakan treasures. Alongside the gold-embroidered wedding slippers made by her grandmother, Lily has also preserved dresses of Indian voile, printed with a design of delicate English cornflowers... Here was not a 'hybrid' combination of cultures, but an important reminder of Peranakan engagement with colonial cultures."

Wilkins is a Frank Knox Fellow at Harvard University where she is completing a Master's in the Regional Studies of East Asia.



Ms. Pamudi Banjitha Abeynayake Senadheerage in front of the Lamont Library at Harvard University

Ms. Pamudi Banjitha Abeynayake Senadheerage, PhD candidate, Monash University Malaysia

Economic Outcomes of Indonesian Internal Migrants and the Role of Social Networks

Ms. Pamudi Senadheerage was given the opportunity to conduct further research on the second part of what she described as a three-part study focusing on “how people from rural areas are moving to urban areas and how having contacts and people they know to help them find jobs makes a difference in the labor market outcomes.” The grant allowed her to meet with researchers who were studying migration related research and receive insights from researchers who had been in that research area for a long time.

Prior to meeting with Harvard academics, she attended a unit on labour economics research and found the lecturer explaining a model discussed in her own studies which was focussed on job referrals and its impact on the labour market outcomes. Senadheerage also took advantage of the one-on-one time she had with experts in the field discussing her study, all of whom provided her with constructive feedback ranging from how to find tune her research and ways to improve the existing analysis, to providing different perspectives on the current results she had obtained, as well as recommendations for additional readings to improve her research. All of which she says helped rebuild her confidence. “It’s not every day you get a chance to meet people you cite in your work, to discuss your work,” she said.

Senadheerage, who had never been to the United States before, not to mention Harvard University said, “it was a good experience because I got to see how the infrastructure was like, what kinds of resources students have and for the two weeks I was there, I had access to the data bases of the libraries.” The Lamont Library for instance, holds over 200,000 volumes, including books, serials, periodicals, newspapers and reference titles combined with workspaces with the view overlooking Harvard Yard. Senadheerage also read these written by previous students in the Economics Department.

“On the one hand, I received reassurance about my research; on the other hand I was seeing all these possibilities of the way forward,” she said. Senadheerage, who studied Economics and International Business at Monash University Malaysia, went back to her home country Sri Lanka and after working there for a year, returned to Malaysia and is currently pursuing her PhD at Monash University.



Mr. Munjed M. Murad

Mr. Munjed M. Murad, PhD candidate, Harvard University

Unveiling an Islamic Epistemology of Nature: Interviewing Southeast Asian Intellectuals on the Islamic Sciences of Nature

Mr. Munjed Murad’s research began at Harvard and continued to Southeast Asia where he travelled to Malaysia and Indonesia to conduct further research on the topic of An Islamic Epistemology of Nature, where he interviewed Southeast Asian intellectuals on the Islamic Sciences of Nature. “It was my hope to record teachings of masters of a science that has been rarely studied, namely Islamic metaphysics. Moreover, I had a strong sense that a nuanced address of nature as physically and metaphysically significant could potentially aid contemporary philosophical initiatives to see more in the natural world than just its materiality. Finally, my research at Harvard needed an informed view on the subject of my study, of which expositors are few.” The Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grant facilitated this research project.

Aside from attending classes in Indonesia, Murad’s study of metaphysics in the Islamic context led him to conducting interviews with scholars of Islamic studies from both Indonesia and Malaysia. Murad was also a guest lecturer for a class on Islamic Studies at Sunway University where he gave a talk on *Islamic Metaphysics and the Book of Nature*.

When it came to discussing his research with a scholar and the insights he received, Murad described it as profound and significant. “It was an opportunity to engage a primary source outside of texts, and my work is not the same after it,” he said. Murad, who obtained his Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Finance, International Business from the George Washington University School of Business and Master of Environmental Management from Yale University described his personal intent to return as soon as possible, “with an eye on furthering both the depth and breadth of this research after having laid some foundations this past summer.” Murad is currently pursuing his Doctorate of Theology at the Harvard Divinity School.

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Malaysia and The Club of Doom - the Collapse of the Islamic Countries

Speaker: Mr. Syed Akbar Ali, Malaysian Public Intellectual



Managing the International and Domestic Fault Lines in East and Southeast Asia
YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz

Speaker: YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz, Founder and President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs, Malaysia



The Islamic State (IS) and Malaysia

Speaker: Dr. Maszlee Malik (International Islamic University Malaysia)



Standing Tall Against Extremism: The G25 Agenda for a better Malaysia

Speaker: Dato' Noor Farida Ariffin, Director-General at the Research, Treaties and International Law Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



JCI: Sabah RCI Report 17 Dec 2014

Speakers: YB Datuk Madius Tangau and YB Darell Leiking



Malaysia and The Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP)

Speakers: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sufian Jusoh, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Charles Santiago, MP for Klang, Malaysia



The Islamic State (IS) in Southeast Asia: A conversation with Prof Joseph Liow

Speaker: Professor Joseph Liow, Dean and Professor of Comparative and International Politics at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.



The Dilemmas of Malay Political Leadership

Speakers: Dato' Vaseehar Hassan, Dr. Ahmad Farouk Musa, and Dato' Saiffudin Abdullah



The Jokowi Administration: What He Can and Cannot Do in Indonesia Politics P1

Speaker: Assoc. Prof. Dr Farish Ahmad-Noor (Badrol Hisham Ahmad-Noor)



East Asia in 2016 (Panel 2)

Speakers: Prof. Emeritus Wang Gungwu, Prof Dwight Perkins, Prof Woo Wing Thye and Prof Yoon Young-Kwan



JEFFREY CHEAH INSTITUTE ON SOUTHEAST ASIA

In August 2013, The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation and Harvard University signed agreements to establish at Harvard, two Jeffrey Professorships of Southeast Asia Studies (SEA) and the Jeffrey Cheah Travel Grants following a gift of USD6.2 million by the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF), the largest social enterprise in Malaysia.

In conjunction with the gift, the Jeffrey Cheah Institute on Southeast Asia (JCI) was established in early 2014. The JCI will act as a catalyst in promoting Southeast Asian studies and as an attractive hub to develop and upgrade academic standards of teaching and research in the Sunway Education institutions and in the region.



JEFFREY SACHS CENTER

The Jeffrey Sachs Center on Sustainable Development was established through a substantial gift from the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation to the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network to support the global effort to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations in 2015. The Center will be housed at Sunway University in Kuala Lumpur. Its vision is for sustainable development practices to be embedded in everyday life, and mission to promote green development and social programs through research and education.



JEFFREY CHEAH FOUNDATION

The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation is the first-of-its-kind in Malaysia within the field of private higher education, modelled along the lines of one of the oldest and most eminent universities in the world, Harvard University. The ownership and equity rights of the Sunway Education Group's learning institutions, namely, Sunway University, Monash University Malaysia (jointly owned with Monash University Australia), Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Sunway College, Sunway TES and Sunway International School and others, have officially and legally been transferred to the Foundation, valued at more than RM720million.

Governed by a distinguished Board of Trustees, the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation have to-date disbursed more than RM270 million in Scholarships to thousands of deserving students.

The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation was launched on 18 March, 2010 by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, in the presence of its Royal Patron, H.R.H. The Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj Ibni Almarhum Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Alhaj. For more information on Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, <http://jeffrey.foundation>.

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