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Director General's Message



BISMILLAHIRAHMANIRRAHIM

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam Sejahtera and Salam 1Malaysia.

As the training arm of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, the Institute strives to perform extraordinarily in diplomacy and international relations training to ensure it remains relevant as a training and research institute as well as a think tank of a prestigious stature.

Last year, the Institute successfully organised a total of 33 training courses and 25 language courses involving more than 500 local participants and 220 international participants from various disciplines and background.

IDFR also received two major awards last year; the Excellent Common User Library Award 2011 from the National Library of Malaysia and a Five-Star Rating in the Malaysia Government Portals and Agency Website Assessment for the year 2012.

Realising that the sharing and dissemination of knowledge can be accomplished through other mediums apart from training courses, the Institute also actively organised a series of public lectures and discourses. Among the prominent speakers who shared their thoughts and ideas at IDFR last year was His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations; Imam

Feisal Abdul Rauf, founder of the Cordoba Initiative; The Honourable Senator Hugh Segal, Canada's Special Envoy for Commonwealth Renewal and Member of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group as well as YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz, President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) and Fellow of CIMB ASEAN Research Institute.

At this juncture, the Institute would also like to express our sincere gratitude to our Royal Patron, His Royal Highness Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah ibni Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah, the Regent of Perak Darul Ridzuan for graciously consenting to deliver an inaugural Royal Address at IDFR in July 2012.

IDFR's publication wing also flourished last year with the release of the Journal of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations Volume 12 Number 1 2012, the 2011 Annual Report, the 2013 Training Programmes and three issues of the Diplomatic Voice. A special book compiling the writings of Malaysian ambassadors past and present regarding their experiences entitled *Malaysian Diplomats: Our Stories Volume 1* was launched in May 2012.


IDFR vows to enhance our competency and professionalism by conforming to our core values and motto as well as giving our fullest determination and perseverance.

Thank you.
Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari

"IDFR vows to enhance our competency and professionalism by always conforming to our core values and motto as well as giving our fullest determination and perseverance."

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YAM Tunku Zain Al-'Abidin Tuanku Muhriz Founding President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS)

Q: In your opinion, if there is one thing that Malaysians should know about good governance, what would it be?

A: To me, good governance in a parliamentary democracy like ours requires solid and independent institutions. Many of these institutions are explicitly defined and empowered by our Constitution – such as our status as a federation of states, Parliament, the courts and the monarchy – but some are not. For instance, a vibrant civil society and freedom of the press are essential ingredients in ensuring that other institutions are performing the roles that citizens expect of them.

Of course, this will work best when citizens themselves understand the development and functions of these institutions, which is why I have often written of the need for better teaching of citizenship and history in our schools. Unfortunately at the moment, there is sometimes poor understanding of which institutions are responsible for certain functions, as well as ignorance about how powers are divided between federal, state and local governments.

Q: As someone representing a budding think tank, would you agree with the suggestion that we need a youth group which is given the mandate to express its views and concerns on policies implemented by the government, similar to the UK Youth Parliament?

A: We don't need a youth group; we need many youth groups to express views and concerns on policies. There should not be any need for a specific mandate for this since there should be sufficient freedom of expression and sufficient transparency in government to enable any citizen to express such views and concerns, and I am very glad to say that the many new civil society organisations of the past few years have been largely led by young Malaysians.

Having said that, the idea of a Youth Parliament is an excellent one and I understand a process is already

underway within the Ministry of Youth and Sports to create this. I expressed my hope to the Minister that it would be even more democratic than the Dewan Ra'ayat.

Q: Does the saying, "Government of the people by the people for the people" portray our government today?

A: Not as fully as it should. Every Malaysian has encountered stories of corruption and cronyism from the very highest levels to the very lowest levels of government and the bureaucracy. Even if sometimes these perceptions are unfounded, it does not contribute to an image of clean government.

The political parties can take the lead by becoming more democratic themselves: at the moment, no party

has a democratic system of selecting candidates to be put up for elections, which makes it much easier for successful candidates to be later enticed by non-democratic means.

On the civil service side, more can be done to make promotions more transparent and merit-based. Of course, strong check and balance institutions such as the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission have a vital role to play as well.

Q: Based on your own experience studying abroad, how would you like to change the current education system?

A: This is a huge question but I will highlight two things: firstly, I would introduce more choice and competition into the education system



“IDFR can enhance its reputation by ensuring its operational independence from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and host multiparty discussions on Malaysia’s foreign policy so that the next generation of diplomats can understand how foreign policy may or may not change if there is a change of government in the future.”



so that parents have more say about what kind of education they want for their children. At the moment, decisions about public education are centralised, so everyone lobbies the Ministry of Education. But it is possible to accommodate the preferences of most parents by decentralising many decisions to schools themselves, with funding following these preferences rather than being allocated to schools directly. Of course, there would be a certain core curriculum that all schools would teach (including citizenship and history), but many other things which are needlessly politicised now (like the language in which to teach maths and science) could be solved by letting parents have more say.

Secondly, I would eradicate the reliance on rote learning and memorising “facts” and focus on equipping young minds with the tools to think independently and critically.

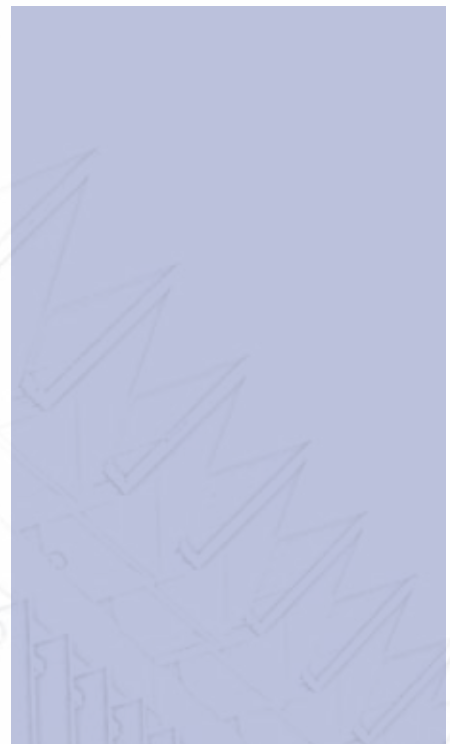
Q: What would you suggest IDFR do to enhance its image as a diplomatic training institute?

A: From what I can see, IDFR is already doing great work. I visit many schools and colleges (public and private) for lectures and panel discussions and in my experience, IDFR students are amongst the most articulate and critical. Furthermore, high level events such as the special address by the United Nations Secretary General add to the prestige and visibility of IDFR.

IDFR can enhance its reputation by ensuring its operational independence from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and host multiparty discussions on Malaysia’s foreign policy so that the next generation of diplomats can understand how foreign policy may or may not change if there is a change of government in the future. With important developments in ASEAN, the United States, China and India spurring trade, security and even domestic political issues, it is essential to think in the long-term – something that short-term ministers perhaps do not always achieve.



Tunku 'Abidin is Founding President of the Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS) and is a weekly columnist in the country’s most widely read English-language newspaper. He graduated with an MSc in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science and subsequently worked in the British Houses of Parliament, the World Bank in Washington D.C., the United Nations Development Programme in Kuala Lumpur and had served Fellowships at the National University of Singapore and the CIMB ASEAN Research Institute. He is also a trustee of two charitable foundations, patron of several musical societies and an honorary major in the Malaysian Territorial Army.



Will the ASEAN Soul Finally Reveal Itself: Some Random Thoughts

by Dr. Azhari-Karim

INTRODUCTION

When former Secretary-General of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), His Excellency Dr. Surin Pitsuwan of Thailand said in Kuala Lumpur in October 2012, “the Global Movement of Moderates (a Malaysian-introduced idea) can be the substance and soul of ASEAN given its emphasis on moderation”, many thought he had neatly summed up what the foremost regional cooperation institution had stood for in the forty-six years since its inception in 1967 and had enabled it to achieve success upon success.

National Ethos of ASEAN Countries

However, is this sufficient to describe the yet-to-be-revealed soul of ASEAN? Understandably for a nation-state, the word ‘soul’ conveys the reference to the country’s national ethos, national interest, national identity, national ideology, national values or national narratives. In other instances, it can carry the meaning of the national historical experience or national conversations of a particular country. The brief survey below will illustrate the different ways how the respective ASEAN member countries have defined their national ethos.

Clearly what has come out of this survey is that not one of the national values of the ASEAN countries listed above has attained a dominance at the regional or ASEAN level. Most of the countries have derived such values from their respective historical experiences. For the so-called Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam (CLMV) countries, the religious aspect and in this case Buddhism, has played a distinct role either as a unifying influence among them or as a basis for inter-country cooperation and partnership with countries outside ASEAN. Only in the case of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei that these countries have had their experiences in part as a response to changes in the post-colonial era. Malaysia for example, instituted the National Charter (Rukunegara) and the New Economic Policy (NEP) to meet the challenges of the inter-racial divide. Singapore deliberately chose the economic development model of the ‘flying geese’. Brunei developed hers based on Islam and the Monarchy and the Malay dominance. Two things remained significant however, for almost all of the countries in the ASEAN. They have jealously guarded their independence.

Despite the differing definitions and practices associated with the applications by the respective countries of their various national ethos, it must be noted however, that from its founding decades until today, ASEAN has always been enabled in its activities especially in the handling of a variety of conflict situations involving member countries or with countries outside the region, by a tacit understanding of going initially for conflict avoidance rather than conflict resolution. Over the years, this process known as the ASEAN Way, has been worked up to perfection. Because of its wider appeal and use as well as characteristics that included universally-held principles of appropriate behaviour between countries including that of ‘moderation’, the ASEAN Way in its articulation and practice, can better be accepted as the ASEAN ethos and hence, the ‘soul of the emerging ASEAN Community’ to come.

ASEAN Way and the Soul of ASEAN

In essence, the practice of the ASEAN Way as a conflict avoidance mechanism can be understood in three ways: its main aspects, essential characteristics and principles. In terms of its essential elements, there are the following: all member countries will negotiate as equals, quiet persuasion is preferred, frequent use of consultation and going for consensus-building and adherence to a shared responsibility in all decisions made. Generally, the ASEAN Way operates on the recognised universal principles of non-interference, non-intervention and the non-use of force in matters relating to all manner of conflicts. As a conflict avoidance instrument, the application of direct and indirect measures of diplomacy, dialogue, restraints and pressures has alleviated to a certain extent the escalation of conflicts among the member countries and others as well.

Consequent to the discussion above, the ASEAN Way can present itself

Brunei	Cambodia	Laos	Indonesia	Malaysia
Malay, Islamic, Monarchy	Buddhist beliefs and practices enable communities to work together as partners	Minimising stress and maximising fun Please don't rush	Preserve pluralism	National Charter Many ethnicities, many cultures, one nation

Table 1: National Ethos of ASEAN countries

Myanmar	The Philippines	Singapore	Thailand	Vietnam
Buddhist just rule and Burmese national culture	Peace, tolerance and harmony	Global networked and open city	Compromise and conciliation Protect its Independence	Struggles for independence and national identity

Table 1a: National Ethos of ASEAN countries

as the soul of the emerging ASEAN Community albeit with cracks already visible on how to proceed along the road towards Community. One argument contends that ASEAN is split in the middle with the “well-off” on one side and the “not so well-off” member countries on the other. It is forward-looking in that the CLMV countries will have to play a game of catching up. There is hope here that the enhanced Community will somehow act to pull along the disadvantaged group along with them. However, if we were to follow the backward-looking scenario right to the end, we will see a situation as stated above, where the weaker states will bring down the so-called “Other” with them if nothing were to happen and this will not help future progress of the ASEAN Community.

Work remains to be done by ASEAN as its members ponder the lessons learnt from the operations of the ASEAN Way and its elevation to the ‘soul of ASEAN’. It has to be remembered that ASEAN was born out of conflicts and any moves to strengthen the cohesion between members sans conflicts will be a welcomed initial action. The ASEAN Way, while it has been ‘enabled’ by the codification of its norms and practices in the ASEAN Charter, will still need to be modified to function also as a dynamic and effective conflict-resolution instrument. It needs to be accepted as such by the larger external Community of countries that are in themselves external powers in their own rights but not necessarily united by the common purpose of working for the interests of the ASEAN.

Need to Acknowledge the Soul of ASEAN

By 2015, the region of Southeast Asia will see the emergence of a Community of Nations to be known as the ASEAN Community. It also means that member countries are now ready to commit themselves to the task. But the order is first to enhance the institutional capabilities of ASEAN and then

proceed consequently with building the Community’s constituent parts. In other words, the former actually involves the laying of the foundations while the latter, the structures. In this way, ASEAN had evolved gradually into what it is today through a process that many had observed, started with community, then the charter, connectivity and hopefully ending with centrality. By this time, the idea of the ASEAN consciousness will remain paramount in the psyches of all its members. To gauge the success of this process, it is important that the Community of ASEAN must be able to sustain itself and not face the fate of institutions that usually will go through the different stages of growth, maturity and then decline. To enable it to stay on course, the ASEAN Community has to look back at its historical consciousness to realise the areas it had overlooked. Issues of the need to acknowledge a ‘soul’ for ASEAN will become very significant here.

However, in terms of building a Community which refers to the enhancement of existing and new structures and the mechanisms to make the institution work, the choice for the ASEAN Community must finally be to go for a strong democratic institution and be supported by an effective regional integration.

Many scholars have written extensively on the kind of community that ASEAN could be labelled as. But these, like the ‘imagined community’ of Ben Anderson, the ‘security community’ of Amitav Acharya and the ‘epistemic community’ of Haas, have all missed the point of how the countries have been able to pool their local and traditional roots in the process of coming together within a grouping such as ASEAN.

Historically however, the Community has a rich pool of local-based knowledge bases to fall back on. One is as mentioned by Leonard Andaya, a noted historian, that the whole Southeast Asian region was once a

continuous landmass divided by huge rivers and lakes that provided a sense of unity through a vast network of maritime spaces. Unity in diversity has been with us all throughout these times connected by the body of waters all around us. A new symbol for the new ASEAN can perhaps be represented as the blue oceans surrounding the Community.

The centrepiece of ASEAN’s progress in building a community to date is the group’s regional integration process that began with the move to bring in the full benefits of economic development through a greater economic integration. This will in fact validate the rationale of bringing in the CLMV countries as members. Indeed regional economic integration alone has served as the main platform of ASEAN’s actions to meet the medium-term plan of instituting an economic community by 2015. It is envisaged that by then, the region will have a single market and a production base. The completion of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) will also assist in preparing ASEAN to be more competitive in the region and assist in making ASEAN a hub for regional integration in Southeast Asia and the East Asian region.

ASEAN: Doing What a Thinking Institution Must Do

With ASEAN moving into high gear in its forty-sixth year and with the ASEAN Way still intact despite what had happened at the 21st ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in October 2012, it is hoped that the collective will of the institution we call ASEAN will decide what is best for the people and the region as a whole and do what a good thinking institution needs to do.



Dr. Azhari-Karim is a former career diplomat and also a former Associate Professor at Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Middle East Revisited: Geo Strategic Implications; Democratic Transformation Challenge and Economic Development Potential (Case of Egypt)

The contemporary crisis stretching across the Islamic crescent from Morocco to the geopolitical imported game a changer in Afghanistan since the invasion of Iraq by foreign powers requires revisiting its conventional premise of this 21st century's imperial history. The region as part of the Islamic global community faced development challenges that have been squarely laid out by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) 1440 Hijrah vision commission report in 2006. Significantly, these challenges are: i) the challenge of achieving healthy human development; ii) the challenge of securing strong and sustainable economic growth; iii) the challenge of promoting good governance; iv) the challenge of strengthening peace and stability; v) the challenge of fostering a powerful sense of common identity, consciousness and empathy as members of the Ummah; and vi) the challenge of restoring the image of the Muslim world.

What escaped many is the potential post Ottoman second breakup being engineered in the newly independent countries of the second World War era. Beyond this unwritten agenda, the region again has been subjected to a new round of global power rivalry in the new cold war – strategic capitalism between the United States of America (USA) and China that seemed to replace the political cold war of the 1950s. Set against this new geo-economic threat, it is quite unknown whether the major expectation of ultimate end game of democratic transformation challenge is an adoption of the west democracy or the rise of Islamic liberal state. Lately, events have shown the political invisible hand of outside powers who champion democracy have extended their help to the opposing camps of the democratic experimentation, to the extent of imposing terms and conditions that strangely hardly respect the voice of the majority in such states as Libya and Egypt. Given this double faced turnaround, the region certainly is in for a planned instability for some considerable period of regime change birth pangs.

Even so, the potential and prospects of the Arab world is not as grim as

it has been made to believe, with a strategic proviso that these nations take economic destiny as their core challenge to provide and alleviate their dire economic conditions, given their present strength as the world's ninth largest economy today. Mr. Vijay Mahajan in his book, *The Arab World* unbound (2012) highlighted the following significations of their economy as; i) the Arab market is vibrant and globally connected; ii) Arab consumers of 360 million outreach control more spending power than we think given their diversity and wealth of the Arab world and iii) the presence of the shadow economy throughout the region add more heft to the Arab consumer markets. Given the region's demographic strength of youthful power and consumer strength over the aging population in the developed countries, Mr. Vijay said despite the turmoil in the region, the task on hand is to tap the "vibrancy and the interconnectedness of the Arab world" beyond the pessimism found in the west's opinion makers today.

Put in a more strategic note, the Middle East region and the world is experiencing growth in all regions except in the West. Paul Kennedy's imperial outstretch has premonition that the great wheel of history is turning against the USA, given its two fundamental over-extension of economic recovery due to budget and trade deficits and military over-extension across the globe.

Indeed the above false dismal picture of the middle east region owes much to the war over key ideas – democracy, capitalism, Islam and the rise of the humanity economy where the vision of human dignity reigns high above current hedonistic terminal end. Consequently, the strategic cold war i.e. global capitalism is being fought in the new nations and new economies eg. the rising Africa of 900 million market as well as the re-drawing of the rules of competition through multilateral approach of the global governance agenda that has found

its birth in the "parliament of man" the United Nations (Thomas G. Weiss, *Thinking about Global Governance* (2011)).

Evidently, revisiting the Middle East region's strategic geo political, economic, social and cultural landscape and their complex interface warrants a fresh scenario reading beyond current conventional academic and media write-up.



Datuk Dr. Mohd Ghazali Md Noor is the Protem Chairman, IDB Alumni of Malaysia and Member of the PTD Alumni Malaysia. The views expressed here are entirely his own.

Editor's Note:

The above comments were written by the contributor after he moderated a forum titled, "Middle East Revisited: Geo Strategic Implications, Democratic Transformation Challenge and the Economic Development Potential (Case of Egypt)" on 31 January 2013.

Special Address by Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia on 3 December 2012



Over the years, Malaysia has been one of the staunchest supporters of the Palestinian cause. And so it is an honour for me to speak at this auspicious occasion: the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

It is written in the Quran: "Then if they should be inclined to make peace, do thou incline towards it also, and put thy trust in Allah." Our sacred text, and our experience, teaches us that peace cannot be forged only on one side. The stability and security that we wish for – and that the Palestinian people deserve – requires absolute dedication and commitment from all. Both Palestine and Israel must play their part in creating a true and lasting peace. This is the thirty-fifth annual day of solidarity. Surely we cannot afford to allow many more. The time for change has long since come.

I speak in the knowledge that calling for peace is easier than securing peace. That it is harder to decry violence reaction when it is your people that are suffering. That in times of conflict, even the closest allies are one step removed. But I also know that our silence would be a betrayal, a betrayal for the people of Palestine.

Peace is the only hope for a better future. It is our duty to call for it, work for it and deliver it.

This ambition must not be soured by experience. Yes, each round of fresh violence lands hard upon a people already weary of war. Each senseless killing embeds further bitterness. Each act of oppression pushes the horizons of peace a little further away. But we must not give up hope.

The path to reconciliation is rarely smooth. But as we have seen in Northern Ireland, and in the Southern Philippines, the journey is worth it. When all sides make a genuine commitment to peace, neither territorial nor religious differences are too great to be overcome. It takes time, it takes effort for generations of conflict to be resolved. But it is not impossible.

This is not an irreconcilable clash of cultures or religions. It is a man-made conflict that is rooted in questions of land, opportunity and justice; a conflict that has spread terribly within the span of a single lifetime. It can be resolved.

I believe that a peaceful Middle East is possible. To argue otherwise is

to indulge in dangerous defeatism; inviting the conclusion that war is inevitable and therefore legitimate. That way lies only darkness and suffering.

What we seek today is not continued oppression and destruction, but a better future for all, regardless of nationality or religion. This future must be built with many hands.

We are all responsible not just for our own destiny, but for the fates and lives of others. In Palestine, we see this responsibility clearly. It is Allah's will: no matter what the challenges, we must work for the greater good. Insha Allah, we will prevail.

Ever since the Palestinians were forced from their homes, the journey to regain their freedom has been marked with anguish. The neighbourhood where children could have played together, picking flowers from the gardens and olives from the trees, is now a battleground. Children grow up not knowing the fates of their fathers; mothers grow old with the loss of their children. Tragedy is heaped upon tragedy and all can seem lost.

Yet ordinary Palestinian people – the people we express our solidarity with

today – continue to speak of peace. Continue to hope that someday they will realise their legitimate ambitions for independence and sovereignty. Continue to dream that they will be able to develop their national and cultural identity. But time and time again, they have been frustrated: by international inaction. By internal conflict. And by Israel's military actions, which continue to escalate.

The latest assault on Gaza demonstrated Israel's apparent disregard for a peaceful co-existence with its neighbours. But it also fits into a tragic pattern. Israeli forces continue to kill Palestinians, demolish houses, restrict economic activity, destroy Palestinian institutions, expand Jewish settlements illegally, and target Palestinian leaders. We expect so much more of a democracy which expresses a desire for peace.

This violence is met with further violence; its victims are human too. Our sympathies lie with the Palestinian cause, but innocent Israeli lives have also been lost. No mother, Jewish or Muslim, Arab or Israeli, should mourn the loss of a child.

No family should find itself torn apart by conflict. Yet within the Palestinian territories, internal political violence has claimed many lives. Too often, the Palestinian people – already suffering poverty, unemployment and poor health – are caught up in power struggles which are no fault of their own.

For too long, the world has tacitly supported a destructive impasse, one which has exacted a heavy toll on the Palestinian people. The cycles of violence have also damaged the peace process itself – fuelling the underlying causes of conflict in the Middle East and the wider world. They make global efforts to combat terrorism that much more difficult.

In the face of these failures, we must redouble our efforts to forge a viable

two-state solution in the Middle East. And we must remain resolute in our support for those people caught in this unending storm.

Malaysia stands together with the Palestinians in the search for an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. We share their hope for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace; one based on compliance with international law, standards and resolutions.

It is in this spirit that Malaysia fully supported the Palestinian bid to become a non-member state of the United Nations on 29 November 2012. We congratulate Palestine on being accepted. This is a significant achievement, bringing the Palestinian dream of a dignified, independent and sovereign state closer.

With time and reconciliation, it will enable the Palestinians to rebuild their lives and build a better future for their children; away from the threats of isolation, extremism and violence.

We know from bitter experience that this will not be easy. Amidst the clamour of war, the voices of moderation must be raised to counter those extremists who do not share our resolve for peace.

Just as not all Palestinians embrace extremism, so not all Israelis support occupation. We must persuade the peace loving moderates everywhere that a two-state solution – with a democratic Israel and a free Palestinian State living side-by-side – is in the best interest of all.

I believe the principle and practice of moderation can prevent conflict. That is why, in 2010, I advocated the idea of Global Movement of the Moderates: to mitigate conflicts perpetrated by extremists regardless of their religion, culture and political ideology. I believe that the Global Movement of Moderates could play a positive role in facilitating the Palestine-Israel peace talks.

“Malaysia stands together with the Palestinians in the search for an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. We share their hope for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace; one based on compliance with international law, standards and resolutions.”

I would also like to appeal to the Palestinian factions to initiate reconciliation talks immediately and unconditionally, to resolve political differences for the sake of unity and their people. Disagreement and divide will further worsen the situation and risk the lives of more Palestinians.

It is imperative that the Palestinian people remain united and steadfast in their focus on the larger cause: the creation of the State of Palestine. In confronting their differences and finding common ground, both sides will have to compromise. It will not always be easy. But for the Palestinian people, there can be no greater reward.

We all hope and pray for a quick and lasting resolution to this historical injustice. In the meantime, Malaysia will continue to help the Palestinian people, whether in cash or in kind.

Last year, we provided monetary assistance of USD2 million to help offset the operational cost of the Embassy of Palestine in Kuala Lumpur. We also provide scholarships for Palestinian students to study in Malaysia; assist human capital development through training programmes and despatch humanitarian assistance through Malaysian NGOs.

For more than 30 years, we have contributed annually to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees. And we recently donated RM1 million to the 'Gaza Emergency Fund'. Established by Perdana Global Peace Foundation under the patronage of former Prime Minister Tun Mahathir Mohamad, the Fund helps alleviate the sufferings of the Palestinian people in Gaza. A team of volunteers from the Foundation is now in Gaza delivering humanitarian assistance to those in need. I am also pleased to announce that Malaysia will contribute another USD1 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian

Refugees (UNRWA) to assist UNRWA in helping the Palestinian refugees affected by the recent Israeli military aggression in Gaza.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Foundation and the Palestinian Embassy in Malaysia, for organising this event to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. It is a solemn day given greater weight by the recent bloodshed in Gaza. Palestine's road to freedom, independence and dignity will not be built on rose petals, but with resilience, steadfastness, and perseverance. It is my hope – and the hope of all

Malaysians – that the international community moves toward a just and lasting solution. But we also hope that those Palestinians who are homeless – those who are wounded, or hungry, or grieving – know that our conscience rests with them today.

Let us all pray to Allah the Almighty, for lasting peace in Palestine. May Allah SWT grant the Palestinian people their aspirations for the return of their homeland and a nation called Palestine; and bring a true and lasting peace to this most troubled region. Insha Allah.

Thank you.

Special Luncheon Address by The Honourable Prime Minister

"Then if they should incline to make peace, do thou incline towards it also, and put thy trust in Allah. Surely He is all-Hearing, the all-Knowing." – Al-Anfal verse 61



To mark the occasion, a special luncheon was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia on 3 December 2012 at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre. The guest of honour at the luncheon was The Honourable Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Dato' Sri Mohd Najib then announced that Malaysia will continue its staunchest commitment to support the Palestinians by donating another USD1 million (RM3 million) to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees. Earlier, Malaysia had donated RM1 million to the 'Gaza Emergency Fund' established by the Perdana Global Peace Foundation under the patronage of Former Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. The donation would be used to help refugees affected by the Israeli military aggression in Gaza.

Dato' Sri Mohd Najib ended his speech with a solemn note of hope for the Palestinian people. He said that although their road to freedom, independence and dignity will not be easy, but with resilience, steadfastness and perseverance, the international community can move towards a just and lasting solution for the Palestinian people.

His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Abdullah took to the stage and delivered a speech immediately after the Prime Minister. Towards the end of his speech, Dr. Abdullah officially invited Dato' Sri Mohd Najib to Palestine, which received thunderous applause from the audience.

The annual celebration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People which is observed by the United Nations and member countries provides an opportunity to create public awareness and greater understanding on the fact that the question of Palestine remains unresolved and that the Palestinian people have yet to attain their inalienable rights as defined by the United Nations General Assembly, namely, the right to self-determination, the right to independence and sovereignty and the right to return to their homes and property.

Also present at the luncheon were Dato' Sri Anifah Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, His Excellency Abdelaziz Abughoush, Palestine Ambassador to Malaysia and His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Deputy Foreign Relations Commissioner of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

In his address, Dato' Sri Mohd Najib congratulated Palestine for being accepted as a non-member state of the United Nations, bringing the Palestinian peoples' dream of a dignified, independent and sovereign state closer to reality.

Forum titled, *Middle East Revisited: Geo Strategic Implications, Democratic Transformation Challenge and the Economic Development Potential (Case of Egypt)*



On 31 January 2013, IDFR in collaboration with the Alumni Association of the Administrative and Diplomatic Officers (PTD Alumni), IDB Alumni Malaysia and the University of Southern California Alumni Association Malaysia (USC Alumni Association) organised a forum titled, *Middle East Revisited: Geo Strategic Implications, Democratic Transformation Challenge and the Economic Development Potential (Case of Egypt)*.

His Excellency Tun Datuk Seri Utama Mohd Khalil Yaakob, the Yang di-Pertua Negeri Melaka was the guest of honour at the event.

The forum commenced with welcoming remarks by Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku

Shaari, Director General of IDFR and opening remarks by Tan Sri Dato' Sri Sallehuddin Mohamed, President of the PTD Alumni. This was followed by the forum discussion moderated by Datuk Dr. Mohd Ghazali Md Noor, President of IDB Alumni Malaysia.

The speakers at the forum were Dr. Azmi Hassan, GeoStrategist, Institute of Geospatial and Perdana School, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia; Dr. Farish A. Noor, IDFR's Distinguished Fellow and Associate Professor at Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University; and Dr. Ali A. Soliman, former CEO/MD, Islamic Corporation of the Development of Private Sector

IDB Group and Professor at the British University of Egypt. Dr. Azmi Hassan spoke on *Geo Strategic Implications and Consequences of Post Arab Spring Middle East*; Dr. Farish A. Noor gave his viewpoint on *Democratic Transformation of Post Arab Spring Middle East-Challenge of Governance* and Dr. Ali A. Soliman elaborated on *Economic Development Potential (Case of Egypt)*.

A short but interesting question and answer session came at the end of the forum and five members of the floor took the opportunity to engage with the speakers. Approximately 150 participants attended the three-hour forum.

Director General's Working Visit to Paris, France by Rafiq Hazura Ridzuan

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General of IDFR undertook a working visit to Paris, France from 26 to 28 November 2012.

Dato' Ku Jaafar was invited to be part of the Malaysian Delegation to the IHEDN-NDUM 2nd Symposium titled, *France-Malaysia: A Joint Approach Addressing Regional Challenges*. The Seminar was co-organised by the National Defence University of

Malaysia (NDUM) and *L'Institut des Hautes Études de Défense Nationale* (IHEDN – Institute for Higher National Defence Studies) of France.

The Malaysian delegation was led by Dato' Jesbil Singh, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Industry Relations and Corporate Affairs of the National Defence University of Malaysia (NDUM).

The Symposium was held from 26 to 27 November 2012. There were three panel sessions held on the first day which were opened to the public. The topics discussed during the sessions were *France and Malaysia's Major Strategic Trends and Concerns*, *Maritime Security* and *Additional Threats and Challenges to Security*.

Panel 1 on *France and Malaysia's Major Strategic Trends and Concerns*



consisted of Mr. Michel Foucher, Director of Studies and Research of IHEDN, Professor Ruhanas Harun, Director for Centre for Defence and International Security Studies (CDISS), NDUM and Professor B.A. Hamzah also from CDISS, NDUM.

The first panel discussed Malaysia's and France's approaches in aligning with major super powers. The panelists explained extensively why and how both countries aligned themselves with other strategic partners in order to seek peace and security, especially in the international front. France engages with many strategic countries in most regions and acknowledged the fact that Malaysia plays a leading role in steering our regional security.

The second panel consisted of Mr. Hafizuddin Damiri from the Malaysia Institute of Defence and Security Studies (MIDAS), Rear Admiral Patrick Chevallereau, Deputy Secretary General of the Sea, Associate Professor Dr. Aruna Gopinath, from CDISS, NDUM, Mr. Dominique Balmitgère, Director of Security and Maritime

Environment Safety from CMA-CGM group, and Rear Admiral Jean-Marie Lhuissier (retired) from Thales group. Their focus was *Maritime Security*.

The panel discussed in great length on how Malaysia and France view its respective role in maritime security; the threats and the possible cooperation in curbing and eliminating threats. It was interesting to note that both sides had differing views on why and how to conduct its maritime security. France is wary of possible conflicts that could jeopardise the security and peace of an area which could affect trade and economy of the country. Malaysia on the other hand, emphasises more on peaceful presence, to which regulations should be put in place to ensure peace in international waters.

The third panel was made up of Major General Dato' Pahlawan Dr. William Stevenson, Executive Director of MIDAS, IGA Philippe Wolf, Deputy Director General of the French National Agency for Information Systems Security of France (ANSSI) and Associate Professor Dr. Radziah A. Rahim from CDISS, NDUM.

The topic discussed at the third session was *Additional Threats and Challenges to Security*. All three experts shared with the audience Malaysia's and France's regulations and experiences in addressing invisible threats. Advancement of technology has indeed simplified work processes and increased efficiency in an organisation. On the other hand, it has also created a new kind of challenge and numerous invisible threats. Communications via email and instant messengers via smart-phones and other advanced gadgets have been identified as one of the ways in recruiting potential anti-establishment terrorists.

Dato' Ku Jaafar then wrapped up the discussion in his closing remarks. Both parties were forthcoming in sharing the challenges faced and actions taken in addressing them and discussed, agreed and agreed to disagree on numerous aspects of Malaysia-France bilateral relations.

The next morning, a closed-door discussion was held. The French delegation consisted of all the speakers

involved as well as representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence of France. This session enabled the group to discuss in depth the subjects discussed at the seminar the day before, as well as future cooperation and issues that could be considered in the next round of the annual seminar.

Later in the afternoon, Dato' Ku Jaafar paid a courtesy call on Madame Nathalie Loiseau, the Director of École Nationale D'Administration (ENA). Dato' Ku Jaafar was accompanied by Mr. Zamshari Shaharan, Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) of the Embassy of Malaysia in Paris and Ms. Rafiq Hazura Ridzuan, Principal Assistant Secretary of the Europe Division of the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ENA is the equivalent to Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara (INTAN). The objective of the call was to touch base and to seek opportunities for future cooperation, particularly in diplomatic training.

The second courtesy call was on Mr. Lionel Paradisi-Coulouma, the Director General of Institut Diplomatique et Consulaire (IDC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Paradisi welcomed Dato' Ku Jaafar and the DCM to his office at the Ministry. He informed Dato' Ku Jaafar that he is well aware of IDFR and its achievements and humbly announced that the Institut Diplomatique et Consulaire is relatively new. The Institute was established in 2009 by the current Director of ENA, Madam Loiseau who is a career diplomat.

On the last day, the Malaysian delegation was taken on a half-day tour by IHEDN. The delegation visited Musée Du Louvre, Notre Dame Cathedral and toured Montmartre on foot and enjoyed the view from the top of the hill, where Sacré Coeur Basilica lies. Later at night, the delegation was taken on a dinner cruise, down the Seine River.

The working visit to Paris, France was a fruitful one. The seminar provided enlightening views on Malaysia-France bilateral relations as well as both countries' efforts and concerns on subjects of mutual interests. As this was an intellectual discourse, both sides were straightforward and frank in addressing their concerns and openly admitted the level of interests in various areas other than defence.

It was interesting to note that although the level of defence cooperation, be it in procurement, training and in an intellectual discourse such as this is highly visible and of great volume, there was a lack of visibility of political engagements. Notwithstanding the sideline meeting between Prime Minister Najib and President Hollande at the recent 9th ASEM Summit in Vientiane, more engagement should be made at the Ministerial and higher official levels from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of both countries.

The meetings with the Directors of training institutions such as ENA and IDC gave IDFR the opportunity to propose possible cooperation in future particularly in the training of diplomats and the exchange of trainers. All three institutions provided avenues for international exchanges and courses. After all, French diplomacy is the diplomacy that language and etiquettes on diplomacy were based on.

“The working visit to Paris, France was a fruitful one. The seminar provided enlightening views on Malaysia-France bilateral relations as well as both countries' efforts and concerns on subjects of mutual interests.”



The ASEAN Youth Workshop on ASEAN Community: Unity in Diversity



involved in policy-making in ASEAN countries. The floor agreed that ASEAN is facing a number of challenges in achieving a 'People-Centred ASEAN'.

However, there is also a trend towards supporting the realisation of a 'People-Centred ASEAN', among others is the globalisation process. Globalisation is opening up windows to the world in all ASEAN countries, thus creating a bigger perspective and worldly point of view among the people of ASEAN. It is also being supported by the growing economy, increase in the involvement of youths as well as CSOs and the trend from localisation to regionalism among the countries. The existence of the internet and social networks could also be utilised to play a role as it is a common platform especially for the youths to express their views. Gender should also not be overlooked as ASEAN women nowadays is a force to be reckoned with and are being recognised around the world for their pivotal roles especially in the social advancement of ASEAN.

Realising the huge potential of the youths of ASEAN, the Centre for Policy Research and International Studies (CenPRIS), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in collaboration with the Foreign Policy Study Group (FPSG) organised the ASEAN Youth Workshop on *ASEAN Community: Unity in Diversity* from 10 to 11 December 2012 at CenPRIS.

Following the success of the Youth Seminar on Foreign Policy held in December last year, this year's workshop set the standard higher by gathering youths from nine out of the ten ASEAN countries.

The two-day workshop was officially opened by Tan Sri Mohd. Radzi Abdul Rahman, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia which was preceded by introductory remarks by Associate Professor Ambassador Dr. Azhari Abdul Karim, Director of CenPRIS and Tan Sri Razali Ismail, Chairman of FPSG. Also present was Professor Ahmad Shukri Mustapa Kamal, Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and International Affairs of Universiti Sains Malaysia as well as moderators and speakers which comprised experienced diplomats, foreign policy practitioners and academicians.

Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR

moderated Panel Discussion II on the topic, *ASEAN Social Cultural Community* which discussed the issues of *People-Centred ASEAN and Civil Society, Youth, Gender* with Dato' Ahmad Mokhtar Selat and Dr. Abu Bakar Eby Hara as resource persons.

Recalling Malaysia's focus for the upcoming Chairmanship in 2015 which is to create a 'People-Centred ASEAN', Ambassador Aminah encouraged the youths to come up with initiatives and views on ways to create awareness of ASEAN among youths. She also asked them for their opinions on the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and gender which are increasingly becoming

The results of the panel discussions, workshops and group presentations based on the three pillars of ASEAN Community; political and security, economic, and social cultural community, yielded fresh revolutionary ideas from the youths which hopefully would start off new initiatives by the ASEAN youths in achieving a 'People-Centred ASEAN' by 2015.



The Director General's *Majlis Amanat*



Forum on Middle East Revisited: Geo Strategic Implications; Democratic Transformation Challenge and Economic Development Potential (Case of Egypt)

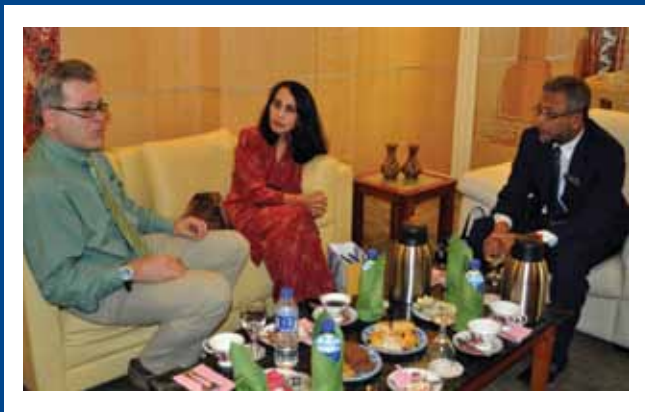


IDFR Distinguished Fellows Meeting





Public Lecture on *Euro Zone Crisis: The Outlook for Europe in 2013 and Its Global Impact*



Diplomatic Training Course for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Officers





Visit of the Delegation from Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs Thailand



Special Feature IDFR's Distinguished Fellows



Since 2011, the Institute has eleven prominent personalities, who are household names in their respective fields, on its panel of Distinguished Fellows. They comprise Malaysians and non-Malaysians, specially selected from a cross-section of the academic, diplomatic, military, professional and think tank circles. The Distinguished Fellows contribute ideas and provide guidance towards enhancing the quality of IDFR's training programmes and developing the Institute's stature as a renowned diplomatic institution. They also participate in public lectures and roundtables and deliver lectures. The Distinguished Fellows are:

Tan Sri Razali Ismail
Chairman, Global Movement of Moderates Foundation (GMMF)

Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan
Chairman, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS)

Tan Sri Ahmad Fuzi Haji Abdul Razak
Secretary General, World Islamic Economic Forum Foundation (WIEF)

Tan Sri Hasmy Agam
Chairman, Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

Professor Dr. Chandra Muzaffar
The Nordin Sophe Professor of Global Studies, Centre for Policy Research Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)

Professor Dr. K S Nathan
Principal Fellow, Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

Admiral (R) Tan Sri Mohd Anwar Hj. Mohd Nor
Chairman, Board of Directors, National Defence University of Malaysia (UPNM)

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

Emeritus Professor Datuk Osman Bakar
Chair/Professor, Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddin Centre for Islamic Studies (SOASCIS), Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Professor Dr. Zafar U. Ahmed
Professor and Dean College of Business and Management Fahad bin Sultan University Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Professor Dr. Badrol Hisham bin Ahmad Noor (Farish A. Noor)
Senior Fellow S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Nanyang Technological University

Professor Tan Sri Dr. Kamal Hassan
(Newly appointed in 2013) Distinguished Professor, International Institute of Islamic Thoughts and Civilization (ISTAC)

Dr. Suffian Jusoh
(Newly appointed in 2013) External Consultant, World Trade Institute (WTI)

On 27 February 2013, a meeting was held to update the Distinguished Fellows about the Institute's current plans and recent achievements and to discuss the way forward for the Institute. It was also for everyone present to meet with the two new members of the panel; Professor Tan Sri Dr. Kamal Hassan and Dr. Suffian Jusoh. Three members of the panel – Admiral (R) Tan Sri Mohd Anwar, Emeritus Professor Datuk Osman Bakar and Professor Dr. Badrol Hisham Ahmad Noor – were not able to attend the meeting due to prior engagements.

Many ideas were put forth by the Distinguished Fellows during the meeting. Among them were for the Institute to identify and establish relationships with reputable foreign universities for benchmarking purposes, to expand the Institute's research capabilities, to optimise the knowledge and input from the various collaborations and to work towards strategic empowerment.

Orientation Course for Heads of Mission and Their Spouses 2/2012



IDFR successfully conducted the second Orientation Course for Heads of Mission and Their Spouses from 3 to 7 December 2012. Twenty-four officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia attended the course. The objectives of the course were to provide an overview of the functions and responsibilities of Heads of Mission and their spouses, to develop knowledge and understanding of current domestic and international issues and to enhance and strengthen their diplomatic skills. In fulfilling these objectives, IDFR arranged interactive lectures and panel discussions with the Heads of Divisions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, other agencies and government-link corporations.

Three panel discussions were conducted during the course. The first one was on *Traditional and New Media* and the panelists were Her Excellency Maria Isabel Rendon, Ambassador of the Argentine Republic to Malaysia; Encik Zukiman Mohd Zain, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of BERNAMA and Encik Kamarul Bahrin Haron, a journalist from ASTRO Awani. The next one was on *Challenges in the Middle East* and the panelists were Associate Professor Dr. Kamaruzzaman Yusoff from the Institute of West Asian Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)

and Professor Dr. Jamil Farooqui from Department of Sociology and Anthropology, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). The final one was on *Economic Transformation Programme* and the panelists were Dato' Ahmad Suhaili Idrus, Director of National Key Result Area (Urban Public Transport) and National Key Economic Areas (Greater Kuala Lumpur) from Performance Management & Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) and Associate Professor Dr. Madeline Berma from the Faculty of Economics and Management, UKM.

The officers were also privileged to listen to two luncheon talks; the first one on *Towards ASEAN Community 2015* by YM Raja Nurshirwan Zainal Abidin, Deputy Director General (ASEAN Economic Community), ASEAN-Malaysian National Secretariat and the second one on *Global/National Economic Issues* by Professor Dato' Noor Azlan Ghazali, Deputy Vice Chancellor, UKM.

IDFR had also arranged two dinner talks. First was by Tan Sri Mohd Radzi Abdul Rahman, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia on *Expectation on the Roles of Heads of Mission* and the second one was by Tan Sri Dr. Sulaiman Mahbob, Chairman of the

Malaysian Institute of Economic Research (MIER) on *Collaboration between Public and Corporate Sector*. There were also lecture sessions on topics such as *Global Movement of Moderates*, *Talent Corp Malaysia*, *Human Rights and Malaysia*, *Government Transformation Programme*, *Economic Diplomacy*, *Royal Protocol* and *Dealing with the Media*.

Several programmes specifically designed for the spouses were also conducted, such as cooking demonstration and food presentation by a culinary chef lecturer from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), a workshop on *Effective Communication*, *Presentation Skills* and *Public Speaking* by the Professional Development Unit, British Council Malaysia and a lecture on *The Role of Spouse* by Puan Sri Jazliza Jalaluddin, President of PERWAKILAN.

The course was officially closed by Senator A. Kohilan Pillay, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Malaysia. IDFR believes that the course objectives were achieved and will continue to constantly review the modules so that the course will be relevant to the needs, vision, mission and aspirations of the Ministry.

Roundtable Conference on *Malaysia's Relations with Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, The Philippines, Singapore towards Strengthening ASEAN through Multi-channel Dialogue*



The historical premise of IDFR had seen the first plans of ASEAN formulated with the five founding nations. ASEAN now has grown with a total of ten member countries strategically situated straddling the Eastern Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific with 600 million people of diverse ethnicity, cultures, languages and religions. ASEAN has also been the convener of regional grouping integration such as ASEAN Plus Three, ASEAN Plus Six and East Asia Summit. However, after 45 years in existence, ASEAN continues to face multiple challenges and issues within the member countries themselves. To facilitate the formulation of solutions for this scenario, the Foreign Policy Study Group (FPSG) in collaboration with IDFR and Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) organised a two-day round table conference on *Malaysia's Relations with Brunei, Cambodia, Laos,*

Myanmar, The Philippines, Singapore towards Strengthening ASEAN through Multi-channel Dialogue at IDFR from 3 to 4 December 2012.

The round table was the third instalment of conference on ASEAN issues held this year and continuing the success saga of the two earlier conferences. It brought together distinguished speakers and participants from government agencies, NGOs, universities, the diplomatic corps, civil society organisations as well as youths.

The guests were privileged to have the presence of Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Malaysia, who in his opening remarks called for ASEAN member countries to be united and bond together to face the emerging challenges stemming from the arising world powers and geo-political realities. He also applauded FPSG for bringing together the various groups of guests to promote people-to-people contacts beyond the existing initiatives by the governments. Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, Director General of IDFR, in his welcoming remarks also congratulated FPSG and SPF and expressed IDFR's appreciation for

having the opportunity to cooperate in all three series of the conference. He emphasised on the need to create a long-term sustainability of the people-to-people contacts as well as urged everyone present to put in the effort required to achieve the ASEAN Community by 2015.

The conference agreed that ASEAN has brought about significant changes in the lives of the people. However, many are still unaware of the enormous role played by ASEAN throughout the years. More information and encouragement needed to be made available to promote regional integration and community building effort. Among the other issues discussed were the need for the enhanced participation of the private sector as ASEAN should not be left behind in the age of economy anticipated for the next decade. Other internal disagreements and disputes should also be resolved to realise the harmonisation of international and regional interests.

The conference concluded with observations and remarks expressing mutual hope that the conference was able to provide views for strengthening ASEAN towards ASEAN Community 2015 and beyond.

Commonwealth Regional Programme on Diplomatic Training 2012



The Commonwealth Regional Programme on Diplomatic Training 2012 was successfully conducted from 12 to 25 November 2012. Fully funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat,

London, this course was offered to officers from the Foreign, Economic, Trade and Commerce ministries in the Commonwealth who have served in their respective ministries for a minimum of seven years.

The aim of this course was to enhance the participants' professional knowledge and skills in diplomacy so that they could play their role more effectively in defending and promoting their national interests in the international arena. Therefore, the objectives of the course were to provide exposure on the contemporary developments in diplomacy and

international relations; enhance knowledge on current global and regional issues; and provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and experience as well as to forge closer relationships and networking. The course was also meant to share with the participants an overview of Malaysia's efforts in transforming and improving its economic growth, governance and social development.

The course was attended by 14 participants from Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Majority of the participants are currently mid-career officers at the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs while the others are serving at the Economic and Trade Divisions in their home countries.

During the two-week programme, the participants went through interactive sessions, group discussions and simulation exercises in the classroom, an attachment at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia and several visits. The classroom interactive sessions covered topics on *Organisational Leadership and Management, ASEAN Security, Global Movement of the Moderates, Public Diplomacy, Malaysia's National Key Result Areas (NKRA) and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), Knowledge Management, Theories and Practices*

in Diplomacy and International Relations and Crisis Management. The participants also went through the theoretical aspect of international negotiation which was followed by simulation exercises. In addition, the course also included a new module; a three-day attachment programme at the Ministry. During the attachment, the participants were exposed to Malaysia's Foreign Policy, the roles and functions of the Ministry and the day-to-day work at the Information and Public Diplomacy Department, Protocol and Consular Department and Multilateral Political Division. To add a regional perspective into the course, His Excellency Ambassador Sumith Nakandala, Director General of Economic Affairs of Sri Lanka's

Ministry of External Affairs was invited to share his views and experience on Peace and Reconciliation in South Asia.

The participants were also taken to Batu Caves where the national celebration for Deepavali was held, which gave them a glimpse of Malaysia's multiculturalism. Additionally, they were exposed to one aspect of Malaysia's history and culture when they went on a day trip to Malacca, one of Malaysia's UNESCO sites.

The course concluded with a dinner and presentation of certificates of completion by Ambassador Aminahun Hj. A. Karim, IDFR's Deputy Director General.

Diplomatic Training Course for the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Officers



Congratulations to all 50 officers from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for successfully completing the specialised Diplomatic Training Course on 12 December 2012. It was a historic achievement for IDFR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia (MFA). This historical milestone was the result of the official visits of Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia and Dato' Sri Anifah Hj. Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia to the Republic in March 2012. Malaysia very much

welcomed the Republic's request for assistance in training their junior and mid-level government officers in preparation for its Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014.

The course was conducted at IDFR from 22 November to 12 December 2012 with the objectives to equip the participants with the necessary knowledge and to enhance their capabilities in preparation for the Chairmanship. This course was made possible through the Malaysian

Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) under the auspices of the MFA.

During the length of the course, the officers were taught on aspects such as *English Language, Effective Communication, Presentation Skills, Speaking Skills, ASEAN related matters, ASEAN Summit and Related Meetings, Media, Media Relations and Media Skills, Protocol Duties, Budget and Finance, Registration and Accreditation, Preparation*



of Documents for the Meeting, Rapporteurship, Accommodation, Medical and Health Facilities, Conference Services and ICT Facilities as well as Security.

The comments and feedback received from all lecturers on the

participants were all encouraging and positive. They were very attentive and enthusiastic in acquiring and learning the necessary knowledge and know-how. The participants also opined that they had gained valuable insights and knowledge from this specialised course. They were very appreciative

of the advice as well as the sharing of knowledge and expertise by lecturers in preparing for the *ASEAN Summit and Related Meetings*.

On 12 December, a certificate presentation ceremony was held at the Swiss Garden Hotel and Residences, Kuala Lumpur to mark the end of the three-week course. The ceremony was graced by Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, IDFR's Director General. Also present were His Excellency U Tin Latt, Ambassador of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, lecturers, IDFR officers and representatives from the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat, the MTCP, as well as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam (CLMV) Division of MFA.

Public Lecture titled, *Better Understanding of the Current Arab Spring - A Change or a Radical Change?*



A public lecture titled, *Better Understanding of the Current Arab Spring - A Change or a Radical Change?* by Professor Dr. Abd Al-Fattah El-Awaisi, Distinguished Visiting Professor at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) was held at the Treaty Room on 17 December 2012.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, IDFR's Director General in his welcoming remarks reminded the audience that the violent and bloody Arab Spring should not be taken lightly by

Dato' Ku Jaafar also said that there was also the issue of religious and ethnic polarisation arising from the Arab Spring giving a certain degree of uncertainty to these countries' political outlook.

In his lecture, Professor Dr. Abd Al-Fattah, who has more than 25 years' teaching and research experience at Arab, British and Malaysian universities stated that political repression, corruption and lack of personal freedom were among the

Malaysians. Many factors should be looked into and learned since it has a powerful, contagious effect. This uprising saw series of chaos and destruction when regimented ideas toppled what were believed-to-be 'tyrant governments'.

main reasons for The Arab Spring that spread through the countries of North Africa and the Middle East, leading to the downfall of dictatorial regimes in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Yemen.

He added that what was taking place is a 'radical change' which would have major implications for the region and the world. However, he added that it may take between five to nine years before the political situation stabilises in the region. When that happens, he opined that there would be a more united Middle East and that the region would become one of the major powers on the world stage. According to Professor Dr. Abd Al-Fattah, among the changes which may take place are that democracy will become more deeply rooted in these countries, and the US will move politically closer towards the Arab countries vis-à-vis Israel on the Palestinian issue.

The public lecture was attended by 40 participants from various government agencies, universities, NGOs and the private sector.

Forum on *International Trade in the 21st Century*



The International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), the Consumer International (CI) and IDFR co-hosted a forum titled, *International Trade in the 21st Century* on 18 December 2012.

The main focus of the forum was trade related issues in the context of the changing global trading environment of today. The panel speakers were Mr. Pradeep Mehtra, Secretary General of Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) International, Dr. Nungsari Ahmad Radhi, Executive Director of Khazanah Research and Investment Strategy, Khazanah Nasional Berhad and Tan Sri Mustafa Mansur, Past President of the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers. Datuk Supperamaniam, former Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Adjunct Professor at IIUM moderated the discussion.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General of IDFR, stressed the importance of training programmes in areas like international trade, investment and economic diplomacy for strengthening Malaysia's ability to compete at the regional and global levels, in his welcoming address. He also pointed out the fast-paced changing trend in trade requires the

industry players to be more up-to-date with a wide range of trade related issues in order to have a 'knack' regionally and globally. He reminded the audience that in today's global world, gone were the days when simple trading was being practised. Nowadays, one must bear international supply chains that are supported by the growing nexus between trade, investment and services.

On the whole, the panelists agreed that the international trading environment is becoming more challenging and that Malaysia needs to improve its industrial competitiveness and enhance its negotiation skills to remain competitive on the world stage.

Among the issues discussed were the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the grey area of the Service Industries and the future direction of ASEAN in trade and services. They also highlighted the need to strengthen Malaysia's trade and investment linkages in the ASEAN region. Datuk Supperamaniam reminded the Malaysian Trade officers present at the forum to be very thorough in cutting deals in trading with other 'giants' as the agreement can be manipulated. So far, according to him, our officers have been playing the right cards.

Attendees included representatives of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), Ministry of Finance, the academia, the private sector, NGOs and foreign missions in Kuala Lumpur.

“On the whole, the panelists agreed that the international trading environment is becoming more challenging and that Malaysia needs to improve its industrial competitiveness and enhance its negotiation skills to remain competitive on the world stage.”

Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 1/2013



The Training Division successfully organised the Workshop on Public Diplomacy and Media Skills 1/2013 from 14 to 17 January 2013. The workshop received encouraging turnout and 25 officers from various ministries and agencies namely, the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of Health, Prime Minister's Department,

Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Malaysian Timber Industry Board, Land Acquisition Section, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT) and IDFR attended the workshop.

With the increase of instant dissemination of information and

response to the diverse situations, it is vital to remain relevant, accurate and adequate in handling challenging issues through public diplomacy. With that in mind, the workshop was conducted to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills in handling the media in the context of public diplomacy and advocacy. It addressed conceptual and practical aspects of public diplomacy and media skills through specific topics such as *Public Diplomacy, Cross-Cultural Understanding, the Role of Media in Public Diplomacy* and *Effective Media Relations*.

Hands-on training was also conducted through Press Conferences and Media Interviews to impart to the participants skills, techniques and sufficient tools in handling the media.

Economic Diplomacy Series 1/2013: *International Trade in Green Technology Products*

IDFR in collaboration with the World Trade Institute (WTI) organised the Economic Diplomacy Series 1/2013 titled, *International Trade in Green Technology Products* on 18 January 2013. The seminar was attended by officers from Wisma Putra as well as representatives from other government agencies as well as students from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

The half-day seminar was an intensive session helmed by three experienced economic specialists, namely Dr. Sufian Jusoh, External Consultant, World Trade Institute, University of Bern, Switzerland; Dr. Haniff Ahamat, Assistant Professor at Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws, IIUM and Mr. Jeong Chun Phuoc, Senior Lecturer in Law from Multimedia University. The three topics discussed were *International Trade in Green Technology; Products – A Primer*, *Green Dumping and Trade in Biofuels* and *Green Technology: Idea and Idealism, National Imperative*.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, Director General of IDFR in his welcoming

remarks mentioned that the awareness of green technology and its high potential is still very low among Malaysians. In his presentation on *International Trade in Green Technology Products – A Primer*, Dr. Sufian Jusoh discussed the definition of green technology products for which there is yet an accepted international standard definition. He also discussed at length the issue of tax, non-tariff measures, subsidy as well as technical and non-technical barriers faced by exporters of green products.

Dr. Haniff Ahamat who presented the topic *Green Dumping and Trade in Biofuels* highlighted the problems faced by the country's biofuel exporters due to allegation of dumping by certain countries. Among the issues usually raised against our biofuel exporters who rely mainly on oil palm as their source material is the problem of deforestation, 'non-sustainable means of production' and allegation of 'lower price due to lower environmental standards'. The non-existence of a clear tariff classification for 'biofuels' in the importing countries is another problem faced by our exporters.

He noted that most of the biofuels produced today come from the OECD countries which tend to use rules and regulations that are discriminatory to tropical oils especially palm oils.

Mr. Jeong Chun Phuoc, in his presentation of *Green Technology: Idea and Idealism, National Imperative* made a number of proposals for implementation by the Government which included introducing a Green Technology Transfer Act, setting up of a Green Technology Transfer Bank, implementation of Sukuk Financing Method and introducing Halal Recognition on Green Technology Products and Services and for Malaysia. He said that Malaysia, which exports green products, should lead the green technology market by setting its own standards rather than follow the standards set by consumers from the developed countries. The seminar certainly was a great start as the first installment for 2013 Economic Diplomacy Series. Future forums under this series include those on carbon issues, geographical indication, ASEAN Investment Agreement and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

Visit of the Delegation from Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs, Thailand



Their visit to IDFR was a reciprocal one, as a delegation of participants from the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) programme led by Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, the Director General of IDFR had visited the esteemed Institution during a study trip to Bangkok in July 2012.

experience sharing with DVIFA as well as enhanced bilateral relations between the two countries. This was followed by a briefing on IDFR's functions, followed by a tour of the Institute's facilities and infrastructure.

The Language Division then conducted two training sessions for the delegation. The first was on Sounds of English, while the second was on Grammar in English. The participants were very enthusiastic and wholeheartedly participated in the activities which were aimed at enhancing pronunciation skills and grasp of grammar.

Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, the Deputy Director General of IDFR in her closing remarks expressed her fervent hope that this visit would continue to enhance the blossoming relationship between the two institutes and warmly welcomed DVIFA to visit IDFR again.

On 21 January 2013, IDFR had the privilege of hosting a delegation of sixty-nine officers accompanied by three officials from the Devawongse Varopakarn Institute of Foreign Affairs, Thailand (DVIFA). The participants comprised senior and mid-career officers from various government agencies such as the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, National Park Wildlife and Plant Conservation, the National Security Council and Disease Control.

Dato' Ku Jaafar, in his welcoming address, expressed his gratitude for the warm hospitality received during IDFR's visit. The Diploma in Diplomacy participants had the valuable opportunity to mingle with their counterparts in Thailand and they were greatly enriched by the exposure and shared experiences. Dato' Ku Jaafar also expressed IDFR's pleasure in the growing and lasting relationship between the counterparts and looks forward to further collaboration and

Public Lecture on *Euro Zone Crisis: The Outlook for Europe in 2013 and Its Global Impact*



A public lecture on *Euro Zone Crisis: The Outlook for Europe in 2013 and Its Global Impact* by Professor (FH) Dr. Anis Bajrektaravic, who was a career diplomat and a well-known speaker among the academia, was held on 29 January 2013.

Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, Director General of IDFR in his welcoming remarks highlighted that over the past two years, the major concerns of policy makers and investors alike all around the globe have been the Euro Zone crisis and the US economic slowdown. The fiscal cliff has dampened economic growth in many countries.

Countries like Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain are among those affected by this blow.

Dr. Anis Bajrektaravic is no stranger to IDFR, as he had visited IDFR in 2010 with a group of students undertaking a programme called *Business Focus ASEAN*. He believes in promoting cross-fertilisation among students in order to foster better understanding in culture and socio-politics between both countries.

Currently Chairman of the International Law and Global Political Studies at the University of Applied Sciences of Krems, Austria, Dr. Anis holds numerous positions including Advisory Board member of the Oxford Academy of *Total Intelligence*, the New York based Geopolitical, History & International Relations (GHIR) Journal and the Canada-based Geopolitics of Energy Journal. In his lecture, Dr. Anis mentioned the history of European Union (EU), EU economy, the challenging crisis,

recent developments in the EU on the future of the union and its likely impact on the ASEAN region and the rest of the world.

The Euro Zone crisis arose out of the difficulty or inability of some members of the EU to repay or refinance their sovereign debt without the assistance of third parties. The countries affected by the crisis include Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

However, of late, there have been some optimism coming out of the EU with encouraging signs that the union would be able to turn the corner in reducing some of the more severe political, economic and social problems precipitated by the crisis. With the political support of the more developed economies like Germany and France and the undertaking by the European Community Bank (ECB) to ease the debt burden of the debtor nations, the outlook for the EU, on the whole, appears to be getting much better today.

'Well-For-Life' Wellness Programme

In November 2012, Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, Director General of IDFR, Ambassador Aminah Hj. A. Karim, Deputy Director General of IDFR, Mr. Lim Juay Jin, Director of Training Division and Dr. Rosli Hj. Hassan, Director of Language Division attended a wellness programme called *Well-For-Life*. The stimulating and refreshing programme was organised by the Human Resource Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia for all Heads of Division and Under Secretaries. The programme was held at Philea Resort and Spa, Ayer Keroh, Malacca from 30 November to 2 December 2012.

The wellness programme was conducted by Dato' Dr. Noordin Darus, a medical doctor, a renowned wellness guru and a water therapy specialist. Dato' Dr. Noordin is a cancer survivor, a wellness forerunner, who had recovered after being struck by blood cancer or lymphoma and was told that he only had a few months to live. The objective of this programme was to greatly enhance the potential, capabilities and performance of the participants in carrying out their duties at a much higher level of efficiency. This was done by engaging them in a series of balanced dietary knowledge and healthy lifestyle lectures as well as involving them in captivating physical activities geared towards the development of concrete awareness and stability of emotional well-being.

Dato' Dr. Noordin also shared with us the seven 'Secrets of Highly Healthy Peak-Performing People'; Peace of Mind, Health and Energy, Long Term Love & Relationship, Financial Freedom & Management, Purpose of Life, Give Back & Do Good and Why Some Peak Perform, Why Some Don't. In addition, he also spoke about Aura Healing, Water Therapy and Salt Therapy, which were some of the major contributing factors in his own personal fight against cancer.

Prior to the programme, the participants were requested to undergo a pre-medical and fitness check. Body composition information such as Resting Heart Rate, Levels of Blood Pressure, Haemoglobin, Total Cholesterol, Uric Acid, and Glucose were captured and recorded for the purpose of the wellness programme.

During the programme, the participants had to go through several practical 'Managing Your Body' exercises which included both indoor and outdoor activities such as a One-minute Sit-up, One-minute Push-up, Ten-metre Dash, Standing Broad Jump, Sit and Reach, and a 2.4km Jog (the actual distance covered was

slightly less than 2.4 km due to rain that particular evening). The results of all the practical exercises were then tallied to the body composition information recorded earlier, to which an analysis of fitness level of each participant was done. Results of this analysis were revealed to the individual participant his or her own fitness level; 'Superior', 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Fair' or 'Weak'. It was good to know that on the average, all the participants had quite commendable results in terms of their health and fitness levels.

On the whole, the programme was thought to be very beneficial to all the participants. They left with a much better awareness and knowledge to be put into practice towards achieving a continuous 'well for life' in both of their personal and professional (as well as spiritual) well being.



Presentation of Diploma Ceremony

Puan Alina Murni Md. Isa and Puan Noraini Awang Nong — two officers from the Academic Studies, Research and Publication Division — who enrolled for a *Diploma Penterjemahan Profesional - Modul Komunikasi Umum* organised by the Malaysian Translators Association in collaboration with Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) received their diploma, together with 21 other course mates, in a diploma conferment ceremony held on 15 December 2012.

Their diploma was presented to them by Dato' Dr. Md. Salleh Yaapar, Chairman of DBP's Board of Governors, witnessed by Prof. Abdullah Hassan, President of the Malaysian Translators Association and programme facilitators. Also present at the ceremony to receive their diplomas were participants from the Judicial and Legal Training Institute (ILKAP) who completed a module on Law.



Excellent Common User Library Award 2011



The IDFR Library was chosen as one of the recipients of the Excellent Common User Library Award 2011 by the National Library of Malaysia and an award ceremony was held in conjunction with the Common User Library Professional Management Meeting 2012 on 5 November 2012 at Horizon Hotel, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

IDFR was represented by Ms. Nor Azura Mior Daud, Assistant Director of the Library. The plaque and certificate of appreciation was presented by Dato' Raslin Abu Bakar, Director General of the National Library of Malaysia.

Five out of 140 common user libraries were selected to receive the Excellent Common User Library Award 2011.

Evaluation of the award was based on the annual reading programme report which was submitted to the National Library of Malaysia at the end of each year and observation during library visits. Among the criteria evaluated were diversity and promotion of existing activities, creativity in attracting the attention of library users, library collections, digital initiatives, staff competency and library infrastructure.

This award was very meaningful to the Library because it was a result of team effort. It became a catalyst for the team to continuously strive for excellence and greater success to create a knowledgeable society and to further encourage reading habit.

Aligned with IDFR's mission towards becoming a knowledge centre of excellence, especially in the field of international relations, diplomacy and strategic studies, the development of library collection has become a pillar of quality service and reference. Similarly, the staff's friendliness and commitment also reflects the excellence of the library. Various initiatives have been undertaken by the library in promoting the use of library resources, including the following: Organising an 'Everyone Can Borrow' (ECB) reading campaign whereby the staff can borrow books from a mobile trolley taken to every division in IDFR; Promoting acquisition of new books through electronic medium and new book display; Establishing a 'Health Corner' to promote healthy lifestyle for all library users; Awarding IDFR staff who borrowed the most books every month with excellent library user award; Organising video presentation on soft skills and establishing a 'Games Corner' which aims to develop creative minds through games.

The library team would like to express their sincere appreciation to the top management, officers and staff who have always given their continuous support, which have also contributed to the success of all programmes and activities organised by the library.

My Short Stay in Malaysia

by Mr. Immanuel Haihonya

Chief Training Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Namibia



It is my pleasure to reflect on my experience at IDFR from 23 September to 31 October 2012. It was my second visit to Malaysia and I was initially attending the Regional and International Affairs Module (RIAM) of the Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) 2012 as one of the 13 international junior diplomats. Based on a special request, I was later attached to IDFR for practical exposure on management of training courses.

I experienced priceless moments during the two-week RIA module.

Among others, the 'skills-mix approach' implemented by IDFR by including participants from other ministries (i.e. Education, Plantation, Defence, Trade and Health) to learn with young diplomats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was highly impressive. It allowed participants to be multi-skilled in different disciplines and really inspired me to replicate the same method back in Namibia, which I think will yield great results.

I also believe that through continued involvement of individuals from all

sectors of the Malaysian economy on capacity building programmes, IDFR is able to obtain a good public status as it is today. I personally applaud the Director General and the IDFR team for a job well done. An integrated learning process and tailor-made content allows the Institute to be flexible and responsive to the nature of the changing world. It goes without saying that collective efforts are made to ensure that IDFR courses remain relevant to both local and international market.

Simulation exercises on UN Security Council (UNSC) Meeting by the DiD 2012 and RIA Participants

Simulation exercises speak louder than class-learning session due to the practical opportunity to emulate the reality. I personally wish to congratulate Tan Sri Hasmy Agam for successfully taking us through the procedures and rules of the UNSC Meeting. It was interesting that he selected the recent case scenario of the Syrian conflict since as an ongoing conflict as it provided a better learning platform for the participants. We also managed to conduct a quick mini research on the situation as well as voting session which left the impression of a real UNSC Meeting. From this simulation lesson, I sided with those who claimed that the veto power is only in the hands of the West and I therefore supported the international community call to reform the current UNSC membership to ensure full representation.

Cultural Exposure

I participated in both the cultural dance of *Alu-alu* and the singing of the 1Malaysia song during the graduation ceremony of DiD 2012. It was quite fascinating to learn the Malay culture and be dressed in traditional Malay apparel. I was able to observe various cultural norms, values and beliefs. Here and there, I noticed specific barriers of communication due to cross-culture. Shortly after the graduation ceremony, I had an opportunity to attend the Diplomatic Training Course (DTC) which was more

relaxed but also more challenging due to the fact that participants were from different countries with different cultural and religious backgrounds as well as different personalities. I had opportunity to observe and embrace cross-cultural communication with joy.



My 'a colourful batik' painted at Kuala Lumpur Craft Centre

Study Visits

My trip to Melaka was so memorable that I proclaim "Life on this Planet Earth started in Melaka". The first memorable thing was the river cruise with colourful lit historical bridges and wooden houses built by Portuguese and British colonial empires of the old days. I was able to see several heritage sites and some historical buildings which have stood since the 14th Century from the Melaka Tower. Kudos to the State of Melaka for preserving the culture and history which resulted in it obtaining the UNESCO recognition as a World Heritage City.

During the trip to Johor, I discovered that Iskandar Malaysia is one of the most vibrant market leaders in the world with inspiring aspirations for the growth of the Malaysian economy and also to elevate the regional economic performance of the Southeast Asia. I was equally impressed that despite the acrimonious market competition from neighbouring Singapore, Iskandar Malaysia is able to diversify its investment portfolio and capitalise on every tangible investment opportunity available for them.

Not forgetting the most interesting aspect – the social programme e-Kasih which links identity cards of individuals identified to be living in poverty to access monthly payouts using memory chips. This approach is said to have been positive in addressing the average poverty within the community of Johor. It goes without saying that the Malaysian economy is in good standard by the looks of the public infrastructures (roads, buildings, etc.) compared to other parts of the world. I witnessed many road works to accommodate the growing traffic. This indicated to me that the preparation to achieve the national Vision 2020 is in full swing.

Other places I visited were the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre (MPTC), Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Putrajaya.

On comparative policy-making, I had the opportunity to visit the National Parliament (Parlimen Malaysia) to observe the debate by policy makers. It helped me to understand the set-up structure and roles of the Members of Parliament in a Monarch-ruled country in addressing different issues of national interests.

I also had an opportunity to visit the George Washington Aircraft Carrier berthed at Port Klang through the invitation of the Embassy of the United States of America in Malaysia to IDFR. It was an amazing experience to witness megabuild-73 floating over the water and we had a tour of the control room to observe the running of the ship.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my gratitude and thanks to Dato' Ku Jaafar Ku Shaari, IDFR's Director General and the entire IDFR team for hosting me, I enjoyed your hospitality. And to the readers of this volume of Diplomatic Voice, thanks a million - you are number one.

Until then, see you again!

IDFR's New Director of Language Division



Dr. Rosli Hj. Hassan graduated in 1991 from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, United States of America (USA) with a Ph.D in the field of Computer Aided Instructions, specialising in the area of computerised language instructions. He also has a Master's degree in English (focusing on computer based learning) from Central Missouri State University, USA and a Bachelors degree in Linguistics from Macalester College, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA.

Dr. Rosli has been highly involved in the area of teaching, training and learning for the past 18 years. His experience in the field includes teaching and holding management posts at several tertiary level academic institutions, such as Division of English of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA; University of Stirling, Scotland; Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM); Universiti Multimedia (MMU) and Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) in Malaysia.

Beyond the formal academic environment, he has also had the experience of conducting corporate training, managing and leading the development of online content for academic and corporate clients, as well as providing the necessary training for the optimum usage on the use of technology within appropriate settings.

What They Say

"This is something new and interesting for me, a very good experience filled with new knowledge. We managed to obtain the real picture of Wisma Putra's role and understanding of the functions, challenges, working procedure of the Mission overseas. This inspires us to deliver our best once we are there, to cooperate as a team and to create a 'mini Malaysia'. This course enables us to be well-prepared for the upcoming posting".



Subashsheena a/p Krishnan
Sekolah Kebangsaan St. Theresa,
Sungai Petani, Kedah

(Participant of *Say It Right* 1/2013)



Dato' Dzulkifli Abd Wahab
Ministry of Agriculture

(Participant of *Pre-Posting Course for Officers and Spouses under Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara (SPKM)* 1/2013)

"A very close to perfect course conforming to the objectives. The lecturers were very knowledgeable, well-informed, message conveyed was very clear and precise. When they combined the ministries/agencies, no matter of ranks, we tend to help each other as fellow classmates, learning together and sharing together. The facilities are very comfortable and conducive".

Upcoming Courses/Events at IDFR*

Workshop on Public International Law	8-11 April 2013
French Level II	8 April-3 July 2013
Effective Presentation Skills 1/2013	9-12 April 2013
French Level IV	9 April-2 July 2013
Orientation Course for Secretaries	15-26 April 2013
Speech Writing Course for Mid Career Officers	15-17 April 2013
Spanish Level II	16 April-20 June 2013
Spanish Level IV	17 April-26 June 2013
Speech Writing Course for Senior Officers	22-24 April 2013
Pre – Posting Orientation Course for Officers and Spouses Under Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara (SPKM) 2/2013	6-17 May 2013
Say it Right 2/2013	20-22 May 2013
Crisis Management for International Participants (MTCP)	3-21 June 2013
Diploma in Diplomacy (DiD) 2/2013	10 June-5 September 2013
High Level Workshop on International Negotiation for Senior Officers	4-7 June 2013
Effective Writing Skills 1/2013	17-20 June 2013
Spanish Level VII	17 June-23 December 2013
Orientation Course for Heads of Mission and Their Spouses 1/2013	24-28 June 2013
Pre-Posting Orientation Course for Officers and Spouses Under Sistem Pentadbiran Kerajaan Malaysia di Luar Negara (SPKM) 3/2013	24 June-5 July 2013

* Subject to changes

Best Wishes

To our colleagues, who left us with pleasant memories

Vasudiwan A/L Narayanan
ended his contract tenure

Alina Murni Md. Isa
resigned from her contract

Nafizal Haris Ismail
transferred to Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Suzalina Md. Tahir
transferred to Ministry of Agriculture

Fatimah Ahmad
retired from the service

To our colleagues who had a 'visit from the stork' recently
Raimi Amzar Zamali and Mahassan Mahamad

To our colleague who recently took the vow of matrimony
Nina Sharida Mohd Arshad



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