



NEWSLETTER

REGIONAL CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

Vol. 14 No. 1

February 2008

First Annual Convention of the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia (NTS-ASIA) held in Colombo

The First Annual Convention of the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security in Asia, jointly organized by the RCSS and NTS-Asia consortium based in Singapore was held from 4-6 November 2007 at Galadari Hotel, Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Convention was attended by representatives of member organizations of the consortium as well as invitees from the government, foreign missions, think tanks and universities in Sri Lanka.

The main themes of the Convention were: emerging NTS issues: climate change and global pandemics; transnational terrorism and armed groups; threats to human security - illicit human trafficking, transnational crime and narcotics; other NTS related themes; and review of progress and taking the NTS-Asia agenda forward.

The Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia) was officially launched on 8th January 2007. Its network members covering various parts of the Asian region are, Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Vietnam. NTS-Asia seeks to expand its outreach by welcoming participation from research institutes and think tanks of other countries as associate members. By building a strong global network of bodies committed to the study of non-traditional security studies, NTS-Asia aims to,



Dr. Rifaat Hussain, Executive Director RCSS addressing the gathering

develop further the progress of networking among scholars and analysts working on NTS issues in the region; build long-term and sustainable regional capacity for research on NTS issues; and mainstream and advance the field of non-traditional security studies in Asia.

The RCSS is a member of the Consortium, set up following years of research and meetings among various scholars and experts from the academic and policy institutes in Asia who share a common interest in advancing the cause of non-traditional security studies in the region. NTS-Asia held its inaugural meeting in Singapore in January 2007.



RCSS Hosts Conference on Human Security of South Asia and Emerging Issues for the Coming Decade



RCSS in collaboration with Saferworld, UK hosted the conference on “Human Security + 10: Emerging Issues for the coming Decade in South Asia” for think tanks from the region to examine selected core threats to human security in the region. The conference was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 22-23 January 2008 and had 20 participants representing think tanks in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.. The objective of the conference was to develop a nuanced analysis of the human security issues that will determine the welfare of South Asian peoples in the coming 10 years, and to develop an agenda for research and policy engagement. The conference included sessions on the themes democratic governance; ideologies and extremism; law and justice; livelihoods, poverty and exclusion; and disasters and insecurity.

The conference expects to: develop a shared understanding among participants on the outlook for human security in the South Asia region in the coming ten years; build on existing links between organizations with



Participants of Human Security of South Asia conference

common objectives focused on the enhancement of human security in the region; identify a series of ‘entry points’ or key areas where progress is critical as a guide to engagement on policy at the national and regional level in the coming decade; produce a paper summarizing the presentations

and discussions, and consolidating recommendations from the event.

It was also proposed that the participating institutions sent proposals on emerging human security threats in the region, out of which three will be given grants to carry out the relevant research studies.



Conference in progress

Executive Director RCSS Delivers Keynote Address at Book Launch

The Sinhala and Tamil language editions of the Berghof Handbook “Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict” were launched on 19th September 2007 at the BCIS (Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies) Auditorium. Executive Director of the RCSS Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain delivered the keynote address.

“Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict”- the Berghof Handbook which is translated into Sinhala and Tamil is a publication that offers a systematic overview of contemporary phenomena in Conflict Transformation and is edited by Alex Martin, Martina Fischer and Norbert Ropers. It presents practical, empirical and theoretical knowledge in this field and is published by The Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies, together with Vijitha Yapa publications.

In his keynote address at the book launch, Dr. Rifaat Hussain said, "The Berghof Handbook offers a wealth of



Dr. Rifaat Hussain delivering the keynote address

ideas on how to build peace, how to sustain it and how to prevent the outbreak of armed conflict. Going beyond conflict resolution and conflict management approaches, it emphasizes the need for conflict transformation as a way out of the spectre of violent anarchy which is haunting the world today. Those who care about peace and harmony in the world can learn a great deal from it."

RCSS Participates in International Steering Group Meeting for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)

Executive Director, RCSS, Dr. Rifaat Hussain and Regional Liaison Officer for GPPAC Nilakshi Gunatillake represented GPPAC – South Asia at the International Steering Group (ISG) meetings of GPPAC in the Netherlands held from 8-13 October 2007. Professor Hussain was invited to chair some of the sessions of the ISG and he made a presentation on the GPPAC South Asia regional process to explore options for future cooperation towards achieving a shift from reaction to conflict prevention.

The ISG of GPPAC, which consists of representatives of the fifteen Regional Secretariats as well as representatives of a number of INGOs, was convened to discuss GPPAC strategy, its structure and governance, and to consolidate plans at both regional and global levels for the forthcoming year. The week long meetings also brought together the Regional Liaison Officers who started work in their



respective regions in the course of 2007.

A special feature was an event conducted to provide an opportunity to the regional liaison officers to interact with the Conflict Prevention staff of the GPPAC European Centre, with the objective of improving operational modalities of GPPAC’s work from a regional perspective.

Issues such as the venue and agenda of the next ISG meeting, as well as a strategy meeting, including donors, tentatively foreseen to be held in October 2008, were taken up by the participants. Exploring avenues to develop GPPAC from a predominantly civil society coalition into a multi-stakeholder partnership was viewed as a positive step taken during the sessions of the meetings. An Outcome Mapping seminar was also held during which new Monitoring and Evaluation procedures for the global work plan to be implemented henceforth, were discussed.

Visitors to RCSS

Representatives of

Dr. Markus Mayer, Country Director of International Alert and Mr. Lakshman



F.B. Gunasekara, Senior Programme Manager of International Alert met with the Executive Director and staff of RCSS to discuss possible collaboration between the two organizations. Executive Director Dr. Rifaat Hussain provided the visiting delegation with an overview of the Centre's activities and its focus on regional security. He stressed that more emphasis will be given to economic and cultural aspects of security through RCSS's work. As the regional initiator of Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) he said that he believed that the successful transformation of conflict could not be considered without economic security. Dr. Markus Mayer spoke on the root causes of conflict and the need to facilitate peace processes through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approaches. He highlighted the possibility of engaging in research and advocacy on economic aspects of peace building and expanding its outreach to South Asia through economic linkages of India and neighbouring countries, with regard to peace building.

Saferworld Officials

Mr. Henry Smith, Director, Mr. Thomas Ansorg, Conflict Advisor and Mr. Larry Attree, Team Leader – South Asia of Saferworld, UK, met with the Executive Director and staff of RCSS to discuss the follow-up and ways forward to the Conference on Human Security jointly organized by RCSS and Saferworld.. It was decided to award three research grants to participants or their institutes on submission of a proposal for additional areas of research or sub-topics that could be explored further. A decision was also taken to prepare a report of conference proceedings to be compiled by RCSS and Saferworld to be published at a later stage. It is noteworthy that Mr. Henry Smith expressed



Saferworld's interest in contributing to the next RCSS Summer Workshop by providing lectures and panel discussions.

Congressional Research Specialists

Research Specialists of the United States Congress together with a US State Department senior official of visited the RCSS as a part of their familiarization tour of the South Asia region. Mr. K. Alan Krostadt, and Dr. Bruce Vaughn, Specialists in South Asian Affairs of the Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division of the Congressio-

nal Research Service together with Ms. Robin K. McClellan, Senior Counterterrorism Advisor-South Asia at the U.S. Department of State had also visited India and Bangladesh as a part of the tour. The



discussion they had with Amb. Geetha de Silva, Associate Director and Prof. R. A. Ariyaratne and other staff of the RCSS focused around strategic and security related issues concerning the region. The delegates were provided with information pertaining to the programmes and activities of the RCSS with special reference to its workshops on traditional and non-traditional security issues.

New Associate Director Appointed

Ambassador Geetha de Silva assumed duties as Associate Director of RCSS, on December 1, 2007.

She was a member of the Sri Lanka Foreign Service (SLFS) and last held the position of Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During her career spanning over 25 years as an SLFS officer Ambassador de Silva served as Sri Lanka's High Commissioner to Canada; Deputy Chief of Mission with Ambassador rank at the Sri Lanka Embassy in Washington D.C. and Deputy Permanent Delegate of Sri Lanka to UNESCO, Paris, amongst other assignments. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs she held the positions of Additional Foreign Secretary/Political Affairs; Director General /South Asia and SAARC; Director/ South Asia and Deputy Director/ United Nations and Human Rights.

Ambassador de Silva has functioned as the leader of Sri Lanka's Delegation to international and regional conferences, such as, International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) General Assembly (Montreal, 2001); Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting (St. Kitts & Nevis, 2003) SAARC Foreign Secretaries Meeting (Dhaka, 2006)

A graduate of the University of Ceylon she holds a diploma in International Relations.



RCSS Congratulates Prof. Amitabh Mattoo

Prof. Amitabh Mattoo, Vice Chancellor of Jammu University has been conferred with one of India's highest civilian awards - the Padmashree, for his contribution to education and public life. Prof. Mattoo has been associated with various programmes of the RCSS and has attended several workshops as a member of the faculty. He has also participated in the Centre's activities related to GPPAC. The RCSS congratulates Prof. Mattoo on this occasion and wishes him well in future endeavours.



Mahbub-ul-Haq Research Awards 2008

The RCSS invited applications for the Mahbub-ul-Haq Awards on collaborative research for the year 2008. The closing date for applications was 31st January 2008 and we have received a reasonable number of applications from young South Asian scholars. Selections will be made shortly and the research grants will be awarded to three sets of scholars to begin their respective research studies thereafter.

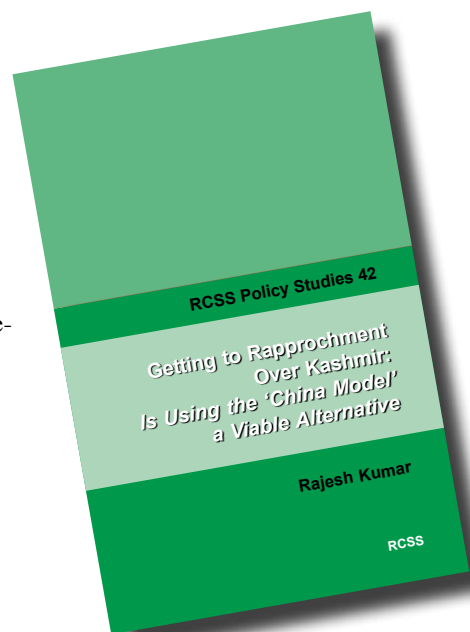
Recent Publications

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Getting to Rapprochement over Kashmir: Is Using the 'China Model' a Viable Alternative

Rajesh Kumar

The economic engagement strategy that resulted in Sino-Indian rapprochement has fascinated scholars and policy makers alike. The dominant discourse is that the same strategy (referred to as the 'China Model' in this book) will work in the India-Pakistan case as well. Dr. Rajesh Kumar takes a counter-position, arguing that there are subtle and not-so-subtle differences in the India-Pakistan and India-China cases, that this strategy is not likely to yield political dividends, and that it even may exacerbate India-Pakistan conflict.

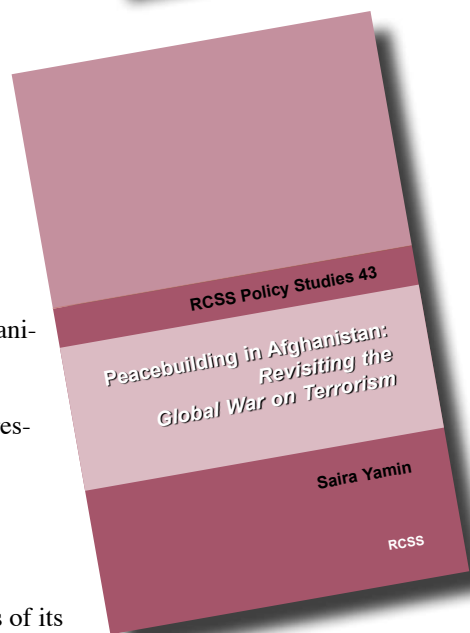


RCSS Policy Studies 43

Peace building in Afghanistan: Revisiting the Global War Against Terrorism

Saira Yamin

The paper attempts to gain a fresh insight on the present scenario in Afghanistan with a focus on developments since 9/11. Drawing from the research studies of various analysts and practitioners, the author elucidates upon the scope of reconstruction work in war-ravaged Afghanistan and presents a strategy for peace-building interventions in the country. The correlation between the internal and external dynamics of the conflict are examined vis-à-vis the Global War on Terrorism and its implications for Afghanistan and the region. A phased and multi-tiered peace plan is proffered envisaging a win-win outcome for all stakeholders in the Afghan imbroglio, thereby strengthening the prospects of its viability.



Views expressed in materials published in *RCSS NEWSLETTER* are of contributors, and not necessarily of the RCSS. The *RCSS NEWSLETTER* is published quarterly. For copies, comments, contributions and further information please write to:

Programme Officer

Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, 410/27, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, SRI LANKA.

Tel: (94-1-2690913-4); Fax: (94-1-2690769) E-mail: rcss@sri.lanka.net <http://www.rcss.org>

Published by: Regional Centre for Strategic Studies

Printed by: Design Systems, Colombo 10. Tel: 4936823