



# SEMINAR ON COUNTERING THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM

AND INAUGURATION OF THE CONSORTIUM  
FOR COUNTERING THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM  
CONFERENCE REPORT

12 February 2008 ||  
SINGAPORE



**S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL  
OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**  
A Graduate School of Nanyang Technological University





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**INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM RESEARCH**

S. RAJARATNAM SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES,  
NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

**I welcome the CFT consortium as an important initiative for the private, public and academic sectors to work together on countering the threat of terrorist financing.**

Sir James Sassoon,  
President of the Financial Action Task Force,  
12 February 2008

The one-day seminar on Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) was co-hosted by the Association of Banks in Singapore (ABS), the Commercial Affairs Department (CAD) and the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) on 12 February 2008. More than 320 distinguished participants and delegates representing law enforcement and other government agencies, financial regulatory bodies, the financial sector, foreign dignitaries and academia attended the seminar. The Singapore Ministry of Home Affairs signalled its strong support with a delegation led by Permanent Secretary Benny Lim.

The seminar, organized to build awareness of the importance of continuing efforts to stop terrorist financing, also witnessed a momentous milestone: the inauguration of the Consortium for Countering the Financing of Terrorism (CCFT). The joint endorsement of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Singapore, the ABS and RSIS demonstrated their support and serious intention to build a strong partnership in the fight against terrorist financing.

Sir James Sassoon, President of the Financial Action Task Force, delivered the keynote speech and witnessed the inauguration of the Consortium. His support for the initiative underscores a fundamental truth: a global effort comprising international organizations, national governments and the private sector is of utmost importance to deny opportunities for terrorist and criminal groups to raise and transmit funds for their activities.

As the phenomenon of home-grown jihadists has displaced Al-Qaeda Central as the new face of global terrorism, it is important to strengthen understanding of the dynamics of terrorism and terrorist financing. Al-Qaeda has successfully embedded its virulent ideology of global jihad against Western governments, their citizens and their allies. This is seen as its most effective strategy in radicalizing communities all over the world, generating anti-West sentiments and breeding suicide bombers.

Money is indispensable for terrorist planning and preparation. This means the financial sector has an important role to play in the detection and disruption of terrorist financing activities.

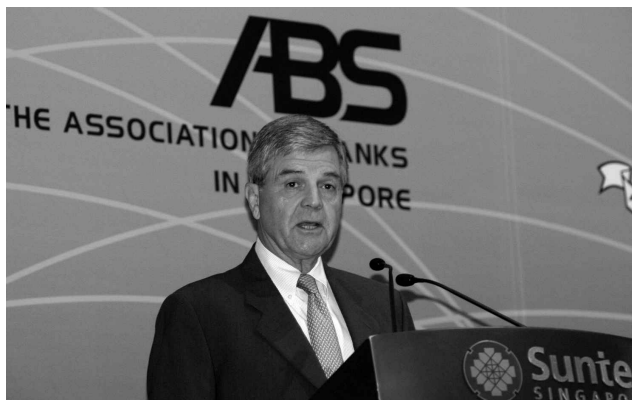
Traditionally, financial investigation took place after an attack, as a reactive measure as law enforcement authorities uncover the operational financial infrastructure of the attack. Today, the mounting challenge is to ensure that all sectors work together in carrying out pro-active investigations. This can be realized through sharing information across the conventional silos, and developing detection measures and resilience for a strong financial system.

The stakes are high and the threat is real. With a strong public-private partnership, we will be better placed to deal with the scourge of terrorism.



*Guests and participants in the Countering of Financing of Terrorism Seminar*

## WELCOME REMARKS



ABS Chairman **David P Conner** got the seminar going by noting that the financial sector is at the forefront in the fight against terrorist financing. Terrorism is a global issue that not only threatens security but also compromises a stable financial system.

The effective collaboration of local and international bodies in fighting terrorism financing is vital. He highlighted the efforts of the Financial Action Task

Force (FATF) in promoting the international framework for Anti Money Laundering (AML) and Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT).

At the local level, continuous collaboration between the ABS task force and the financial sector and its regulatory bodies is evident. The result of such efforts includes the implementation of MAS 626, the annual Financial Crime Conference, the ABS Fellows project collaboration, the introduction of cross-border currency reporting regime, and the endorsement of the Consortium for Countering the Financing of Terrorism.

Mr. Conner also reiterated the importance of the seminar in assisting the financial sector to gain a better understanding of the nature and scope of the regional and global threats. He applauded the event as an excellent opportunity for networking and learning from one another's experiences.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS



In his keynote address, **Sir James Sassoon**, U.K. Chancellor and President of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), stressed the importance of FATF's role in the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

Sir James remarked that FATF has established its role as a standard setter, as an evaluation body and as a research-and-policy developer on specific trends, threats or typologies. These efforts are intended to reduce vulnerabilities in the global framework that terrorists and criminals exploit. Worldwide, organizations such as the United Nations, the Financial Stability Forum, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and ASEAN have recognized, endorsed and adopted FATF recommendations and standards.

Sir James pointed out the dynamics of both money laundering and terrorist financing. Launderers and terrorist financiers react and adjust quickly to new legislations, law enforcement interventions and technological developments. For this reason, a global network of countries with consistent application of recognized international standards must be in place. Recognizing this, he commended the establishment of the CCFT (Consortium for Countering the Financing of Terrorism) as an example of how to remain a step ahead. On its part, FATF is taking a twin-track approach for effective AML/CFT systems. First, FATF assists member states in meeting the required standards and preparing them for assessments. Second, FATF has formulated a process to identify, examine and engage with vulnerable jurisdictions. It has successfully reached out to countries and helped them to produce action plans and legislative improvements.

With prior experience in the private sector, Sir James is in a unique position to develop a more open and constructive dialogue with the private sector for effective CFT implementation. Along this line, he highlighted three significant initiatives taken by the FATF. First, a forum organized in December 2007 provided opportunities for the public and private sectors to exchange ideas and develop money laundering and terrorist financing typologies. Consequently, FATF has been able to strengthen its capacity to analyse methods and trends that would help policymakers to better target interventions against key priorities. He cited the interest of international leaders such as the U.K. and Indian Ministers in FATF's work in fighting organized crime and terrorism.

He also touched on the issues of working closely with the financial sector and the fact that FATF has issued guidelines for a risk-based approach to money laundering and terrorist financing. While not cheaper and no less rigorous, a risk-based approach will help ensure the delivery of outcomes. Third, a Private Sector Consultative Forum has been established to provide a formal structure to facilitate information exchange.

Despite some process commonalities between money laundering and terrorist financing, there are distinct differences. In certain cases, the funding of terrorist activities only involves a small amount from legitimate sources. In this respect, FATF has set out standard preventive measures for the financial sector as a first line of defence. The challenge lies not only in putting in place robust customer due diligence and record-keeping processes but also in having an appropriate process of sharing of intelligence between law-enforcement agencies and the financial sector. Future FATF projects include preparing national threat assessments and a regular surveillance discussion of trends and threats.

Sir James acknowledged the lack of much-needed resources to implement anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing measures. However, he was keen to emphasize the actual AML/CFT impact. Lastly, he underscored how critical it is for an effective strategy to comprise a joint global effort involving multiple key parties.

# CCFT INAUGURATION CEREMONY

The highlight of the seminar was the inauguration of the Consortium for Countering the Financing of Terrorism – Asia Pacific (CCFT). In his inauguration address, **Ambassador Barry Desker**, Dean of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, noted that the Consortium and its agenda would be fully supported by key stakeholders in the CFT community. He promised that RSIS would continue its groundbreaking work in research aimed at countering the financing of terrorism in the region.

Ambassador Desker highlighted the ABS Fellowship that RSIS launched in 2005 to further enhance the capacity in fighting terrorist financing. The fellowship programme, which the Monetary Authority of Singapore co-sponsored, saw two senior bankers from the United Overseas Bank and Deutsche Bank in Singapore working with the School's International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research. This unique partnership has resulted in the formulation of a set of terrorist financial indicators and best practices worldwide. A series of workshops with key institutions such as the National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit (NTFIU), New Scotland Yard, the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC), the Commercial Affairs Department of Singapore and the National Defense College of the Philippines has also been conducted.

Ambassador Desker lauded the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research for its initiative in developing a successful model of public

and private sector cooperation and collaboration.

He reiterated that combating terrorist financing could no longer be viewed as a task reserved solely for law enforcement agencies. As different institutions and stakeholders hold the knowledge necessary to defeat the financing of terrorism, a collaborative response is essential.

Ambassador Desker also hoped that launching the Consortium would allow the development of a global network of knowledge, and that it would enhance capabilities and facilitate capacity building among partners. With a long-term vision and sustainable regional capacity for CFT research, Singapore will emerge as an international centre for CFT expertise.



*The CCFT Memorandum of Understanding was signed by (from left to right) Mr. Loh Ngai Seng, Senior Director, Homefront Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore; Ambassador Barry Desker, Dean, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies; and Mrs Ong-Ang Ai Boon, Director, Association of Banks in Singapore, on 12 February 2008 at Suntec Convention Centre, Singapore.*

# DYNAMICS OF GLOBAL AND REGIONAL TERRORISM LANDSCAPE



**Dr. Rohan Gunaratna**, Head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at RSIS, talked about the regional and global terrorism threat landscape, the sources and methods of terrorist finance and key challenges for governments and the private sector, especially banks and other financial institutions.

First, Dr. Gunaratna described the pivotal role of Al-Qaeda in using radical Islamic ideology to its advantage. The failure of the various governments to counter this extremist ideology has led to the increase in domestic groups and home-grown cells. Al-Qaeda and its associated groups have also successfully embedded the ideology of armed jihad in Southeast Asia.

Second, he shared on how global events have contributed to shaping the current threat. He highlighted

the developments in conflict zones such as Iraq and Afghanistan, both of which have driven some Southeast Asian Muslims into extremism and terrorism. He highlighted the importance of containing and stabilizing these conflict areas.

Third, he discussed how terrorist groups misuse the formal financial system (such as banks) and informal money transfers (such as hawala) as well as use human couriers to move funds. Without money, no terrorist operational and organizational network can survive and sustain itself. Terrorist activities are financed through individual donations, infiltration of charities, low-level and organized crime, and legitimate businesses. For example, the Abu Sayyaf Group released a video just before the holy month of Ramadan, requesting for donations from their sympathizers in Saudi Arabia.

In conclusion, Dr. Gunaratna said that the financial sector is the frontline in the fight against the terrorist infrastructure. The collaboration between law enforcement and intelligence services and banks is crucial in identifying, monitoring and tracking the flow of terrorist and extremist money. It will lead upstream to the donors and downstream to the operational cells. Global efforts to dismantle terrorist financial infrastructures will succeed only if the public and the private sectors can work together.



# IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL INVESTIGATION AND FINANCIAL SECTOR IN NATIONAL CT INITIATIVES



**Neil Bennett**, Operations Supervisor of the National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit, New Scotland Yard, United Kingdom, described how the financial sector can contribute to the wider counter-terrorism environment. Citing the United Kingdom's experience in creating a hostile environment for terrorists, he also shared how the government's policies and strategies have worked.

Policy, enforcement, intelligence and regulation are the four main factors that contribute to CFT. These factors allow the government to achieve its goals with the use of financial tools such as detection, disruption and engagement. In addition, the U.K. government's strategy, which is endorsed by three ministries, has prioritized certain areas to enhance CFT.

First, there must be knowledge about the interests and activities of the terrorist groups. Second, capabilities must be strengthened, including intelligence building. Third, a risk-based approach must be in place and the government must be prepared to help minimize the burden on businesses.

Mr. Bennett discussed the July 2005 London bombing as a case where both banks and government agencies cooperated to successfully unmask the identity of the perpetrators.

He also cited other examples, such as the Dhiren Barot case, the foiled Trans-Atlantic bombing case, and the London and Glasgow airport bombings in 2007. He stressed the importance of sharing information with the private sector, especially on current and real-time issues rather than on archaic matters.

He demonstrated the importance of financial investigation in each of the cases and noted that a trust-based partnership between the financial sector and government agencies has worked to contain the threat of terrorism in the United Kingdom.

## SINGAPORE'S CFT RESPONSE

**Leong Kok Cheong**, Head of the Suspicious Transaction Reporting Office of the Financial Investigation Division of the Commercial Affairs Department (CAD), talked about the significance of harnessing the use of technology to counter the financing of terrorism. The Suspicious Transaction Reporting Office (STRO) is Singapore's Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). It is the central agency in Singapore for receiving, analysing and disseminating reports of suspicious transactions. Raw data contained in Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs) are turned into financial intelligence that can be used to detect money laundering, terrorist financing and other criminal offences. He added that the office also disseminates financial intelligence to relevant enforcement and regulatory agencies.

Mr. Leong shared that there has been an increase in the number of STRs submitted since 2004. Through a system known as the Web-based Intelligent Analytical and Graphical Visualization System (WINGS), reports are evaluated and analysed. The system provides better intelligence management and effective detection of threats. A wide variety of criminal activity has been detected through the use of STRs. Various outreach programmes have also been conducted by the STRO to different industrial sectors to raise awareness of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism tools. This is also to encourage the increase in the quantity and quality of STRs.

He added that on the external front, STRO is involved in international forums and cooperates with regional bodies on global AML and CFT efforts, thus maintaining close working relationships with FIUs in other countries.

The second speaker, **Lee Chwee Huat**, Assistant Director of the Operations Management and Development Division (OMDD) of CAD, discussed how Singapore has responded to the FATF Special Recommendations. The OMDD was established in February 2006 to chart the long-term operational strategies and development plans of CAD. It puts in place systems, structures, policies and plans to drive operational and investigation excellence. It also coordinates all major commercial crime-related

operations that involve multiple divisions of CAD of the police land divisions. In addition, it oversees the Cross Border Cash Enforcement Branch (CEB), which handles all incidents relating to offences under the reporting of cross-border movements of physical and bearer-negotiable instruments (CBNI). Relevant cross-border movements of CBNI exceeding SGD 30,000 in total value or its equivalent in foreign currency must be reported to the enforcement authorities and CEB officers conduct investigative, prosecutorial and/or forfeiture/confiscation actions against persons who do not give a full and accurate report. Mr. Lee emphasized that the measures are put in place to detect and monitor the cross-border movements of CBNI by cash couriers supporting terrorism financing or money-laundering activities. However, he highlighted that this is not a currency control measure, and that there are no restrictions on the type or amount of CBNI that can be moved into or out of Singapore.

The third speaker, **Ian Wong**, Assistant Director of the Financial Investigation Division of CAD, reiterated that the true test of strong public-private sector cooperation is the private sector's willingness to provide assistance in a complete and expeditious manner, especially in times of emergency. For example, in the aftermath of the U.K. bomb blast, bank officials literally camped in their offices throughout the weekend and beyond to provide financial records to the police.

The records were voluminous, and round-the-clock cooperation was necessary to assist in resolving the investigations.

This same message was originally delivered during the Financial Crimes Conference organized by the Association of Banks in August 2007. Thereafter, CAD received expressions of support from many banks and financial institutions that they would indeed offer round-the-clock assistance to CAD's investigations especially in times of emergency.

CAD thanked these banks and financial institutions for their strong support.

# CFT IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND KEY SUCCESS FACTORS



**Gunawan Husin**, ABS Fellow, RSIS-ICPVTR Adjunct Fellow and Head of the Business Continuity Management of the Royal Bank of Scotland, discussed the current CFT measures in place, the obstacles to effective implementation and how to apply CFT mechanism most effectively.

Mr. Husin explained that the operational costs of terrorism are only those expenses incurred in the weeks and months prior to an attack. In attacking the financial infrastructure of terrorist groups, one needs to look further into its organizational costs too. Focusing on organizational cost, which is 90 percent of the overall financial infrastructure, will lead upstream to donors and downstream to operational cells.

CFT requires the active participation of many key stakeholders from different segments of the public and private sectors as well as academia.

Mr. Husin noted that despite UN leadership and FATF guidelines, the world continues to experience limited success in the fight against terrorist financing. The main reason behind this is that there remain some states that have not yet criminalised terrorist financing. There are also various jurisdictions with different sets of priorities and levels of compliance.

There are two key components that must be consolidated in order to progress to the next level, namely, political willingness and public-private sector partnership. These are the two basic requirements before a country can begin to build measures and guidelines to detect the financing of terrorism.

Mr. Husin urged all delegates to welcome the establishment of the Consortium and to contribute to it according to their strengths. The Consortium aims to bring the public-private partnership to a sustainable level, where it will contribute to capacity building in the region and dedicate multi-disciplinary resources to create a hostile environment for terrorists. He reiterated that the risk from terrorism is real and that together in a partnership, we will not fail.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF SANCTIONS LIST



**Jay Jhaveri**, Director of World-Check, demonstrated in his presentation that complying with sanctions lists is a necessary but inadequate measure in the fight to counter the financing of terrorism. He argued that a wide discrepancy exists between the number of terrorists officially sanctioned by the world's four most authoritative sanctioning bodies and the much greater number of terrorists known to be active.

Mr. Jhaveri illustrated this point by showing the number of terrorists listed by the U.S. Office of Assets Control (OFAC), the United Nations, the United Kingdom Treasury (UKHMT) and the European Union (EU) as belonging to several sanctioned terrorist groups. He compared their relatively low numbers with the larger estimates generally cited by experts. For example, the four lists combined have only a few hundred individuals and entities associated with Al-Qaeda. Yet, even a conservative estimate of the number of operatives trained in Al-Qaeda camps since the group's inception in 1989 ranges from 50,000 to 100,000.

Adding up the numbers, he noted that the combined lists designated only 857 terrorists worldwide. He thus invited delegates to judge for themselves how such lists can be effective in aiding the financial sector and law enforcement agencies in combating terrorism.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

A panel discussion on how to overcome the obstacles to effective partnership and information exchange was chaired by Yvette Cheak, Chair of the ABS Standing Committee on Self-governance and Compliance. The panellists were Ian Wong, Neil Bennet, Gunawan Husin and Jay Jhaveri.

Delegates wanted to hear the views of the panellists on how to ensure effective participation by their industry. Most notable was the interest within the financial sector on moving forward after the seminar and many took advantage of the presence of CAD officials to seek clarification on operational modalities.

Among the questions raised was one on the protection of innocent account holders with the same names as known terrorists. Should such bank accounts be frozen? CAD's Ian Wong assured participants that his office would use other identifying particulars to establish the identity of known terrorists, and would only act if there is strong evidence beyond a mere name match.

Another question dealt with the dilemma of banks as to whether to close suspicious accounts. Neil Bennett, speaking from a law-enforcement perspective, said that he would want the account to remain open to allow further investigations by the police and intelligence agencies. He also explained the legislation in the U.K. that provides legal grounds for closing an account.

A point was also raised on the effectiveness of FATF recommendations in assisting various jurisdictions in fighting financial crimes. Mr. Husin explained that each jurisdiction has its own priorities and local conditions. While FATF recommendations do help to some extent, one must understand that it is not a "one size fits all" situation. Each country needs to follow the recommendations and translate the guidelines into minimum standards at the working level, and to share the best practices across different jurisdictions.



*Andrew Zerzan from World Bank*



## CLOSING REMARKS



**Yvette Cheak**, in her closing remarks, thanked the speakers for sharing their time and experiences in countering the financing of terrorism. She praised the commitment and energy shown by the participants and hoped that such dynamism would be carried forward in the future activities of the Consortium. She also pledged the continued support of ABS for the successful functioning of the Consortium.

Compiled by: Ava Patricia Cabiguin Avila and Gunawan Husin  
Edited by: Susan Sim

# PROGRAMME

0900	<b>WELCOME REMARKS</b> <b>David P Conner,</b> Chairman, ABS/Director & CEO, OCBC Bank		<b>FATF SPECIAL RECOMMENDATION IX: SINGAPORE'S RESPONSE</b> <b>Superintendent Lee Chwee Huat,</b> Assistant Director, Operations Management Development Division, Commercial Affairs Department, Singapore
0910	<b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS</b> <b>Sir James Sassoon,</b> President, Financial Action Task Force, United Kingdom		<b>PARTNERSHIP IN COUNTER TERRORISM FINANCING</b> <b>Ian Wong, Assistant Director,</b> Financial Investigation Division, Commercial Affairs Department
0955	<b>INAUGURATION CEREMONY OF THE CONSORTIUM FOR COUNTERING THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM – ASIA PACIFIC</b>		
	Inauguration address by: <b>Ambassador Barry Desker,</b> Dean, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore	1445	<b>CFT IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND KEY SUCCESS FACTORS: CHALLENGES OF EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION</b> <b>Gunawan Husin,</b> ABS Fellow and Adjunct Fellow RSIS-ICPVTR/Head of Business Continuity Management, Royal Bank of Scotland, Singapore
1010	Tea Break		
1050	<b>DYNAMICS OF GLOBAL AND REGIONAL TERRORISM LANDSCAPE</b> <b>Dr Rohan Gunaratna,</b> Head, International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore	1530	<b>WORLD-CHECK PRESENTATION</b> <b>Jay J haveri,</b> Director, World-Check, Singapore
1140	<b>IMPORTANCE OF FINANCIAL INVESTIGATION AND FINANCIAL SECTOR IN NATIONAL CT INITIATIVES - INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDY</b> <b>Neil Bennett,</b> Operations Supervisor, National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit, New Scotland Yard, United Kingdom	1600	Panel Discussion – <b>OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND HOW THEY CAN BE OVERCOME</b> Panel: <b>Yvette Cheak (Chair)</b> <b>Ian Wong</b> <b>Neil Bennett</b> <b>Gunawan Husin</b> <b>Jay Jhaveri</b>
1230	Lunch		<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b> <b>Yvette Cheak,</b> Chair, ABS Standing Committee on Self-Governance and Compliance/MD & Head, Group Ethics & Compliance, BNP Paribas, Singapore
1345	<b>GROWING SIGNIFICANCE OF FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE</b> <b>Leong Kok Cheong,</b> Head, Suspicious Transaction Report Office, Financial Investigation Division, Commercial Affairs Department, Singapore	1700	End of Seminar

# ABOUT RSIS

**The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)** was established in January 2007 as an autonomous School within the Nanyang Technological University. RSIS's mission is to be a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in the Asia Pacific. To accomplish this mission, it will:

- Provide a rigorous professional graduate education in international affairs with a strong practical and area emphasis
- Conduct policy-relevant research in defence, national security, international relations, strategic studies and diplomacy,
- Build a global network of like-minded professional schools.

## **Graduate Training in International Affairs**

RSIS offers an exacting graduate education in international affairs, taught by an international faculty of leading thinkers and practitioners. The Master of Science (MSc) degree programmes in Strategic Studies, International Relations, and International Political Economy are distinguished by their focus on the Asia Pacific, the professional practice of international affairs, and the cultivation of academic depth. About 130 students, the majority from abroad are enrolled in these programmes. A small select Ph.D. programme caters to advanced students whose interests match those of specific faculty members.

## **Research**

RSIS research is conducted by five components: the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies which is RSIS' predecessor (IDSS, 1996), the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR, 2004), the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS, 2006), the Centre for the Advanced Study of Regionalism and Multilateralism (CASRM, 2007), and the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia, 2007). The focus of research is on issues relating to the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region and their implications for Singapore and other countries in the region. RSIS also has the S. Rajaratnam Professorship in Strategic Studies, which brings distinguished scholars and practitioners to participate in the work of the school.

## **International Collaboration**

Collaboration with other professional Schools of international affairs to form a global network of excellence is a RSIS priority. RSIS will initiate links with other like-minded schools so as to enrich its research and teaching activities as well as adopt the best practices of successful schools.



# ABOUT ICPVTR

**The International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR)** is a specialist centre within RSIS. The Centre seeks to integrate academic theory with practical knowledge, which is essential for complete and comprehensive understanding of threats from politically motivated groups. Its research staff comprises functional and regional analysts from South Asia, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, Oceania, Africa, Europe, North America and the Middle East. They are drawn from academia, and from government agencies and also includes Muslim religious scholars. The Centre seeks to maintain its unique cultural and linguistic diversity. More than fifty percent of ICPVTR staff are Muslims.

## Mission

ICPVTR conducts research, training and outreach programmes aimed at reducing the threat of politically motivated violence and at mitigating its effects on the international system.

## Core Objectives

- To conduct sustained research and analysis of terrorist, guerilla, militia and extremist political groups and their support bases. To this end, the Centre collects and analyses literature seeking to politicize, radicalize and mobilize the public into supporting extremism and participating in violence.
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of international, state and societal responses in managing the threat of political violence.
- To provide high quality instruction and training for officials and future leaders engaged in combating terrorism and other forms of political violence.
- To advise government and inform societies affected by political violence on how best to manage the current and evolving threat.

## Core Projects

### A. Database

The ICPVTR terrorism database – the Global Pathfinder - is a one-stop repository for information on current and emerging threats. The database consists of profiles of terrorists and terrorist groups, significant incidents, as well as profiles of training camps and individuals and institutions involved in terrorist financing. It also hosts

primary and secondary documents including original documents collected from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Bosnia, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines amongst others. Our special collection includes more than 250 videos recovered from Al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan, videos and training manuals from various conflict zones and over 400 jihadi websites.

### B. Capacity Building

In addition to teaching courses at the Masters level, ICPVTR threat specialists conduct various levels of specialized courses for Singaporean and foreign law enforcement personnel from agencies like the military and police forces. The ICPVTR capacity building programme is geared towards providing world-class education and training for serving and future leaders in counter-terrorism.

### C. Strategic Counter-Terrorism Projects

ICPVTR's strategic counter-terrorism projects include ideological, legislative, educational, financial, media, informatics and developmental initiatives. These strategic projects seek to create an environment hostile to terrorist groups and unfriendly to their supporters and sympathizers. ICPVTR seeks to build a norm and an ethic against politically motivated violence, especially terrorism.

As terrorists and extremists emerge from the community in which they live, the ICPVTR popularized the phrase "Communities Defeat Terrorism" in Singapore. Our staff actively participates in the work of the Religious Rehabilitation Group (RRG), which is engaged in counselling and rehabilitation of Jemaah Islamiyah detainees in Singapore. The RRG also reaches out to the community to promote the value of religious tolerance in Singapore.

Similarly, ICPVTR pioneered the concept of engaging the financial sector and law enforcement agencies to deny terrorist groups access to the financial sector. In collaboration with the Association of Banks in Singapore, ICPVTR works to develop indicators and best practices in countering the financing of terrorism.

