

**Progress Report for Research Centres**

**Reporting Period: 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014**

**1. Name of the Research Centre**

Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC)

**2. Membership and Management Structure**

**2.1 Centre Director (Name & Department)**

Director

Prof Mark R Thompson, Department of Asian and International Studies

Associate Director

Dr Chiara Formichi, Department of Asian and International Studies

*(RO will include the list of core members/Centre Members which have already been provided by Centres to this report)*

Please see attached file for list of core members.

**2.2 Advisors/Consultants**

Associate or other Members/Advisors/Consultants

New SEARC members

SEARC has been actively recruiting new members outside of CLASS, including in the natural sciences.

1. Prof Johnny CL Chan, Dean of School of Energy and Environment, Chair Professor of Atmospheric Science, CityU. Prof Chan is internationally renowned in the research areas of typhoons and monsoons. Recently, he has been working on the problem of global warming and its relationship with typhoon activity, as well as on tropical cyclone and monsoon climate. He met with SEARC speaker Prof. James Warren in October 2013, a renowned historian of Southeast Asia working on the history of typhoons in the Philippines (Prof Chan joined SEARC in October 2013).

2. Dr Wong Pak Nung Bryan, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Social Studies, CityU. With a cross-disciplinary background in anthropology, political science and sociology, he has done ethnographic fieldwork in northeastern Philippines and more recently, in northern-central Thailand (Dr Wong joined SEARC in February 2013).
3. Dr Toby Carroll, Associate Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies, CityU. Dr Carroll's research interests are on the political economy of development (with a strong focus on Asia), and Southeast Asian regionalism (Dr Carroll joined SEARC in May 2013).
4. Dr Thomas Patton, Assistant Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies, CityU. His teaching and research is attentive to religion in Southeast Asia, particularly focusing on historical and ethnographic interests engaging Buddhist, and increasingly Islamic, phenomenon in relation to Burmese cultural contexts, issues of gender and class, and politics (Dr Patton joined SEARC in February 2014).
5. Prof Felipe Cucker, Chair Professor, Department of Mathematics, CityU. Prof Cucker has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Society for the Foundations of Computational Mathematics since its creation. He is presently the Chairman of the Society. He is a member of the editorial board of the journals *Foundations of Computational Mathematics*, *Journal of complexity*, *SIAM Journal on Optimization*, and *Theoretical Computer Science*. In 2005 he was made Foreign Member of the Real Academia de Ciencias y Artes de Barcelona. He is interested in issues relating to Hong Kong and Southeast Asia (Prof Cucker joined SEARC in February 2014).

#### New SEARC research affiliates

Research affiliates are leading academics working on Southeast Asia or interested in Southeast Asia at institutions of higher learning in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Prof Ian Holliday, Department of Politics and Public Administration, the University of Hong Kong, former Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Hong Kong, and former Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, CityU. For the past decade or so, Prof Ian Holliday has been interested chiefly in the politics of Myanmar. His research focuses on issues of political development and reform inside the country. His teaching embraces problems of humanitarian intervention in Myanmar and elsewhere (Prof Holliday joined SEARC in February 2014).

#### Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar

Dr Yin Hlaing Kyaw, former associate director of SEARC and assistant professor of the Department of Asian and International Studies, is senior advisor to the president of Myanmar, Thein Sein, member of the Myanmar Peace Centre Secretariat, and director of Myanmar Egress, an NGO concerned with political change in the country. SEARC members have regularly

participated in Myanmar Egress's Social Studies Summer Programme which teaches Asian and international studies to government officials, NGO activists, and advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students from Myanmar.

SEARC affiliated members who joined before March 2013:

1. Prof Kingsley Bolton, former CLASS Dean and Chair Prof of English, now Adjunct Prof and Prof at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. His research interests include English language and literature worldwide, language and globalisation, multilingualism, sociolinguistics, and world Englishes. Much of his research has been on language issues in the Asian region with a focus on Filipino English.
2. Prof Catherine Chiu, former Associate Dean of College of Humanities and Social Sciences, CityU, now Head, Department of General Education, Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong. Her fields of expertise are on work & labour issues, women's issues, general social issues, scholarship of teaching and learning, particularly in Asia.
3. Dr Delang Claudio O., Research Assistant Prof, Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University. His research interests are on development studies, rural development, political ecology, ecological economics and greater Mekong sub-region of Southeast Asia.
4. Dr Judith Clarke, Assistant Prof, Department of Journalism, Hong Kong Baptist University. Her first degree was in Russian Studies and Sociology, and she has an MA in Asian Studies. She completed her PhD in 1999 with a thesis examining the politically influenced coverage of the 'hidden' conflict in Cambodia in the 1980s. She maintains her research interest in Cambodia as well as other areas of Asia, but also specialises in news around the world, teaching Comparative and International News as well as professional journalism subjects.
5. Dr Yu Xiajiang, Associate Prof, Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University. His research interests are environmental and energy policy, ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, social and cultural issues and international development and cooperation with a focus on Southeast Asia.

Associate members

SEARC is pleased to have added several prominent members of the community (journalists, NGO activists, leaders in civil society, business people) who are interested in Southeast Asia and supportive of SEARC to its associate membership.

1. Ms Nelly Fung, a prominent Hong Kong-based writer whose work focuses on the Philippines and Hong Kong. She is also the founder of Chinese International School and ISF Academy; and historian by avocation (Ms Fung joined SEARC in April 2013)

2. Ms Sonia Zerrudo, Managing Director of Smart Asia International Enterprises and a well-known leader of the Filipino (Ms Zerrudo joined SEARC in April 2013)
3. Mr Philip Bowring, an eminent journalist of Asian affairs who is now an independent columnist, mainly for the International Herald Tribune, and consultant on regional economic and political issues. He now writes fortnightly columns for the SCMP and occasional ones for the Wall Street Journal. He is also a contributor to [www.asiasentinel.com](http://www.asiasentinel.com), of which he was a founder. He is the former editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. (Mr Bowring joined SEARC in February 2014)

#### Associate members who joined SEARC before March 2013

Ms Vaudine England, freelance journalist and author noted for her writings about Southeast Asia. She is a Hong Kong-based reporter for the BBC and the *Guardian* newspaper, among others.

### 2.3 Steering/Management/Advisory Committee, if established

#### Steering Committee

- Chair: Prof Xiaowei Zang (Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences)
- Convener: Prof Mark R Thompson (Director, SEARC)
- Dr Chiara Formichi (Associate Director, SEARC)
- Prof Joseph Cheng (Chair Professor, Department of Public and Social Administration)

#### Management Committee

- Chair: Prof Mark R Thompson (Director, SEARC)
- Vice-chair: Dr Chiara Formichi (Assistant Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies)
- Prof William Case (Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies) (former SEARC Director)
- Dr Bill Taylor (Associate Professor, Department of Public and Social Administration)
- Dr Thomas Patton (Assistant Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies)

#### International Advisory Committee

- Prof Mark Beeson (Winthrop Professor, The University of Western Australia, Australia)
- Prof Donald K Emmerson (Director, Southeast Asia Forum, Stanford University, USA)
- Prof Hans-Dieter Evers (Eminent Visiting Professor, Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam; Professor emeritus of Development Planning, University of Bielefeld; Senior Fellow, Center for Development Research (ZEF), University of Bonn)
- Prof Vedi Hadiz, Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University
- Prof Kevin Hewison (Director, Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University)
- Prof Paul D Hutchcroft (Director, School of International, Political & Strategic Studies, The

Australian National University, Australia)

- Prof Michael Jacobsen, Director of Asia Studies Programme, Copenhagen Business School
- Prof Kanishka Jayasuriya, Director of the Indo-Pacific Research Centre, University of Adelaide
- Prof Pasuk Phongpaichit (Professor of Economics, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)
- Prof Garry Rodan (Director, Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University, Australia)
- Prof Robert Taylor (former Visiting Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies, CityU, now Visiting Senior Fellow, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, ISEAS, Singapore)

### **3. Mission statement and objectives**

*(Please highlight changes, if any, since establishment of the Centre)*

The Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC) strives to be a centre of excellence in academic and applied studies of contemporary Southeast Asia. In terms of research output, the number of high profile conferences and workshops held, and the breadth of coverage of the region, SEARC has clearly become one of the leading research centres for the study of contemporary Southeast Asia in the world. In keeping with the new priorities set by City University, greater attention has been given to theoretical and cross-disciplinary analysis, with the intention of addressing real-world challenges in national political systems, workplace inequalities, gender relations, and disaster management. SEARC seeks to attract competitive external grant funding, to collaborate internationally with other institutions, to conduct disciplinary-based and cross-disciplinary research in compelling academic debates in the social sciences, to generate high-quality research publications, and to reach the public through open events and media engagement.

SEARC's core members have distinguished publication records in the fields of comparative politics, sociology, history, religious studies, and anthropology related to Southeast Asia. Their research addresses real-world challenges in national political systems, economic policies, the environment, workplace inequalities, gender relations, and disaster management in the region. SEARC also has visiting scholars, research affiliates in other Hong Kong universities, and an international advisory team that add further to its impact.

As president of the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA), the only major scholarly organization dedicated to the study of Asian politics and international affairs within Asia, SEARC director Mark R. Thompson has helped raise SEARC's profile as a major center for the study of Southeast Asia, with an emphasis on political science and international relations. Following up on the APISA Congress held jointly at CityU in December 2012 (which draw over 120 participants from 30 different countries), Thompson attended the next APISA Congress in Ankara in October 2013 where he delivered his presidential address to over 200 scholars from 25 different countries. Thompson and several other SEARC members will attend the next APISA Congress in Chiang Mai in September 2014 where he will deliver his final speech as president of the organization. This contributes to SEARC's overall strategy of extending links to scholars and

institutions researching other parts of the developing world, especially in Asia, whose concerns resonate with those of the Centre in cooperation with organizations such as the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA);

SEARC members have been invited to prestigious international meetings - SEARC's former associate director Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing and current Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar has been invited for three consecutive years since 2012 to attend the famous and influential World Economic Forum Annual Meeting at Davos, Switzerland to discuss recent developments in Myanmar where he met with statesman such as Tony Blair and Kevin Rudd as well as philanthropists like George Soros. SEARC co-hosted the Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas Conference with the Department of Asian and International Studies (AIS) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 6-7 September 2013 which brought together leading scholars to discuss Asian migration along many different dimensions. It also holds frequent seminars open to the public given by leading experts on Southeast Asia. SEARC strives to reach out to the larger CityU community and Hong Kongers in general to awake interest in and provide greater understanding of Southeast Asia.

SEARC, in consultation with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, will be invited to join the Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA) within the coming academic year. This is an important initiative for the networking of Southeast Asian centres in Asia, to encourage greater research collaboration as well as strengthen the standing of Southeast Asian studies in the Asian region.

SEARC's objectives may be summarized as follows:

- to advance the Centre's international reputation and City University's standing by researching political, economic, and social developments in contemporary Southeast Asia;
- To work together with major international organizations such as the International Organization of Migration, in order to have high profile meetings that bring together scholars with key activists and policy makers.
- to obtain competitive external grant funding;
- to extend links to scholars and institutions researching other parts of the developing world, especially in Asia, whose concerns resonate with those of the Centre in cooperation with organizations such as the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA);
- to conduct disciplinary-based and cross-disciplinary research;
- to address major debates in comparative politics, political economy, and comparative sociology;
- to produce high quality research publications on contemporary Southeast Asia;
- to engage Hong Kong citizens, especially civil society organizations, through open forums and media engagement; and
- to enhance the study of Southeast Asia in Hong Kong and to increase understanding of the region within CityU and the Hong Kong communities.

#### 4. Research activities carried out during the reporting period

##### 4.1 Collaboration among CityU members in terms of joint projects and publications

PI (Dept) and Co-Is (Dept)	Approval Date	Grant Type (SRG, Start-up Grant for New Staff, ARG, etc)	Project Title	Funding amount (\$)
<u>Prof Mark R Thompson (SEARC)</u> and Prof William Case	24 Apr 2012	CityU Strategic Research Grant (SRG)	Different Democratic Trajectories in Four Southeast Asian Countries	174,792.00
<u>Prof Mark R Thompson (SEARC)</u> and Prof William Case	1 Jul 2013	RGC General Research Fund (GRF)	Democracy and its Discontents in Southeast Asia	853,920.00

##### 4.2 Conferences/seminars organized

- please list conferences organized, the impact of these conferences and how these contributed to networking at local, regional or international levels
- please also include, as appropriate, professional courses or training organized for the industry/business/community which help strengthen the links with these sectors

#### **Major Interational Conference**

##### **6-7 September 2013**

#### **Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas**

The conference was co-hosted by the Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC), the Department of Asian and International Studies (AIS) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 6-7 September 2013 which brought together over 60 leading scholars to discuss Asian migration along many different dimensions. City University of Hong Kong President Prof Way Kuo attended the Opening Ceremony. Closing remarks were made by Prof Arthur Ellis (CityU Provost) and Ambassador William Swing (IOM Director General).

#### **Workshop**

##### **27 April 2013**

#### **The Role of Southeast and South Asian Migrants' Religions in Hong Kong**

A one-day workshop on the state of current research and future directions

This round-table workshop held on 27 April 2013 brought together a small group of academics

interested in researching areas of overlap between migration and religion in Hong Kong. It generated a discussion on the state of current research in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology, studies of religion, education, social work etc. The workshop addressed the question of whether and how the religious culture of migrants influenced the patterns of religion in Hong Kong, and vice-versa.

### Seminars

Over the years, SEARC has been providing regular seminars on cutting edge research about Southeast Asia which are open to all members of the university and the community. Seminars are good opportunities for academics, professionals, social activists, students and other interested parties of the general public to engage one another in gatherings on the CityU campus, helping to raise the university's local profile and its contributions to public life. Most seminars result in a working paper put on the SEARC website (SEARC has one of the most extensive collections of working papers on the region of any such research centre in the world) as well as, more recently a videotape of the seminar put on Youtube with a link cite. In this way SEARC carefully documents its seminars to contribute to the study of Southeast Asia even for those unable to attend the seminars personally.

Over the past 12-month (April 2013 – March 2014), SEARC hosted 11 seminars on contemporary issues of politics, society, culture, ideology and history of Southeast Asia. Below is the list of seminars held:

1. **'The Monarchy in Thailand's Post-Bhumibol Era'**, Dr Pavin Chachavalpongpun (Associate Professor, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, Japan), 19 June 2013
2. **'Malaysia's 13th General Election: Any Change for the Better?'**, Prof William Case (Professor, Department of Asian and International Studies, City University of Hong Kong), 16 September 2013
3. **'Philippine Typhoon: Climate, History and Society in the Philippines from the Sixteen to Twentieth Centuries'**, Prof James Warren (Professor of History and Southeast Asian Studies, Murdoch University, Australia), 8 October 2013
4. **'The "Small World" of the Village in Two Thai Novels of the Cold War'**, Dr Michael Montesano (Visiting Research Fellow, The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore), 28 October 2013
5. **'When Indonesian domestic workers sue: turning points and triggers in the journey from employment to the law'**, Dr Carol Tan (Reader in Law, The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and Chair, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies), 7 November 2013
6. **'Religion and Humanitarian Response in Asia: the case of Muhammadiyah'**, Dr Robin Bush (Senior Research Fellow, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore), 27 January 2014
7. **'Liberalism, Free Trade and Empire: The diverse roles of John Bowring in Asia'**, Mr Philip Bowring (Eminent journalist of Asian affairs, Hong Kong), 17 February 2014
8. **'Governing Maritime Space: The South China Sea as a Mediterranean Cultural Area'**,



Prof. Dr. Hans-Dieter Evers (Eminent Visiting Professor, Institute of Asian Studies, FASS, Universiti Brunei Darussalam), 24 February 2014

9. **‘Indonesia's Tryst with Destiny: The 2014 elections and the challenges of democracy in historical perspective, 1998-2014’**, Prof Peter Carey (Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Humanities, University of Indonesia & Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College, Oxford), 10 March 2014

10. **‘Political Consequences of Policy Decisiveness in Southeast Asia’**, Dr Eric Batalla (Full professor and current chair, Political Science Department, De La Salle University, the Philippines), 17 March 2014

11. **‘Taking responsibility for employment companies that overcharge Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong’**, Dr Wayne Palmer (Senior Client Advisor, Domestic Helpers and Migrant Workers Programme, Christian Action, Hong Kong), 24 March 2014

*Note:* since October 2013, we filmed all SEARC seminars and put them on our website in order to make the centre's activities available to a broader academic community.

#### Lecture and movie screening

14 March 2014

Dr Frank Dhont, an eminent historian of Indonesian history and the chair of International Indonesia Forum, gave a lecture on “Historical Memory and Political Identity: The Exploitation of Indonesian Human Resources during the Japanese Occupation (1942-1945)” on 14 March 2014 followed by the screening of “The Act of Killing” including a discussion held by Associate Director: Dr Chiara Formichi and AIS PhD student: Novi Dayanti.

#### Cultural Festival

18-21 April 2013

The Southeast Asia Cultural Festival

Organizer: SEARC director, SEARC office and Southeast Asian Consulates in Hong Kong

Description: this cultural festival, the first of its kind at a Hong Kong university, has been made possible through funding from the internationalization fund of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLASS) of CityU, sponsorship from Cebu Pacific, and with the support from the Southeast Asian consulates in Hong Kong. The festival highlighted the diverse and fascinating cultures of Southeast Asia with a writers' forum, a cinema series, culinary delicacies, information booths about individual countries in the region, and cultural performances such as traditional dance, music, and theatrical presentations from the region. Five of the ten Consul Generals from Southeast Asia in Hong Kong attended the opening ceremony, along with CityU President Prof Way Kuo and former CLASS Dean Prof Martin Painter. The festival contributed to the internationalization at CityU and has strengthened ties between the Centre and the Southeast Asian Consulates in Hong Kong as well as with the community groups that represents Southeast Asians living in the HKSAR.

newsletter and updated web page )

#### MoUs with leading Southeast Asia Centres

SEARC actively seeks cooperation with leading Southeast Asia centres by signing MoUs with them. SEARC has signed a MoU with one of the leading centres in the region in Germany, Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Passau. SEARC director Prof Mark Thompson visited Passau in October 2013 to arrange for this cooperation. He also presented a paper on “Corruption, Reformism and Electoral Democracy in the Philippines and Thailand,” at the University of Passau on 22 October 2013.

SEARC and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University have signed an MoU in October 2013. Prof Thompson traveled to Kyoto for a Philippines studies conference and to strengthen ties between the universities in late February 2014. On 2 March 2014, Prof Thompson was an invited plenary speaker in the International Workshop on “The Philippine State, Economy, and Elite,” Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, Japan. SEARC, in consultation with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, will be invited to join the Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA) within the coming academic year.

SEARC has reactivated an MoU with the Centre of South East Asian Studies, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, in February 2014. Discussions about cooperation between SEARC and SOAS began during the visit of Dr Carol Tan, Chair, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies on 7 November 2013 when she delivered a seminar entitled “When Indonesian domestic workers sue: turning points and triggers in the journey from employment to the law.”

In the coming academic year, SEARC director is planning visits to major Southeast Asia centres in mainland China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the US (Berkeley and Stanford, which both have major Southeast Asia centres and with which SEARC has close ties with). Besides signing MoUs, possibilities of joint research and other projects explored with centres focusing on Southeast Asia are spread around the region and in such countries as Australia, Britain, Canada, mainland China, Europe, and the US.

#### Southeast Asia Consortium

As a result of efforts undertaken by SEARC director Mark Thompson and associate director, Dr Formichi, the centre will join the Southeast Asia consortium of research-oriented centres this coming academic year. As joining such networks has been a major new part of SEARC’s mission, the Centre is very pleased play a significant role in this consortium. While there has been little effort in the past to enhance cooperation between Southeast Asia centres, this consortium promises to create synergy effects on research and teaching about Southeast Asia as well as increasing awareness of the importance of the study of this region. It will help put Southeast Asian research ‘on the map’ by highlighting centres where a significant number of researchers

pursue work on Southeast Asia, where major journals are published, and where key policy makers meet. City University not only has the only Centre for Southeast Asian research in Hong Kong, it is also one of the more significant institutions for the study of this region in the world. Given its location in Hong Kong, near but not in Southeast Asia and enjoying complete academic freedom, it is ideally suited to be a 'neutral' place for Southeast Asian studies. This consortium will help put SEARC and CityU at the forefront of Southeast Asian studies, with the potential of making it one of the most high profile research areas at the university. It will also help SEARC create further networks and increase collaboration with other well-known Southeast Asian studies institutions and publishers around the world.

#### Mainland China Networking

One of SEARC's most important initiatives in terms of networking in the past academic year was to develop close ties with all major Mainland universities working on Southeast Asia:

SEARC Director, Prof Thompson, earlier visited Xiamen University, which has the leading Southeast Asia Program in China. Prof Thompson gave a talk titled "Reform as Passion: Anti-Corruption Movements in the Philippines." In January 2014 he visited two important centres for Southeast Asian Studies, both have excellent Southeast Asia studies programmes in China in January 2014 in Guangzhou. At the first, the School of Asian-Pacific Studies at Sun Yat-sen University. Prof Thompson gave a talk about politics in the Philippines and Thailand and discussed for the corporation with the centre at Sun Yat-sen. At Jinan University, he gave a talk about the current situation in Thailand and also discussed the possibility of further cooperation with that centre there which has a strong interest in contemporary Southeast Asia. MoUs are currently being arranged with both of these centres.

In the coming academic year Prof Thompson is planning to visit Kunming, Yunnan Province and to Beijing University in the coming academic year. The goals of these networks are both in terms of exchange of academic staff and possibly student exchange and MoUs, On the one hand and on the other hand, to develop forms of cooperation and possibly joint grant applications.

#### Collaboration within Hong Kong

Prof Thompson and Dr Formichi attended the opening night of the Asia Society exhibition: "No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia" on October 30, 2013. SEARC co-organized the Hong Kong island launch of its Southeast Asian Festival (April 18-21, 2013) with the Asia Society on the theme of Heritage Preservation in Southeast Asia. SEARC will continue to work more closely with the Asia society, with collaboration planned for future events. Prof Thompson attended the opening night of the 4th Philippine Film Festival on November 8, 2013. All these events were publicized on the SEARC website.

#### Collaboration in the United Kingdom

Prof Thompson was also an invited Southeast Asia scholar, "Media and Democracy: Central Eastern Europe in a Comparative Context" workshop, St Antony's College, Oxford University,

during 9-11 July 2013, which he gave a paper presentation on “Does the Watchdog need Watching? Transitional Media Systems in Southeast Asia.”

#### Collaboration in Australia

SEARC Associate Director, Dr Chiara Formichi, visited leading peer Southeast Asia research institutions in Australia in the week of 16-22 September 2013. On 17 September, Dr Chiara Formichi met Sydney University’s Southeast Asia Centre Director Assoc. Prof Michele Ford and gave a talk at the Indonesia Seminar Series, co-hosted by the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies. In Canberra she met Assoc. Prof Ariel Heryanto, Director of the Southeast Asia Institute at the Australia National University (ANU) and attended the Indonesia Update at the Crawford School of Public Policy. The outcome was an exchange of idea about furthering Southeast Asian studies cooperation between Hong Kong and Australia. In particular, Dr Formichi discussed MoU arrangements with Sydney and ANU which are currently being negotiated as well as a possible faculty exchanges coming out of this.

#### Collaboration in Southeast Asia

In this reporting period, SEARC Director Prof Thompson undertook a number of duty visits and invited presentations. Prof Thompson was an invited plenary speaker, Philippine Political Science Association 2013 International Meeting, Batac City, Philippines, on 11-12 April 2013, which he gave a paper presentation on “The Post-Marcos Presidency within ‘Political Time.’”

During September 20-21, 2013, Prof Thompson presented a paper on “‘Good Governance’ and ‘Securitizing’ Corruption,” at the Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA) conference “Rethinking Human Security in the Asian Century,” Makati, Philippines. Prof Thompson has been a Visiting Fellow at De La Salle University, Philippines for the past two years.

He was also the first invited international visiting scholar to the International Conference on International Relations and Development (ICIRD) Visiting Scholars Workshop: “Asian Values, Asian Liberalisms: Contested Political Interpretations of Culture in Southeast Asia” on 5-6 September 2013, Thammasat University, Thailand.

Prof William Case was a Visiting Professor at the University of Malaya Centre for Democracy and Elections (UMcedel), Faculty of Social Science at the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, during the summer break in 2013.

Dr Johnathan London was awarded by the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), CityU in May 2013 for a Certificate of Merit for Knowledge Transfer activities for his consultancy activities in Viet Nam.

#### Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA)

Prof Thompson who has recently been elected president of the Asian Political and International

Studies Association (APISA) for 2013-14. The 7th Congress of the APISA was held at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, from 25-26 Oct 2013. Prof Thompson gave his inaugural address and presented an overview of the organization's history and activities as well as a paper about Presidentialism in the Philippines. APISA, now in its eleventh year, is an organization dedicated to fostering the study of politics and international relations of Asia in Asia. The last APISA Congress, co-sponsored by SEARC was held at CityU and HKIEd.

#### SEARC's Network

Other SEARC core members have been continuously promoting contacts with Southeast Asia centres in their countries of interests as well as where they did graduate work earlier. It is fair to say that through active members, SEARC is one of the best networked centres for the study of the region in the world.

This is a partial list of Southeast Asia research centres with which SEARC has close contacts:

#### US

- The Southeast Asia Program (SEAP), Cornell University. Contact: Prof Tamarn Loos, Director and Prof emeritus Benedict R. Anderson
- Center for Southeast Asia Studies (CSEAS) at University of California, Berkeley. Contact: Jeffrey Hadler, Chair.
- Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), University of Michigan. Contact: Dr Christi-Anne Castro, Director
- Council on Southeast Asia Studies (CSEAS), Yale University. Contact: Dr Ben Kiernan, Council Chair
- Southeast Asia Forum, Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center (Shorenstein APARC), Stanford University. Contact: Donald K. Emmerson, Director and Program Coordinator
- The Centre for Southeast Asian Studies at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Contact: Prof Patricio Abinales.
- Center for Asian Research at Arizona State University. Contact: Prof James Rush, Acting Director.

#### UK

- The Centre of South East Asian Studies, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Contact: Dr Carol Tan, former Centre Chair.
- East Asian Studies, University of Leeds. Contact: Professor Claire Honess, Head of School

#### Australia

- Sydney Southeast Asia Centre, University of Sydney. Contact: Associate Prof Michele Ford, Director.
- The Island Southeast Asia Center at Australian National University and Mainland Southeast Asia Center at Australian National University. Contact: Prof Paul Hutchcroft, Director, School of International, Political, and Strategic Studies and Member of SEARC's International Advisory Committee
- Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University. Contact: Prof Kevin Hewison (former SEARC

director)

- Centre of Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Monash University. Contact: Prof. Greg Barton, Director CSEAS, and Research Prof Herb Feith for the Study of Indonesia in the Faculty of Arts at Monash.

#### Germany

- Southeast Asian Studies, University of Passau. Contact: Prof. Dr. Rüdiger Korff
- Southeast Asian History and Society, Humboldt University. Contact: Prof. Dr. phil. Vincent Houben
- German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Institute for Asian Studies (state-linked). Contacts: Dr. Patrick Koellner, Director, GIGA Institute for Asian Studies and Prof. Andreas Ufen, Research Fellow, GIGA Institute for Asian Studies.
- Southeast Asian Studies, Freiburg University. Contact: Prof Juergen Rueland.

#### Japan

- Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University. Contact: Prof Caroline Hau.

#### South Korea

- KISEAS: Korean Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (state-linked). Contact: Dr. Hong-gu Kim, Director.

#### China

- School of Asian-Pacific Studies, Sun Yat-sen University. Contact: Prof Yu Changsen, Director.
- Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Jinan University. Contact: Prof Li Wannan
- Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Xiamen University. Contact: Prof Guotu Zhuang, Centre Director.
- Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Peking University. Contact: Prof Bao Maohong, Director.

#### Singapore

- Department of Southeast Asian Studies, National University of Singapore. Contact: Dr Goh Beng Lan, Head of Department and Associate Professor.
- Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (government-linked). Contact: Dr Ooi Kee Beng, Deputy Director.
- Asia Research Institute (ARI), the National University of Singapore. Contact: Prof. Prasenjit Duara, Director.
- Indonesia Programme, Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University. Contact: Associate Prof Leonard Sebastian, Programme Coordinator.

#### The Philippines

- Political Science Department and Third World Studies Center (TWSC), University of the Philippines. Contact: Prof Francisco Nemenzo (former president of the university)
- International Studies and Political Science Department, De La Salle University, the Philippines. Contacts: Prof Francisco Magno, Institute Director, and Prof Julio C. Teehankee, Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Chair, International Studies Department.

#### Indonesia

- Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies (CESASS), Universitas Gadjah Madah. Contact: Muhadi Sugiono, Director.
- International Relations Department, Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas

Indonesia. Contact: Dr Evi Fitriani, Head.

- Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University. Contacts: Kiky Rizky, M. Sc.. Head, Department of International Relations and Arisman, M. Sc., Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Social and Political Science

#### Malaysia

- Monash University in Malaysia, School of Arts and Social Sciences, Project Southeast Asia. Contact: Dr Marco Buente, School of Arts and Social Sciences.

- The University of Nottingham, Malaysia Campus, Faculty of Social Sciences. Contact: Prof Michael Connors.

#### Vietnam

- Institute for Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, (under the aegis of the Vietnamese Government). Contacts: Dr Nguyễn Duy Dũng, Director and Dr Nguyễn Huy Hoàng, Vice Director

#### Thailand

- Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS), Payap University. Contact: Dr Paul Chambers

- Faculty of Political Science, International Relations (Southeast Asia), Thammasat University. Contact: Dr Chanintira Na Thalang and Dr Michelle Tan.

#### Denmark

- Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), University of Copenhagen. Contact: Dr Geir Helgesen, Director.

#### Brunei

- Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam. Contact: Dr. Rommel A. Curaming, Coordinator.

#### Publicity

We revamped the SEARC website in September 2013. We started the SEARC blog (<http://searc-blog.blogspot.com>) in November 2013 which provides one of the most comprehensive listings of recent publications regarding Southeast Asia studies as well as tracking and publicizing recent research by SEARC members and providing information about events and recent news matters regarding Southeast Asia.

To further publicize the centre and its activities, we designed and published a SEARC brochure in January 2014 to introduce SEARC to participants of SEARC seminars and other interested parties.

#### 4.4 Applied work undertaken (patents, consultancy work and professional collaboration, etc.)

SEARC Director, Prof Thompson is the member of the following journal editorial boards: *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, *Southeast Asia-European Journal of Law and Governance*, *Kasarinlan: Philippine Journal of Third World Studies* and *Philippine Political Science Journal (PPSJ)*. Prof Thompson is the President, the Asian Political

and International Studies Association (APISA) in 2013-14 and a member of the Executive Board of APISA since 2011. He is the co-editor Routledge/City University of Hong Kong Southeast Asia Series since 2011. He is also the member of the Academic Advisory Board (Southeast Asia), German Academy of Sciences (DGA) since 2012.

Prof William Case, SEARC former director is an editorial board member of *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* (De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines), *Philippine Political Science Journal* (PPSJ), (Philippines Political Science Association), *Journal of Asian Politics and History* (JAPH), (Asian Politics and History Association/Clarewood Asia Foundation). He is also the Advisory board member, *East Asia: An International Quarterly* (Springer/University of Durham). He is the elected President of Asian Politics and History Association (Asian Politics and History Association/Clarewood Asia Foundation), 2012-13. He has been the co-editor, Routledge/City University of Hong Kong Southeast Asian Series (London: Routledge) since 2006. He is member of the following association: Association of Asian Studies (AAS), Comparative Democratization Section Best Book Prize Committee, American Political Science Association, and American Political Science Association (APSA). Prof Case is the referee of the *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion, and Policy*, *Philippine Political Science Journal* and *Pacific Review*. He is also the reader of Palgrave Macmillan, East Asia, and International Political Science Review.

SEARC member and Associate Professor/Associate Head of AIS, Dr Justin Robertson ran two seminar series open to the university and the wider Hong Kong community. The first series is entitled "Is the Global Economic Crisis Really Over?" and Michael Pettis delivered the sixth part of the series in October 2012, a provocative talk on China's debt issues to an audience of over 60. The second series, ran in conjunction with the Royal Geographical Society, brought the natural world and issues related to the global environment closer to the students as well as the larger Hong Kong public. The two public lectures in 2012-2013 by BBC presenters and documentary film-makers attracted nearly 200 students.

Dr Johnathan London participated in the United Nations Development Program, Project on Governance of Essential Services in Vietnam in January 2014. He has two featured interviews (in Vietnamese): Radio France International about research article on the Political Economy of Development in China and Vietnam ("Chính sách phát triển kinh tế của Trung Quốc và Việt Nam") and Radio France International G.s J.London: Vietnam must embrace political reform to win international support for maritime disputes." ("Việt Nam phải cải cách chính trị để được quốc tế ủng hộ về Biển Đông"). Dr London was also quoted in U.S.-Vietnam Naval Exercises Begin Amid Sea Tensions, Bloomberg-Apr 8, 2014 as well as quoted in Thanh Nien News, "Vietnam's young leaders climbing atop successful localities" March 31, 2014. On top of these, Dr London provides editorial services for *Social Sciences and Medicine*, *Journal of Vietnamese Studies* and *The Journal of Contemporary Asia*.



Dr Toby Carroll is the Conceiver and Co-editor (with Darryl Jarvis and M. Ramesh) of the Palgrave book series, *Studies in the Political economy of Public Policy*. He is the editor of *Asian Studies Review* (political economy and international politics), published by Taylor and Francis, listed in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) and the Arts and Humanities Citation Index. He was also the Conceiver and lead researcher for the New Approaches to Building Markets in Asia research project. The project involved two grants, three workshops and around 50 academics from around the globe. It included a working paper series (approximately 50 papers), 4 special issues of journals (two published, a third accepted, a fourth under contract) and 1 edited volume (in press). The project also included a seminar series.

Prof Joseph Cheng is the Honorary Advisor of the School of International Relations, the National University of Costa Rica. He is also the Advisor of the Centre for Asian Studies, Chu Hai College. He is on the Advisory (Editorial) Boards of the following journals: *Asian Studies Review*, *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, *Asian Pacific Law Review* and *Asian Studies (in Chinese)*.

Dr Yuk Wah Chan is on the Editorial Board, *Asian Borderlands Book Series*, Amsterdam University Press. She is also one of the Board of Advisers, North American Taiwan Studies Association. In December 2013, she was a Visiting Scholar in the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing, an eminent scholar of contemporary Myanmar, a former Associate Director of SEARC, Assistant Professor of AIS, and now Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar at SEARC is now engaging in peace promotion (as head of a leading peace centre and educator who is planning to found a social science faculty in Myanmar). We are honoured he is interested to establish close ties with SEARC and CityU as Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar. He will give regular SEARC seminars, co-organize conferences with us and search for ways to find joint external funding and consult with SEARC members about cooperation, and explore possible joint research grants with us.

Dr Wong Pak-nung Bryan is the Editor-in-Chief, *Bandung: Journal of the Global South* and Deputy Chief Editor of *Indonesia Focus*.

## **5. Critical self-evaluation of the work of the Centre during the reporting period**

### **5.1 Summary of achievements**

*(Please give an account of the achievements of the Centre during the reporting period, including evidence of the added value of the Centre and highlight the three top achievements with emphasis on their impact)*

#### Conference and Workshop

### Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas

The conference was co-hosted by the Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC), the Department of Asian and International Studies (AIS) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 6-7 September 2013 which brought together leading scholars to discuss Asian migration along many different dimensions. City University of Hong Kong President Prof Way Kuo attended the Opening Ceremony. Closing remarks were made by Prof Arthur Ellis (CityU Provost) and Ambassador William Swing (IOM Director General). The conference illustrates not only SEARC's high profile as a center for the study of migration (SEARC will host another major international conference on the topic in December 2014), it also demonstrated SEARC's ability to collaborate with a major international organization, the International Organization for Migration.

### The Role of Southeast and South Asian Migrants' Religions in Hong Kong

A one-day workshop on the state of current research and future directions

This round-table workshop held on 27 April 2013 brought together a small group of academics interested in researching areas of overlap between migration and religion in Hong Kong. It generated a discussion on the state of current research in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology, studies of religion, education, social work etc. The workshop addressed the question of whether and how the religious culture of migrants influenced patterns of religion in Hong Kong, and vice-versa.

### Seminars and Working papers

SEARC hosted 11 research seminars over the past 12 months by prominent speakers from major universities, think tanks, and policy organizations from the Australia, UK, Japan, Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, and Hong Kong as well as published eight working papers making SEARC one of the most productive Southeast Asia centres for the discussion and dissemination of cutting edge research in the field of Southeast Asian studies.

### The Southeast Asia Cultural Festival

This cultural festival, the first of its kind at a Hong Kong university, has been made possible through funding from the internationalization fund of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLASS) of CityU, sponsorship from Cebu Pacific, and with the support from the Southeast Asian consulates in Hong Kong. The festival highlighted the diverse and fascinating cultures of Southeast Asia with a writers' forum, a cinema series, culinary delicacies, information booths about individual countries in the region, and cultural performances such as traditional dance, music, and theatrical presentations from the region. Five of the ten Consul Generals from Southeast Asia in Hong Kong attended the opening ceremony, along with CityU President Prof Way Kuo and former CLASS Dean Prof Martin Painter. The festival contributes to the internationalization at CityU and has strengthened ties between the Centre and the Southeast Asian Consulates in Hong Kong as well as with the community groups represents Southeast Asians living in the HKSAR.

### SEARC Research Achievement

SEARC has become one of the major research centre for the studies of Southeast Asia in the world. All SEARC members are research active. The appendix indicates the extent of their publications. SEARC Core members published two books, six edited books, 21 articles in journals (including 11 in SSCI journals), and 23 chapters in edited volumes making it one of the most research-active centres on Southeast Asian studies anywhere in the world.

Here are just a few of the research achievement can be highlighted:

#### Studies of Comparative Democratization in Southeast Asia

Prof William Case, former Director of SEARC and Prof Mark Thompson, current Director of SEARC, received a major GRF grant of HK\$ 853,920.00: “Democracy and its Discontents in Southeast Asia” for the study of Comparative Democratization in Southeast Asia in 2013. This grant comes in recognition of the fact that Prof Case and Prof Thompson have established themselves as two of the leading scholars in the world in the study of democratization in Southeast Asia. Both continue to publish extensively on this topic as indicated in the appendix. Moreover, Prof Case is the editor of the prestigious *Routledge Handbook of Democracy in Southeast Asia*. This volume brings together all of the major scholars working on this field in the world and positioned SEARC as the place in which major research is conducted and major scholars brought together in this field.

#### The Political Economy of Southeast Asia and Beyond

Prof Paul Cammack, a core member of SEARC, received a prestigious GRF grant in 2012 which continued through 2015 entitled: “Regional Organizations and Responses to the Global Financial Crisis in Africa, South America and Southeast Asia” for the amount of HK\$ 477,654.00. Prof Cammack, widely recognized as one of the leading scholars of political economy in the world, has made substantial progress in his research which has a major focus on Southeast Asia. Prof Cammack has published a series of working papers in 2013 that provided update of his current research (The Asian Development Bank and the Asian Financial Crisis: Openness and Inclusion, 1997-2000; The Asian Development Bank between the Crises: Pursuit of Competitiveness, 2001-2007; The Asian Development Bank and the Global Financial Crisis: Asian Global Leadership, 2008-2012)

[http://www.cityu.edu.hk/searc/Publications\\_SEARCWorkingPapers.aspx?year=2012](http://www.cityu.edu.hk/searc/Publications_SEARCWorkingPapers.aspx?year=2012)

Through this publicity of his research on the SEARC website, Prof Cammack has added SEARC visibility and its vital issue on financial crisis in Southeast Asia and beyond.

#### Asian Diseases in International Affairs

Dr Nicholas Thomas, a core member of SEARC, has received a prestigious GRF grant in July 2013 with the project titled: “Asian Diseases in International Affairs” for the amount of HK \$959,800.00. Dr Thomas is widely recognized as one of the leading authorities on this issue. His research has a strong emphasis on Southeast Asia. During this reporting period, he has published a related article concerning food security in a SSCI journal. His research continues to be a vital importance in this field.

### Religious Minorities in Asia: Assessing Legal and Social Approaches to Diversity

Dr Chiara Formichi, Associate Director of SEARC, has received a General Research Fund on Early-Career Scheme, “Religious Minorities in Asia: Assessing Legal and Social Approaches to Diversity” for the amount of HK \$233,450.00. Dr Formichi, widely recognized as a leading authority on religion in Southeast Asia, published a major book on the topic in 2013 entitled *Demystifying the caliphate: historical memory and contemporary contexts*, published by Hurst Publishers and Columbia University Press. Her research grant explores another aspect of religion in Southeast Asia namely “Religious Minorities in Asia: Assessing Legal and Social Approaches to Diversity”. Dr Formichi’s research demonstrated the breadth of the interest of SEARC core members in understanding religion in this very diverse region particularly the role of Islam is a vital importance for scholars working in this region and also for those interested in cultural issues. Dr Formichi, who has been conducting research on this topic, promises to make further significant contribution in this field.

SEARC, in the person of its former associate director, Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing, SEARC is actively involved in Myanmar’s current political transition. Dr Kyaw is the Director of the Myanmar Peace Centre, the Secretary to the Commission of Inquiry for Sectarian Violence, and advises the country’s president Thein Sein as the Director of the National and Social Advisory Council while at the same time helping to run a NGO, Myanmar Egress, of which he is co-founder in its peace and higher education initiatives.

SEARC has also held a number of other events, including public forums, debates, and discussions with business leaders, NGO activists, policy makers and journalists. Through these events, SEARC has been able to advance some of the aims specified by CityU in its Strategic Plan: stimulating academic exchanges; developing links between research and the classroom setting; fostering ties to the business community; and reaching out to the Hong Kong’s social activists and interested community members. Among the research centres at CityU, SEARC is uniquely positioned to perform this role. It is the only unit in the university which, in focusing on political, economic, and social issues in contemporary Southeast Asia, as well as the region’s ties to China, is able to engage international academics and the Hong Kong community through its regular schedule of seminars, conferences and public events.

### Media commentary

SEARC is the only research centre in Hong Kong with members able to comment authoritatively on a wide range of contemporary issues in Southeast Asia for the benefit of the Hong Kong community (in this reporting period issues commented upon included the killing of Hong Kong hostages in Manila, the missing Malaysia airliner, the political conflict in Thailand, elections in Indonesia and Malaysia, and the regime crackdown and leadership conflict in Vietnam). Below are some examples of the regularly commentary SEARC members continued to provide to the Hong Kong and foreign media. :

- Prof Mark Thompson, SEARC Director, is a regular commentator about Southeast Asia on Voice of America, RTHK (Hong Kong) television and radio, and CNBC (Hong Kong), where he has commented on the killing of Hong Kong hostages in Manila, among other issues. He commented on the ongoing Thailand protests on the RTHK TV show ‘The Pulse’ on 29 November 2013. He published “Thai Democrats’ Hypocrisy,” *South China Morning Post*, 17 January 2014. He has also been selected as a regular commentator on Southeast Asia Affairs for the *New Straits Times* (Singapore). He was interviewed by the Voice of America on 10 December 2013 about the current political crisis in Thailand, on 13 January 2014, and on 19 March 2014 about the missing Malaysia Airlines plane.
- Prof William Case, former SEARC director and core member, appeared on RTHK radio’s ‘Backchat’ programme on 7 May 2013 about Malaysia’s 13th general election and on 3 December 2013 about anti-government demonstrations in Thailand. He also appeared on the same programme on 17 March 2014 debating the issue ‘What’s Wrong with Western Style Democracy.’ He was interviewed by a local Chinese newspaper, *Ming Pao*, about the Malaysian 13<sup>th</sup> general election on three consecutive days: 5, 6 & 7 May 2013. Prof Case was also interviewed by *Malaysiakini*, ‘Pakatan not Likely to Win, Malay Support Lukewarm’, on 5 May 2013, at <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/229197>. The Voice of America (VOA) had a radio interview with Prof Case on “Malaysia’s 13th general election” on 6 May 2013.
- Dr Jonathan London, a SEARC core member, commented on BBC News Asia on Vietnam's bloggers challenging one party rule on 20 August 2013. He also commented in the SCMP on Vietnam politics on 15 May 2013, 11 September 2013 and 15 September 2013. He also recently commented on a new era in Vietnamese politics in *Cogitasia* on 9 January 2014 and commented on “What kind of a neighbour is China?” in BBC World Have Your Say on 27 January 2014. Here are some featured interviews in English and Vietnamese by Dr London: “What if social media were censored (in Viet Nam).” RN Drive. Radio National Australia. 2 September 2013; interview with Jonathan London on political situation in Viet Nam. Aired 4 September 9 2013; RFI English service. “Confidence vote blow to Vietnamese PM.” Radio France International (English service).
- Dr Wong Pak Nung Byran was interviewed by Radio Television Hong Kong for a special programme on Myanmar President Thein Sein’s Visit to Washington D.C. and Its Implications for Future Sino-US Geostrategic Deployment, 24 May 2013 (broadcasted on 25 May 2013). Dr Wong was frequently interviewed by local media about his comments on various political issues like the Manila Hostage Crisis Aftermaths, Hong Kong-Philippines relations and the APEC summit in Bali (Indonesia), and Hong Kong – Philippines relations. He was frequently interviewed by different local media about his view on the current Thai political situation in 2013 and 2014.
- Former SEARC associate director, Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing who is now Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar at the centre is, as mentioned above, now one of the major players in Myanmar’s political transition (both as peace negotiator and as presidential advisory). He now hosts his own popular TV programme on the country’s political transition in Myanmar and is regularly quoted in the international press.

Indeed,

## 5.2 Self-evaluation

*(Please provide an evaluation of the Centre's work with respect to e.g. meeting Centre objectives, effort in identifying/targeting Government or other sizable external funding initiatives, and in mapping/teaming faculties to areas of the identified initiatives to prepare for bidding these funds, collaboration among members/research teams, added value of Centre support, impact of Centre's work, uniqueness, competitive edge, visibility and reputation, ability to attract people and resource etc)*

### Evaluation of the Centre / SKL's work in meeting its objectives and international excellence

Given its geography, economic interests, social composition, political autonomy and academic freedom, Hong Kong is an ideal place to study Southeast Asia. The Southeast Asia Research Centre (SEARC) of the City University of Hong Kong is the *only* research centre focused on Southeast Asia in Hong Kong. In a little more than a decade, SEARC has established a strong international reputation for the study of political, economic, education, cultural and social issues in contemporary Southeast Asia.

The last three and a half years have seen SEARC revitalized and, assuming it continues to receive essential funding from the university, is well positioned to further enhance its reputation as a leader in the study of Southeast Asia worldwide. It is important to note that *no* major Southeast Asia research centre in the world (including those located at Cornell University, the University of London, Kyoto, and National University Singapore) are self-funding. *All* receive basic financing from their respective institutions (please refer to the appendix: World's Leading Southeast Asia Study Centres). To remain viable and competitive in this exclusive "club" of Southeast Asian institutes (which is, in turn of benefit to CityU as it is the only university in Hong Kong with a Southeast Asia centre), SEARC needs basic university funding while it at the same time it continues to seek competitive external grants, to collaborate with major international organizations, and to work closely with Hong Kong-based organizations. SEARC's strong international reputation is an important contribution to CityU's commitment to internationalization. This is of particular importance at this juncture when the centre is expanding and reaching out – regularly international visitors and short-term visiting fellows are and will continue to be a key component of further raising the profile of the Centre, as discussed more below.

SEARC is engaged in concerted efforts to secure matching funding for all its major conferences, meetings, workshops and other such research activities. External donors such as the Konrad Adenauer Foundation have co-financed several of SEARC's recent conferences on Myanmar's political transition. SEARC co-hosted an international conference, Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas with the Department of Asian and International Studies (AIS) and the

International Organization for Migration (IOM) on 6-7 September 2013 which brought together leading scholars to discuss Asian migration along many different dimensions. SEARC will also host a major conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN) - based at the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, the Netherlands at CityU on 8-10 December 2014 which over 80 scholars from 25 different countries are planning to attend. On the other hand, SEARC has sought partners in Hong Kong, such as the Asia Society (with which it co-organized the Hong Kong launch of the Southeast Asian Cultural Festival in April 2013 and in which participated in a recent major exhibition of Southeast Asian painters) and the ten Southeast Asian consulates in Hong Kong (they were partners in SEARC's Southeast Asian Cultural Festival in April 2013). SEARC members have also collaborated on organizing lectures of interest to the Hong Kong community with the Royal Geographic Society. Through such joint funding or "joint ventures," SEARC is able to both strengthen its contacts abroad (as well as in Hong Kong itself) while at the same time able to do more as it uses matching funding for most of its major events. This innovative funding model is well suited to SEARC's efforts to make it one of the most high profile centres for the study of Southeast Asia.

Moreover, SEARC will seek funding from the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC) for a policy-oriented conference and/or a policy-oriented research grant.

City University has large number of scholars with a research focus on Southeast Asia, almost all of whom have now joined SEARC. The Centre has also developed excellent contacts with other scholars and authors in Hong Kong and beyond working in this field as affiliated member and has a very distinguished international membership. With strong research output of its members discussed above, regular seminars given by some of the world's top Southeast Asianists, and regular international conferences, its mission is to provide a forum where cutting edge research on this important region can be conducted.

Having actively networked with other major centres of Southeast Asia studies around the world (just to mention a few of the more important in Cornell University, Stanford University, University of California Berkeley, University of London, Kyoto University, Xiamen University, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore as well as many others in the region itself), SEARC, in consultation with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, will soon join the Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA), an important network for cooperation among centres focuses on this region within Asia.

All such events serve SEARC's core objective, that is, to advance its international standing and CityU's reputation by researching political, economic, and social developments in contemporary Southeast Asia. Further, in compliance with CityU's Strategic Plan, these undertakings were deeply cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary in character.

SEARC also maintained its heavy schedule of academic seminars and public events. The costs associated with hosting these events is low, as SEARC is able to use university facilities. But

these events make strong contributions toward CityU's goals of knowledge creation and transfer to the university's students and the broader Hong Kong community. SEARC members also published an impressive amount during this period, with two books, six edited books, 21 articles in journals, including 11 in SSCI journals, and 23 chapters in edited volumes. A number of these publications were the direct result of previous SEARC conferences and seminars. A stream of further publications can be expected based in large part on the papers that came out of SEARC conferences/workshops and seminars, like the forthcoming book as a result of the conference on Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas. Other core members of SEARC won grants during the year while several new grant applications have been made which promised more research outputs. SEARC has undoubtedly become one of the most research active centres for the study of contemporary Southeast Asian politics and society in the world. Given very limited resources, SEARC performance in this time period must be evaluated as excellent.

SEARC reaches out to the CityU community and communicates to a larger Hong Kong audience. This is in follow up to the Southeast Asian Cultural Festival in April 2013 in which SEARC reached out to Hong Kong people interested in Southeast Asia and the Southeast Asian community in Hong Kong. In follow up to that, we have been working closely with others on cultural events, such as the Asia Society, the Royal Geographic Society and various Southeast Asian consulates. Our vision is to be an open research institute providing information through seminars, conferences, cultural events, and media outreach. Our research seminars are often very topical with themes such as the recent Malaysian elections and or the Philippine typhoon. Other events, such as the Southeast Asian Cultural festival, appeals directly to a wider audience. Moreover, we have a website and a blog which helps people interested in Southeast Asia to learn more about the region.

Evaluation on the participation / support of members in Centre / SKL's activities / group projects.

#### Conferences and workshop

As discussed in more detail above, SEARC has co-hosted a major international conference to discuss Asian migration along many different dimensions which there was nearly 70 participants (Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas, 6-7 September 2013). SEARC also held a one-day workshop on the state of current research and future directions of the Role of Southeast and South Asian Migrants' Religions in Hong Kong on 27 April 2013.

#### Regular SEARC seminars

Well attended by a broad range of SEARC core members, SEARC affiliates, CityU faculty and students as well as several from other universities, and interested people from Hong Kong (like staff members from Medecins Sans Frontieres and staff members from Southeast Asian Consulates in HKSAR), these seminars addressed a wide range of issues – political, economic, social, cultural – focused on different Southeast Asian countries with the papers presented quickly available online both as videotapes of the talks and as Working Papers. These seminars have become a well-known outlet for the cutting edge on research, energizing members of SEARC and



other faculty at CityU.

### Reaching out to the Hong Kong Community

SEARC seminars and conferences draw a large number of participants outside of the university on issues relevant to current debates in Hong Kong. *Indeed, SEARC is the only source of serious academic information on Southeast Asia in Hong Kong* and its members' and invited speakers/conference participants'/research fellows' ability to comment authoritatively upon developments in Southeast Asia for the benefit of the Hong Kong community. SEARC has sought to engage Hong Kong citizens, especially civil society organizations, through open forums and media engagement, enhancing the study of Southeast Asia in Hong Kong and to increase understanding of the region within CityU and the Hong Kong communities.

Southeast Asia Cultural Festival: held on 18-21 April 2013 was the first of its kind at a Hong Kong university, has been made possible through funding from the internationalization fund of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLASS) of CityU, sponsorship from Cebu Pacific, and with support from the Southeast Asian consulates in Hong Kong. The festival highlighted the diverse and fascinating cultures of Southeast Asia with a writers' forum, a cinema series, culinary delicacies, information booths about individual countries in the region, and cultural performances such as traditional dance, music, and theatrical presentations from the region. The festival had both a CityU and Hong Kong island opening ceremony. The Hong Kong kickoff was held in collaboration with the Asia Society and featured the theme of Heritage Preservation in Southeast Asia. Eight of the ten Consul Generals from Southeast Asia in Hong Kong attended the opening ceremony at CityU, along with CityU President Prof Way Kuo and former CLASS Dean Prof Martin Painter. The festival contributed to the internationalization at CityU and has strengthened ties between the Centre and the Southeast Asian Consulates in Hong Kong as well as with the community groups represents Southeast Asians living in the HKSAR.

Dr Justin Robertson ran a lecture series on the topic "Is the Global Economic Crisis Really Over?" together with the Royal Geographical Society.

SEARC has recently been invited by the Philippine Consulate General to co-host a Lecture Series on Philippine Culture and Heritage in September 2014 which is to be held at CityU.

#### • SEARC's Working Group on Indonesia

formed in late 2011, this group, focused on the most populous country in Southeast Asia which also has the largest Muslim population in the world, brings together scholars working primarily on Indonesia (Drs Chiara Formichi and Nankyung Choi) with those with a strong interest in the country from a comparative perspective (Profs Paul Cammack, William Case and Mark Thompson, among others). In meetings held at regular intervals, the group discusses key articles or issues relating to Indonesia. Several SEARC research seminars have been the result of this group's initiative. Dr Frank Dhont, an eminent historian of Indonesian history and the chair of International Indonesia Forum, gave a lecture on "Historical Memory and Political Identity: The Exploitation of Indonesian Human Resources during the Japanese Occupation (1942-1945)" on 14 March 2014 followed by the screening of "The Act of Killing" including a discussion held by Associate Director: Dr Chiara Formichi and AIS PhD student: Novi Dayanti was an example of

the working group's effort.

- Publications

As the number of books, articles (including a number in SSCI journals), book chapters and other outlets indicates, SEARC members have been very productive in terms of research. Dr Federico Ferrara's manuscript "Thailand's Unfinished National Revolution: Kings, Coups, and Constitutions Since 1932" was accepted by Cambridge University Press for publication in late 2014. In addition, SEARC members published two books, six edited books, 21 articles in journals, including 11 in SSCI journals, and 23 chapters in edited volumes. They also publish numerous working papers, newspaper opinion pieces and other publications. More generally though, SEARC has promoted a conducive environment on Southeast Asian studies with its conferences, seminars, working groups, and Working Papers series as well as informal discussions and collaboration among members. Many scholars who work on Southeast Asia often feel "isolated" in their research. Thanks to SEARC, there is a strong collaborative research environment for this field at CityU.

- Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA).

SEARC, in consultation with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, will join SEASIA within the coming academic year. It is the culmination of SEARC members having reached out to their colleagues in Southeast Asia, Australia, Britain, Canada, China, German, South Korea, the U.S. and elsewhere. It speaks to the international orientation of SEARC that by merely pooling the already existing contacts and working relationships individual members have with other major Southeast Asia study centres around the world, the nucleus of such a spot in the consortium could be secured in a short period of time since this networking initiative will be systematically pursued.

#### Evaluation of the Centre / SKL's visibility and reputation

- SEARC is a medium-sized research Centre. With a core membership approaching 30, it is about the same size as Cornell's Southeast Asia centre, but smaller than Kyoto's which has 73 members; SEARC is larger than the Centre of South East Asian Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London which has 14 and Center for Southeast Asia Studies, University of California which has 11. However, SEARC is much smaller than some of the largest centres which are the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) and the Asia Research Institute (ARI) in Singapore (with up to 100 scholars and visiting fellows each).
- SEARC is not as broad as some other internationally famous Southeast Asia centres in terms of research orientation which are stronger in cultural studies and language training. That said, SEARC profits from its emphasis on current Southeast Asian affairs which makes it a "go to" place for those interested in current developments, not just in the academic world, but also the media, business, and political consultancy. This makes SEARC well-placed in Hong Kong to help

guide understanding of political changes in Southeast Asia countries such as Myanmar where current changes are bringing about considerable interest in the business community and the media.

- SEARC's research out 'per capita' is strong compared to most of these major Southeast Asia research centres. All SEARC core members are research active and many of them are leaders in their field.
- SEARC is probably the *least well-funded* of any of these major international centres mentioned. Strongly supported by the university when founded in 2001, funding dried up by the mid-2000s. SEARC was again funded by the university two years ago for the first time in several years. In order to remain competitive and continue to raise its profile in this exclusive league of Southeast Asian centres, SEARC must continue to receive regular university funding.

That SEARC's international reputation is very strong was confirmed during its last external review conducted in March 2011 by the CLASS Audit Review 2011 Exercise. SEARC was assessed very positively, confirming its standing as a world-class research centre that enhances the academic reputation of CityU. SEARC's research and other activities are comparable to other leading centres of Southeast Asian studies with which it has close cooperation. SEARC, in consultation with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, will be invited to join the Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA) within the coming academic year. A few tentative observations can be made at this point however (with the relevant institutions being Southeast Asia centres at Cornell University, Stanford University, University of California Berkeley, University of London, the Australian National University, the University of Sydney, Kyoto University, Xiamen University, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) in Singapore) as well as many others in the region itself.

- One of SEARC's weaknesses is the lack of high profile visiting fellows on a regular basis. The last high profile long-term visitor was Prof Robert H. Taylor, a famous historian of Myanmar, who was at CityU 2009-2011. Since then, due to its limited budget, SEARC has not been able to attract young promising scholars or more established ones (several offers were made but were declined due to high living costs in Hong Kong, indicating the research fellowships need to be remunerated better in future offers.) Short of a major funding increase, the SEARC leadership has thus decided to focus on attracting high profile short-term visiting fellows. Dr Frank Dhont, an eminent Indonesian historian who was a visitor to SEARC March 2014 is the first of hopefully many such distinguished short-term visitors.
- The research productivity of SEARC members has been discussed in detail above. This strong reputation for scholarly output has also been enhanced by its regular production of special issues and articles in international journals, as well its publication through the RoutledgeCurzon/City University of Hong Kong Southeast Asia Studies book series. These books have sold well, been favourably reviewed, and have attracted expressions of continuing support

from the publishers.

- SEARC researchers have continued to receive invitations to present their research internationally at workshops and on conference panels, observe elections overseas, and provide media commentary to local and international outlets as detailed in part 5.1 above.
- SEARC researchers have also been active in applying for external funds. As of this writing, SEARC members have applied for several GRF grants and other sources of external funding.

SEARC is regularly approached by new and established scholars who, attracted by the centre's reputation, seek an institutional base during sabbatical and other periods of research leave. During 2013-14, SEARC hosted two international scholars and one short-term visitor:

- Ms Luna Iacopini (March – May 2013), a post-doctoral student from University of Geneva. She was visiting SEARC to continue the research she had begun with her PhD dissertation “The choice of university and its implications on the attainment of employment in Hanoi.” She presented a SEARC seminar in March 2013 on this topic.
- Dr Kyaw Yin Hlaing (April 2013 – March 2014), Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar, a board member of Myanmar Peace Centre the Director of Myanmar Egress. He is the former Associate SEARC Director. Dr Kyaw's efforts as one of the board member of the Myanmar Peace Centre have been central to the current peace negotiations in Myanmar in which this organization plays a leading role as has his role as the Secretary to the Commission of Inquiry for Sectarian Violence. In addition, Dr Kyaw is advising the current government as the Director of the National and Social Advisory Council. The NGO of which he is one of the founders and key members, Myanmar Egress, has been heavily involved in peace negotiations as well as initiatives to improve higher education in Myanmar, an issue which Dr Kyaw will step up his involvement in the near future. SEARC wishes to thank its former associate director for his important contributions to Myanmar and SEARC at this crucial juncture in its history. As perhaps the foremost authority of current Myanmar politics with an extensive publication list, he has also organized two recent major conferences on the political transition in Myanmar through SEARC.

Short-term visitor:

- Dr Frank Dhont (March 2014), an eminent historian of Indonesian history and the chair of International Indonesia Forum gave a lecture on “Historical Memory and Political Identity: The Exploitation of Indonesian Human Resources during the Japanese Occupation (1942-1945)” which allow in depth study of Indonesian history to researchers on Southeast Asia. He helped us to establish contact with a famous university, Gajah Mada University, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

In 2014-15, SEARC plans to host four international scholars as visitors and up to four short-term

visitors:

1. Dr Wayne Palmer (March 2014 – February 2015), he is the Senior Client Advisor at the Christian Action – Domestic Helpers and Migrant Workers Programme.
2. Dr Jason Lim (May 2014 – June 2014), Lecturer in Asian History & Acting Convener (History Program), School of Humanities & Social Inquiry, Faculty of Law, Humanities & the Arts, University of Wollongong, Australia.
3. Mr Agus Haryanto (August 2014 – November 2014), Lecturer in Jenderal Soedirman University, Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia.
4. Dr Kelly Gerard (November 2014 – February 2015), Assistant Professor in Political Science and International Relations, School of Social Sciences, The University of Western Australia.

Short-term visitor:

Dr Chiara Formichi (December 2014). Dr Formichi is leaving City University for Cornell this summer. SEARC sees this as recognition of the quality of research of its current Associate Director. Dr Formichi's move also presents an opportunity to strengthen ties between SEARC and Southeast Asian studies at Cornell, one of the leading centres for the region in the world. Dr Formich will become Assistant Professor at the Asian Studies Department, and core faculty member at the South East Asia Program at Cornell University. Her visit in December 2014 is already being arranged in order to work towards a MoU between the two centres and arrange a conference/workshop and/or joint research project between members of the two centres.

As mentioned above, SEARC does not currently have sufficient funds to advertise a position for a long-term research fellowship which pays a competitive enough salary to attract a top scholar in the field as is common at many other Southeast Asian centres at institutes/centres of Southeast Asian studies. Instead, discussions are in progress with several leading scholars of Southeast Asia to come to SEARC as short-term visitors 2014-15.

As mentioned above, Dr Kyaw, after leaving CityU, has agreed to remain an Occasional Visiting Distinguished Scholar at SEARC for a year to help SEARC maintain its high profile in the study of the country's transitions.

Finally, SEARC researchers are regularly sought out by the local and international media to comment on political and social events in Southeast Asia. Their interviews and op-ed pieces have generated an impressive amount of local, regional, and international publicity. The range of print media outlets includes: Asian Wall Street Journal, Bangkok Post, International Herald Tribune, Financial Times, South China Morning Post, Ming Pao, Apple Daily, Associated Press, and

Reuters. SEARC's core members are also interviewed regularly by radio and television outlets, including CNN, BBC, Aljazeera, Star TV, Voice of America, RTHK, Commercial Radio (Hong Kong) and Channel NewsAsia.

Evaluation of the Centre / SKL's achievements, uniqueness, and competitive edge in the local/regional/international context

SEARC is unique within the Hong Kong community today as the sole academic research unit that addresses the politics, economies, cultural, societies and international relations of contemporary Southeast Asia. With strong indications that world attention is shifting to Southeast Asia, SEARC is ideally positioned to meet this growing interest in a region that is of vital importance to Hong Kong. SEARC achieves this through its academic scholarship, its applied research, and its community events and media commentary. Its researchers are regularly invited to international conferences and workshops; they regularly publish their research in high-quality outlets; and they are growing increasingly adept at securing competitive external funding. Thus, especially in view of its small organizational size and modest levels of funding, SEARC retains a competitive edge, enabling it to enhance CityU's growing reputation as a major institution for social science inquiry.

Evaluation of the Centre / SKL's ability to attract people and resources

SEARC has recruited a strong cohort of core members, including Prof William Case, probably the best known foreign expert on Malaysian politics and an accomplished comparativist of the region; Prof Paul Cammack, a distinguished expert on political economy whose research interests have recently shifted toward Asia; SEARC Director: Prof Mark R Thompson, a well-known scholar on the Philippines and comparative Southeast Asian politics; Prof Joseph Cheng, among whose many research interests is security issues in Southeast Asia; Dr Chiara Formichi, a scholar with a strong reputation in the field of Islam in Indonesia; Dr Toby Carroll, a political economist with a strong record of research on the political-economic situation in Southeast Asia; Dr Nicholas Thomas, a high profile international relations scholar with interests in territorial disputes involving Southeast Asia; Dr Bradly Williams, an expert on international relations in Northeast and Southeast Asia; Dr Adrienne La Grange, a leading expert on Philippine English and Call Centres in the country; Dr Federico Ferrara, a young scholar with a growing reputation in the field of Thai studies; Dr Jonathan London and Dr Yuk Wah Chan, both recognized experts on Vietnam with Dr London an expert on welfare issues and Dr Chan a specialist on migration; Dr Nankyung Choi, a leading expert on local politics in Indonesia; Dr Stephan Ortmann, a widely published young scholar specializing in Singapore and Vietnam; Dr Reuben Mondejar, an economics expert on Southeast Asia with interests in the South China Sea issue. Prof Robert H. Taylor, a renowned scholar of Myanmar politics, was a visiting Professor from 2010-2011 and active SEARC affiliated member. SEARC has recently restructured its International Advisory Committee, recruiting noted Southeast Asianists like Prof Donald K. Emmerson, Prof Paul Hutchcroft, and Prof Andrew MacIntyre. Prof Hans-Dieter Evers, who recently gave a SEARC seminar, is currently an Eminent Visiting Professor, Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei

Darussalam (a new but very well-funded university that has been attracting top scholars in Southeast Asian studies). Prof Evers and Prof Thompson are working together on an MoU and future research cooperation. Prof Evers has also joined SEARC's international advisory committee. SEARC is regularly approached too by overseas scholars seeking a base for sabbaticals and other forms of research leave, evincing SEARC's standing as a respected centre for research on contemporary Southeast Asia.

## **6. Planned activities for 2014-15**

### Conferences and Workshops

#### 8-10 December 2014 - 4th Conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network

To be organized together with the Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN) and the International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS) in Leiden, the Netherlands at CityU.

#### Research seminars 2014-2015

Eight research seminars are planned in the upcoming academic year with leading Southeast Asianists from the US, the UK, Japan, Germany as well as several Southeast Asian countries including the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam scheduled to speak. Aside from leading scholars, important journalists and activists involved in observing or influencing the region's affairs will be invited.

#### Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia (SEASIA)

SEARC, in consultation with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University, will be invited to join SESASIA within the coming academic year.

#### Other outreach

In addition, the SEARC director and other core members will continue to make regular duty visits to centres of Southeast Asian studies linked to SEARC to strengthen collaboration as well as to potential new partners. Furthermore, SEARC will invite directors/chairs of other centers to visit SEARC, give seminars, and to involve in discussion for further participation. As of this writing, invitations have already been extended to centers in Berkeley, the University of Hawaii, and Kyoto University for the coming academic year, with other invitations to follow soon.

## **7. Future plans and long-term strategic development strategy**

*(Please include plans to generate income for sustaining Centre activities and plans to become financially independent for Centres which are more than three years of their establishment; bringing in new members; and where appropriate succession strategies with impending retirement/departure of the Director or its member)*

To operate effectively, and competitively, SEARC requires funding from the university for its

basic operations, key research, seminars, duty visits and some of its conference activities. SEARC will finance Thwe Aye Yu, a promising PhD candidate from Myanmar, out of existing funds. SEARC strives to have three short-term visitors or one long term fellow per year. Several high profile scholars in Southeast Asia have contacted SEARC about coming to the Centre as short term visiting fellows in 2014, with details of these visits still to be arranged. No major international Southeast Asia centre, with which SEARC compared itself to, is self-financed (please refer to the appendix: World's Leading Southeast Asia Study Centres). In order to remain internationally competitive, SEARC requires substantial and regular university funding.

However, as mentioned above, SEARC is developing a co-financing model of all its major conferences with other institutions or external donors. It already has a strong record of acquiring project-related grants and fruitful collaborations with major funding organizations, particularly for conferences/workshops. As mentioned above, SEARC will continue to work closely with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung which has co-financed its past Myanmar conferences. SEARC has also working together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as discussed above. SEARC also will approach other major organizations and associations, in Hong Kong and beyond for future cooperation on projects, conferences or other events. SEARC core members have also applied for several external grants and more core members will be encouraged to apply next fall. In addition, efforts were made to seek funding through new sources, such as the small grants International Organization for Migration (IOM) made. Given that SEARC recently co-hosted an international conference, Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas, it is now closer to funding agencies linked to that organization. In addition, the planned conference in December 2014 is co-organized and co-financed with the Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN) and the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), the Netherlands.

- In addition, SEARC will continue to expand its membership, particularly its associated members in Hong Kong (with great potential among interested business people, policy makers, NGOs, and journalists) as well as enhancing its international links primarily through a planned network of Southeast Asia research centres around the world, as discussed in detail above. By co-hosted an international conference, Asian Migration and the Global Asian Diasporas, SEARC became one of handful of institutes and centres closely affiliated with this leading (and rapidly growing) organization of political scientists and policy experts in Asia.

Other future plans include:

- To continue to organize conferences, seminars and workshops that attracts top local and international scholars which lead to high-quality publications.
- To contribute to an intellectual climate in the department that encourages SEARC core members to apply for competitive external grants and to present their research at conferences, workshops, and seminars.



- To increase collaboration between core members of SEARC and between them and scholars in other CLASS-based research centres and overseas institutions in the modes of faculty exchange, joint research funding applications, and organizing conferences together.
- To maintain SEARC's working paper series as an outlet for established, but especially new researchers, to enter their findings quickly into the public domain.
- To continue engaging CityU students in seminars, thereby strengthening linkages between scholarly research and classroom teaching.
- To continue to invite eminent researchers and professionals to deliver seminars and talks that enhance the cross-disciplinary study of Southeast Asia which strengthen ties to the Hong Kong community.
- To maintain its standing as a world-class centre for the study of Southeast Asia, SEARC needs to attract top scholars as well as post-doctoral fellows in order to keep up with the cutting edge research and make SEARC a well-known place in which to research and debate key issues related to Southeast Asia.