

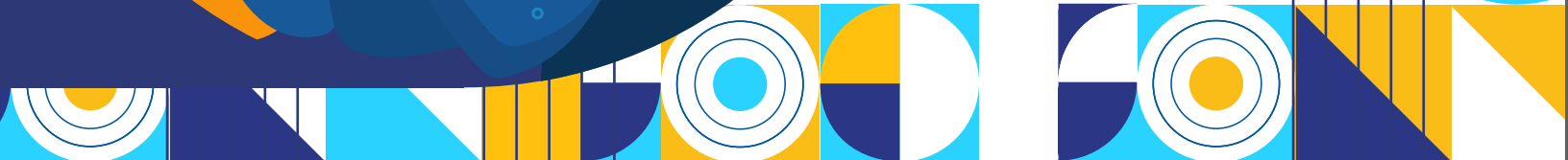
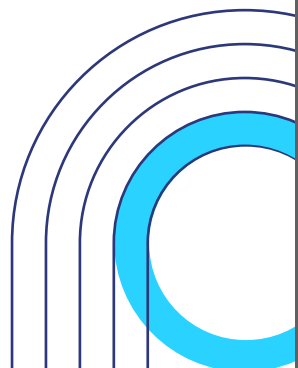


January
2021



Members' Voices

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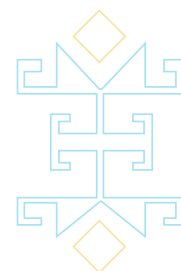


Key Message from SEAN-CSO

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced virtually all stakeholders working on P/CVE in South East Asia to move their activities online. These constraints go well beyond the field of P/CVE and have changed how civil society and government programs across the board are being delivered. For many, this has precipitated a paradigm shift to digital delivery and generated many creative responses, including a remarkable proliferation of webinars, online training courses and other networking activities across South East Asia and the world beyond.

As welcome as these responses are, it must be acknowledged that they have also resulted in some unintended outcomes, the more benign of which include a duplication of efforts, a tendency to “reinvent the wheel”, and a diffused “zoom fatigue”. To create a firm foundation for civil society organisations to continue effective work on P/CVE in South East Asia, we propose the following program of activities for 2021:

1. Building an online library of manuals that are freely available online to civil society organisations working on P/CVE and in related fields.
2. Assessing the implementation of the SEAN-CSO strategy and the expectations for the future of the network.
3. Sustaining and growing online communications and production of newsletters and social media posts to ensure continuity in communications.
4. Producing a series of monthly webinars on issues of direct relevance to SEAN-CSO members.
5. Organising one online regional workshop in April 2021.





Interview

Eugene Yapp and Mable Leong *Gabungan Bertindak Malaysia (GBM Coalition).*

Eugene Yapp is the National Unity Program Director of the arm of Gabungan Bertindak Malaysia that addresses issues of national unity. He is also the Director of Religious Freedom and Liberty Partnership in Malaysia. Eugene was part of the original cohort that helped make SEAN-CSO the network that it is today. Mable Leong has a background in law and currently serves on a legal council in Kuala Lumpur. She is a GBM Coalition Project Executive and has been involved in various projects over the years.

GBM is a coalition of 27 local civil society organisations coming together under one banner. Founded in 2009, GBM is the largest independent mixed faith-based civil society coalition in Malaysia. The organisations that make up the coalition are a mix of faith-based groups, human rights advocates, community service providers, think-tanks, and educational organisations. The coalition's three main objectives are as follows: to create and strengthen common platforms and spaces for interaction, mutual understanding, and collaboration among groups and communities of different ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds; to develop and forge public consensus on the vision of the country that will unite all Malaysians and be acceptable by all Malaysians; to effect changes to the policies and legislations in favour of the promotion of national unity and racial and religious harmony in the country.

To further the aforementioned broad objectives, the coalition has a 3-prong strategic approach via a special purpose vehicle called "GBM Coalition." The strategies are as follows:



1. Bridge-building narrative — unity in diversity and standing in solidarity with all.
2. Advocacy — contributing to policy and legislative changes on unity in diversity and national harmony.
3. Community intervention programmes — holistic approach of offering community services to address poverty and marginalisation issues that hinder unity in diversity and national harmony.

GBM Coalition implements this strategy within local communities. Unlike some human rights organizations which confine their work mainly to policy advocacy and legislative change, the coalition extends beyond and works with local communities. Eugene emphasized that, **“we believe that our strategy of bridge-building advocacy and community intervention**





programs will create a movement, and produce a counter-narrative that will prevent violent extremism and address the issue of hateful extremism. If we can address hateful extremism, it will lead to less violent reactions.”

Recently, Eugene and Mable worked together to draft a bill that proposed the creation of a National Reconciliation and Mediation Commission that was subsequently brought to the Minister of National Unity. They felt that within local communities there were a lot of grievances because of ethnic and religious tensions. They proposed the creation of a commission, recognized by an act of Parliament. The commission would empower the setting up of mediation roundtables in local communities. The commission would also aid in compelling parties to attend these roundtables to talk and hopefully resolve their differences without going to court and or having to make police reports. They spent many months preparing everything and their bill was going to be debated in Parliament. However in February 2020, there was a change in government from the Pakatan Harapan Party to the Perikatan Nasional Party. As a result, all the work that they had done came to a halt. However, the commission, if it materializes in the future, will become a government instrument to address issues of hateful extremism and contribute to preventing violent extremism.

At the end of the interview, Mable and Eugene shared their hopes for the future of Malaysian society. Mable said, “what I want to see in my country is for people to be more intentional. I also think that everyone, both everyday citizens and those who lead Malaysia, should try and put our own self-interests aside and help each other more.” Eugene closed with a seemingly simple, but powerful statement. **“Have better understanding, build solidarity, create trust and confidence so that we can all unite and become a better nation.”**





Member Highlights

Institute for Autonomy and Governance *from the Philippines*



Source: iag.org.ph/

The Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG) is an internationally recognized policy center based in Cotabato City. As stated on their website, the institute is “dedicated to research, training, and technical assistance to evolve genuine autonomy and good governance as a way to peace and sustainable development in the southern Philippines.” Born out of the instability and uncertainty that characterized the island of Mindanao in the late 1990s-early 2000s, IAG was originally a program within the College of Law of Notre Dame University under Dean Benedicto Bacani and inspired by university president Fr. Eliseo Mercado, Jr. of the Oblates of Mtary Immaculate.

IAG states their mission is “to engage peoples, leaders and institutions in capacity building, dialogue and knowledge production towards evidence-based public policies and practices.” This is done through a variety of ways including the production of semi-annual reviews, policy briefs, monographs, and the implementation of sustainable development programs.

As highlighted on their website, “IAG’s programs are anchored on the belief that the basic root of the conflict in Mindanao is injustice and underdevelopment; that it is essentially a political problem that requires a political solution; and evolving an effective and viable vehicle for Moro and Indigenous peoples’ self-determination is the core of this political solution.”

IAG has created and implemented many different programs to achieve their goals. For example, their Political Dialogue program targets the promotion of political dialogue for peace in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Its primary focus is on helping to build a stable political environment in support of the Mindanao peace process. This is carried out through positive engagement with political leaders, so they are better equipped to serve their constituents and spearhead processes for sustainable peace and development.

Another program of note is “Mainstreaming Indigenous Peoples’ Rights in the BARMM.” As noted in the project description, “this program focuses on capacity building for the empowerment and strengthening of Indigenous peoples’ self-governance as well as advocacy for socio-legal and administrative reforms in the BARMM.” Overall, IAG strives to craft and “promote public policies that protect the rights and welfare of Indigenous peoples, especially in conflict and fragile environments. Autonomy and good governance as paths for peace in the southern Philippines must be responsive to the needs and protection of vulnerable groups most affected by instability and insecurity.”

To learn more about IAG and the impactful work they do, check out their Facebook: @iagorgph, Twitter: @IAGorgph, Instagram: @iagorgph, and website: iag.org.ph/

International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation, International Islamic University Malaysia (ISTAC-IIUM)

from Malaysia



The Asrama Malaysia programme - Multi-racial boarding schools (2019) (source: <https://www.iium.edu.my/news>)

The International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), is an advanced Islamic learning and research institute based at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) in Kuala Lumpur. As highlighted on their website, ISTAC's mission is "to produce a new breed of academics and scholars, who are multilingual and multi-disciplinary in their expertise with knowledgeable understanding of the universal message of Islam for the advancement of Islamic thought and civilization, who can address new challenges and concerns facing the Muslim Ummah and humanity which will enable meaningful living in the 21st century globalized world."

ISTAC has 10 main "niche areas": Islamic thought, Malay-Islamic civilization, comparative religion and intercultural dialogue, Islamic and gender equity, epistemology, spirituality and intellectuality in Islamic civilization, peace and security studies, reform (Islah) and renewal (Tajdid) in Islamic history, comparative civilizational studies, Islam and futures studies, and Ottoman civilization and the modern world.

ISTAC produces a vast amount of scholarship alongside scholars from Malaysia and abroad. The Extremism Analytical Research Unit (EARU) led by Dr. Danial Bin Mohammad Yusof is just one area worthy of note. The EARU consists of 15 major scholars from ten different universities. Together, they have worked on and continue to collaborate on various projects focused on preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE). For example, in 2019-2020, they developed "Capacity Building Modules," focusing on PCVE governance in Malaysia, individual radicalization and rehabilitation, the history of extremism, international relations and terror financing, the weaponization of social media, and the psychology of VE and terrorism.

Alongside the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) researchers from the University of Maryland, College Park, USA, members of the EARU conducted a research project titled "Building Research Capacity for Countering Violent Extremism in Malaysia." This endeavor focused on developing Malaysian instruments for PCVE. This included creating a simulation for policymakers, public advocacy, and education and spatial and social network analyses of extremism. Most recently, ISTAC and START co-hosted the "International Symposium on Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism (ICVE) in Malaysia and Southeast Asia" from January 12th to January 27th. As explained on START's website, the ICVE "aims to bring together scholars, researchers, and practitioners from the region and around the world to promote collaboration, present research findings, and discuss policy implication on preventing/countering violent extremism.

To learn more about ISTAC-IIUM's amazing work, check out their Facebook: @ISTACOfficial and their website: iium.edu.my/institute/istac

Funding Opportunity

SEAN-CSO is contributing seed funding (max AUD \$10,000) toward conducting online activities to counter and mitigate hateful extremism and misinformation online. Activities are expected to be conducted between 15 March 2021 to 30 June 2021. Applicants should submit a one-page proposal of no more than 500 words in email to Marzieh Sadeghpour (Marzieh.Sadeghpour@deakin.edu.au) by 20 Feb 2021 that includes:

- ▶ Contact information (name, email, organizational details)
- ▶ Proposed activity, and method/s of delivery
- ▶ Anticipated resource requirements and budget
- ▶ Proposed outputs from the on-line activity and estimated time needed
- ▶ A detailed risk assessment plan
- ▶ A detailed strategy for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the project

Selected applicants will be invited to share further details if needed. SEAN-CSO expects to announce the selected projects by 15 March 2021.

Civil Society Actors in conflict prevention:

- ▶ bit.ly/SEANCSO-Europa

Strengthening Youth-led Movement:

- ▶ bit.ly/SEANCSO-YAL

Covid-19 Vaccine Counter-Misinformation:

- ▶ bit.ly/SEANCSO-Google

Local Knowledge Partner Philippines

- ▶ bit.ly/SEANCSO-GCERF

Announcement

SEAN-CSO is developing an online CVE library of online training materials for CVE practitioners, that will be relevant and freely available online to regional civil society organizations (CSOs), working and researching in the field of preventing and countering violent extremism (P/CVE), and related fields. Contents for the library will range from reports, policy papers to toolkits and counter-narratives. The library will be hosted on the SEAN-CSO website, and is developed in consultation with Deakin University and SEAN-CSO members.

On that account, we are reaching out to friends and colleagues to contribute materials for the library. We are happy to incorporate contents in local languages, as well as suggestions on materials that have been very useful for your work, and what you need to fill the gaps on existing contents and resources. For more details or if you wish to contribute, please contact Badrul Hisham Ismail from IMAN Research at badrulhisham@imanresearch.com.

✉ badrulhisham@imanresearch.com



Updates

- SEAN-CSO currently *has*



- All SEAN-CSO social media is *followed by*

3,479 accounts

- SEAN-CSO posts focused on PVE *receive*

an average
2,658 likes

How to make a self-recorded video:



Want to be exclusively featured on SEAN-CSO's Social Media? We want to hear more from you, especially in these pandemic times. You can talk about interesting projects that you're currently involved in, how the pandemic has affected your work or organization in the field, or anything related to P/CVE issues.

Still don't know how to make a good video? Don't worry, we have got your back. We have created this simple 2-minute tutorial on how to make a decent self-recorded video in your own home. Stream it online on YouTube:

bit.ly/SelfRecTutorial

Follow us

Follow us for updated info on P/CVE issues:

@SEAN.CSO.WTAVE

@sean.cso

Also check our website:

sean-cso.org

Synergy in Harmony

Walk together for a better world



Would you like to be featured in the next SEAN-CSO Newsletter or in our upcoming social media campaign?

If you have stories, research, or programs focused on Preventing or Countering Violent Extremism, contact us at:

sean-cso@peacegen.id

This update has been brought to you by SEAN-CSO in collaboration with Peace Generation Indonesia.