



Asia Forum

The Asia Forum of Wellington

April 2011

The Asia Forum Report for 2010

2010 saw another successful year of well-attended and stimulating meetings. As in previous years we have received warm support from a number of distinguished individuals and opinion leaders from various interests and professional backgrounds, both from abroad and from New Zealand, sharing their perspectives with Asia Forum. As usual the Forum continued to focus on off-the-record discussions and an exchange of views on numerous topical Asian issues that have occurred and developed throughout the year.

Asia Forum continues to strive and focus its effort on facilitating informed debate and the concerns of New Zealanders in engaging with Asia. The Forum gratefully values the opportunity to collaborate and cooperate with the NZ Institute of International Affairs, the Wellington Employers' Chamber of Commerce, and the educational institutions and business organisations in Wellington. We also value the support and encouragement of the Asia NZ Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the diplomatic community in Wellington.

Our 2010 speaking programme continued the format of previous years with a range of high profile speakers from New Zealand and abroad leading the discussions.

Our meetings were mostly held monthly in the offices of law firms Bell Gully, Minter Ellison Rudd Watts, Russell McVeagh, and at Victoria University's Centre for Strategic Studies, who generously provided refreshments as well as their meeting facilities. Our gratitude also goes to Catalyst IT Ltd for hosting our website. Their hospitality, generosity and continuous support are much appreciated.

Highlights for the year

A few highlights for 2010 were:

- **Mr Peter Drysdale** Head of East Asian Bureau of Economic Research, Emeritus Professor of Economics and Visiting Fellow in Policy and Governance at the Australian National University spoke to the forum of his perspective of *Building an East Asian or Asia Pacific Community?*
- **Dr Muthiah Alagappa** – Distinguished Senior Fellow and founding Director of East-West Centre Washington. Sir Howard Kippenberger Chair at the Centre of

Strategic Studies at Victoria University led a discussion at the James Cook Grand Chancellor Hotel on the topic *-Regional Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific: Is it up to the challenge?*

Asia Forum is grateful for the support from Hon. Tim Groser, Minister of Trade and the Hon. Murray McCully, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Vision for the future/looking ahead

Asia Forum has over the years been led and chaired by Farib Sos on a voluntary basis. He has been assisted by a group of colleagues including Colin Bell, Douglas Day, Sokha Mey, Tim Beal, Anna Potts and recently by Andrew Beattie.

Asia Forum is embarking on 15 years of operation since it began in 1996 and it is a great challenge to sustain and maintain its activities. The Forum is keen to have additional input and support from interested individuals and organisations to ensure its continued existence, as a viable entity in providing a positive contribution towards New Zealand-Asia relations. Asia Forum would welcome additional support in any aspect from any individual or organisation to help sustain its activities in the years ahead.

Contribution

The Asia Forum has benefited greatly from the support of various organisations, notably and extensively from Bell Gully. However, there are certain running costs, especially pertaining to communications, which have to be covered. The Asia Forum is therefore seeking contributions from organisations or individuals who support our objectives and who wish to join us in providing an opportunity for informed and stimulating discussion of contemporary Asian issues amongst opinion leaders.

Those interested in considering such a contribution should contact Farib Sos, whose contact details are below.

Details on the Asia Forum programme can be found on the Asia Forum website at

http://www.apri.ac.nz/Asia_Forum

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