

# Contributors

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(Affiliations and titles are correct as of the time of the publication)

**Kuik Cheng-Chwee** is Professor of International Relations at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), National University of Malaysia (UKM), and concurrently a nonresident senior fellow at the SAIS Foreign Policy Institute, Johns Hopkins University and a nonresident scholar at Carnegie China. Previously he was a postdoctoral research associate at the Princeton-Harvard “China and the World” Program and a visiting research fellow at Oxford University. Professor Kuik’s research focuses on the external policies of small and secondary states, big powers in the Indo-Pacific, Asian security, and international relations. Cheng-Chwee is a regular invited speaker to international conferences and closed-door policy roundtables. His publications have appeared in such peer-reviewed journals as *International Affairs*, *Pacific Review*, *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, and *Contemporary Southeast Asia*. He is co-author (with David Lampton and Selina Ho) of *Rivers of Iron: Railroads and Chinese Power in Southeast Asia* (2020) and co-editor (with Alice Ba and Sueo Sudo) of *Institutionalizing East Asia* (2016). Cheng-Chwee’s essay, “The Essence of Hedging”, won ISEAS’s Michael Leifer Memorial Prize. Cheng-Chwee serves on the editorial boards of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *Asian Politics and Policy*, *International Journal of Asian Studies*, and several other international journals. He holds an M.Litt. from the University of St. Andrews and a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. He has been on Stanford University’s Top 2% Scientists list, subfield International Relations, for two consecutive years (2023 and 2024).

**Alice D. Ba** is Emma Smith Morris Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations. She has published widely on the international relations of East and Southeast Asia, the politics and processes of regionalism, and Southeast Asia’s relations with China and the United States. Recent publications have addressed the roles of strategic narratives, the systemic effects of multilateralism and domestic change in Asia, ASEAN’s legitimation strategies and challenges, and the interplay between institutional frameworks in Asia. She is also the author of *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia: Region, Regionalism, and ASEAN* (Stanford 2009) and received US Fulbright awards for work in Beijing and Singapore. At the University of Delaware, she served as Department Acting Chair (2023-2024) and Director of Asian Studies (2009-2014).

**Emirza Adi Syailendra**, M.Sc, PhD (Candidate, ANU), is an expert on Asian security, specialising in Southeast Asian defence and foreign policy in the maritime domain. He has published widely in international journals such as *Asian Security*, *Asia Policy*, and *World Development*. His public affairs commentary has appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, *The Diplomat*, *People’s Daily*, and *East Asia Forum*, demonstrating a strong record of academic and policy-relevant work on Indonesia’s domestic politics and foreign relations. His thesis examines why maritime Southeast Asian states continue to show restraint toward China in the post-Cold War period, despite its growing assertiveness in the South

China Sea. He developed an innovative framework on tacit understandings to explain this mutual restraint. In 2022, he received the DFAT-funded Maritime Exchange Grant in Malaysia, spending six months as a fellow at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies and publishing his findings in both policy and academic outlets. He is a Co-Chief Investigator of the Strategic Policy Grant on Indonesia's maritime strategy, which secured him a research fellowship at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU (2023–2026). He won the 2023 College of Asia and the Pacific Commendation for Excellence in Education and was nominated for the 2024 Vice-Chancellor's Award for Emerging Academics. From 1 August 2025, Emir will commence a postdoctoral fellowship at the Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

**Aries A. Arugay** is Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines Diliman. He is also Editor-in-Chief of *Asian Politics & Policy*, a Scopus-indexed academic journal published by Wiley-Blackwell and Visiting Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the Philippines Studies Programme of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies-Yusof-Ishak Institute (Singapore). He was a visiting scholar in the Universidad Mayor de San Simón (Bolivia), Chulalongkorn University (Thailand), University of Sydney (Australia), Jeju Peace Institute (South Korea), University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the National Institute of Defense Studies (Japan), and Universiti Brunei Darussalam. His research interests are civil-military relations, comparative democratization, security sector reform, and international relations of Southeast Asia. He is also an active track-two diplomacy practitioner having participated in more than 100 international conferences, workshops, and meetings on ASEAN regionalism, international security, geopolitics, and other strategic issues. He obtained his PhD in Political Science from Georgia State University (United States) in 2014 as a Fulbright Fellow and his MA and BA (*cum laude*) in Political Science from the University of the Philippines-Diliman.