

ASIA 21 YOUNG LEADERS SUMMIT
2009 CONFERENCE REPORT

CRISIS & OPPORTUNITY

THE CHANGING FACE OF LEADERSHIP



In knowledge partnership with

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SUMMIT FOCUS/ 01

Leaders are born, but they are also made.

Asia Society created the Asia 21 Young Leaders Initiative to bring together the most significant next generation leaders from every country in the Asia-Pacific region and from every sector to help these outstanding individuals make each other better leaders. Leadership may be an individual talent, but it is a collective act. This is even more the case in today's increasingly interdependent world.

The title of the 2009 Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit, *The Changing Face of Leadership: Crisis and Opportunity*, was selected by the 2009-2010 class of Asia 21 Fellows to capture this very point. As the challenges our region faces become more transnational, our leaders must themselves become more transnational and cross-sectoral.

As can be seen from this conference summary, delegates to the 2009

Summit struggled with some of the greatest challenges facing the Asia-Pacific region -- including corruption, gender inequality, censorship, environmental degradation, and uneven access to healthcare and education -- but also explored what kind of leadership would be required to address these critical challenges.

The Summit sought to open delegate's minds and to catalyze new opportunities for collaboration. The objective was not just to have an amazing four days, but to take yet another step towards building the Asia 21 movement as a major catalyst for mutual understanding and change in the Asia-Pacific.

Based on the early reports from delegates, it is clear that our goals are being achieved.

One delegate reported that the experience had "completely scrambled my wires! If your plan was to make us think," she said, "to challenge our notion of

leadership (not to mention crisis and opportunity), consider it done. The summit -- for me -- was humbling, eye-opening, invigorating."

Another asserted that "The overall experience was simply extraordinary. The collaboration of people assembled to share this experience and interact was transformational."

Changed perceptions such as these are designed to inspire action, and Asia 21 Young Leaders are actively engaging in many of the public service projects developed at the Kuala Lumpur summit.

This Asia-Pacific century will be built, brick by brick, through every demonstration of respect, every act that promotes mutual understanding, and every action that transcends borders and boundaries to achieve a greater good for a broader community. It is certainly our hope that the Asia 21 movement can play an important role in catalyzing this monumentally important construction project.

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ABOUT ASIA SOCIETY

The Asia Society is an international organization dedicated to strengthening relationships and deepening understanding among the peoples of Asia and the United States. We seek to increase knowledge and enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of policy, business, education, arts, and culture.

Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd, the Society reaches audiences around the world through its headquarters in New York and regional centers in Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington DC, Hong Kong, Seoul, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai and Shanghai.

The Asia Society is supported by contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals. Asia Society is on the web at

www.asiasociety.org



FOREWORD/ 03

The Asia Society's Asia 21 Young Leaders Initiative was created based on a simple premise – that a new brand and generation of progressive leaders must emerge across the Asia-Pacific if our region, and the world, are to succeed in the twenty-first century.

Unlike the many outstanding national leaders of the twentieth century who built independent states, won wars of liberation, and reconstituted war-torn societies, the best twenty-first century leaders will need to develop transnational, cross-sectoral responses to shared challenges. In our increasingly interconnected world, leaders must learn to transcend traditional boundaries to drive outcomes that supersede narrow interests.

This type of leadership will not emerge on its own. It must be nurtured by all of us who share a

commitment to building a region and a world where the frictions that can result from greater international contact can be overcome by higher levels of mutual understanding and collaboration.

The successful realization of the Asia 21 initiative is due in large part to the generosity of our founding international sponsor, Bank of America Merrill Lynch. For the 2009 Summit in Kuala Lumpur, we have been delighted to engage PricewaterhouseCoopers as a knowledge partner and owe special thanks to our many other sponsors and supporters for making it all possible.

Meeting, listening to, and understanding each other is the first step in this process of building a distinctive generation of leaders for the twenty-first

century. Developing shared ideas of values-based leadership and public service, working together on collaborative projects to address common challenges, and building institutions that systematize and further these collaborations, and continually refreshing and renewing our commitment to these values and structures are further steps.

The Asia 21 movement is designed for next generation leaders to push themselves and each other along this very important continuum, and to help us all do our part to make our region and our world better places.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Metz'.

Jamie Metz
Executive Vice President
Asia Society



FOREWORD/ 04

As a young leader myself once, I know what it is like to have to grapple with the load that responsibility brings, amidst challenges and uncertainties. I was also fortunate enough to have a strong network of colleagues, mentors and fellow-leaders throughout my journey as a leader – people with whom I was able to share ideas and experiences, and create lasting and meaningful collaborations.

This is why I feel the Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit is an excellent platform. Bringing together the world's future - our leaders of tomorrow - from all walks of life, it allows them to connect and lay the foundation for strong alliances.

While the world becomes increasingly globalised, the challenges and opportunities that Asia faces are unique to the region. Today we deal with balancing the issue of climate change against development; capitalising on the

shift of global powers to the East; and a financial crisis more severe than most can remember. Yet the answers we seek lie in our leaders possessing the same few characteristics as in decades past: strength, passion, integrity and the ability to sacrifice personal interest for the greater good. While the specifics of any crisis may change, these qualities don't often differ.

Asia 21 reminds me that here in Asia we have an abundance of talent and capabilities. I hope this Summit helps us leverage on these young leaders' abilities. I look forward to the solutions they are bound to deliver.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Johan".

Dato' Johan Raslan
Executive Chairman
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Malaysia



“A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled. They will say: we did it ourselves.”

- Lao Tzu

AGENDA/ 05

Friday, November 20, 2009

Morning & Afternoon	Arrivals
6:00pm	Opening Reception Networking Activity
7:00pm	Opening Dinner Welcoming Remarks Vishakha N. Desai President Asia Society Introductory Remarks Jamie Metz Executive Vice President Asia Society Introduction of Keynote Speaker Suryani Senja Alias Senior Vice President Investments Khazanah Nasional Keynote Address YAB Dato'Sri Najib Tun Razak Prime Minister Malaysia Motion of Thanks to the Prime Minister Tan Sri Mohamed Jawhar Hassan Chairman and CEO ISIS Malaysia
9:00-9:30pm	Cultural Performance—Rhythm in Bronze
9:30pm	Closing Remarks
9:30-11:00pm	Nightcaps/Kopitiam/Teh Tarik Sessions Film-making: How to turn crisis into opportunity in 60 seconds Led By: Nitin Das Director, Filmkaar Productions Dance Stars: Breaking the Ice Led By: Mitchell Pham Director, Augen Software Group You: Communication through a Camera, a Picture to Tell What I Know About You Led By: Danwen Xing Independent Artist Sufi Drums Led By: Jumaatun Azmi Founder & Managing Director, KasehDia Sdn Bhd

8:45-9:30am	<p>Brief Opening Remarks Jamie Metz Executive Vice President Asia Society</p> <p>Setting the Stage Brief, dynamic remarks highlighting the overlapping financial, environmental, and security crises facing the global community.</p> <p>Facilitator Steve Woo-Sung Chung Chief Strategy Officer CDNetworks, Inc.</p> <p>Opening Statements Gen Kanai Director Asia Business Development Mozilla Corporation</p> <p>Aaron Maniam Deputy Director, Strategic Policy Office Singapore Public Service Division</p> <p>Kathleen Reen Vice President for Asia, Environment and News Media Programs Internews</p> <p>Soojian Zuberi Managing Director Head of Global Markets Sales Asia Bank of America Merrill Lynch</p>	11:00am-1:00pm	<p>Session 3 Breakout: Ethics and Responsibility Breakout sessions will explore the characteristics, sources, innovation, and national vs global implications of ethics and responsibility in the following issue areas.</p> <p>Censorship and Free Speech Ming Fan Producer, News Probe Central China TV</p> <p>Keiko Yamamoto News Reporter NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation)</p> <p>Corruption and Governance Arnel Paciano Casanova Executive Director Asia Society Philippine, Foundation, Inc.</p> <p>Fawad Ahmad Muslim CEO & President Jahaan Technology Corporation</p> <p>Access to Healthcare Piya Hanvoravongchai Lecturer London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine</p> <p>Ting Hway Wong Doctor Singapore General Hospital</p> <p>Priti Radhakrishnan Co-Director & Co-Founder Initiative For Medicines, Access & Knowledge (I-MAK)</p> <p>Gender Equality Enkhchimeg Davaanyam CEO, Petrovis LLC</p> <p>Pardis Mahdavi Assistant Professor Department of Anthropology Pomona College</p> <p>Access to Quality Education Natalie Christine Jorge Vice President Bato Balani Foundation, Inc.</p> <p>Truc Pham-Dinh Head of Department Power Machines & Equipment Faculty of Electrical & Electronic Engineering Vietnam National University</p> <p>Creative Leadership: From Artists to Entrepreneurs Nitin Das Director, Filmkaar Productions</p> <p>Hsu-ming Teo Lecturer Department of Modern History Macquarie University</p> <p>Danwen Xing Independent Artist</p>
9:30-10:30am	<p>Session 2 Open Plenary Forum on the Changing Requirements of Leadership in Times of Crisis Building on cases to be presented from young leaders who have turned crisis into opportunity, the discussion will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the characteristics of a global leader? • How can national leaders develop a global vision? • How can leaders turn crisis into opportunity? • What distinguishes leaders in times of crisis? • How do you develop leadership in times of crisis? <p>Moderators Pardis Mahdavi Assistant Professor Department Of Anthropology Pomona College</p> <p>Westley Moore Investment Banker Citigroup</p>		
10:30-11:00am	Break		

1:00-2:00pm	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Hosted by: Azran Osman Rani CEO, AirAsiaX</p> <p>During the last 10 minutes of lunch, breakout session organizers present their conclusions to the larger group.</p>	3:30-4:30pm	<p>Session 5 Leadership and Sustainable Development</p> <p>How can a global leadership framework best help address the climate change crisis?</p> <p>Moderators Andrew Chan Executive Director PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory Services</p> <p>Rashneh Pardiwala Founder & Director Centre for Environmental Research & Education (CERE)</p> <p>Ruth Yeoh Director of Investments YTL Corporation Berhad</p>
2:00-3:00pm	<p>Session 4 Islam in Multi-Cultural Societies</p> <p>Zainah Anwar Project Director Musawah, A Global Movement for Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family</p> <p>In Dialogue with Asia 21 Fellows Jumaatun Azmi Founder and MD KasehDia Sdn Bhd</p> <p>Sandiaga S. Uno Founding Partner PT Saratoga Investama Sedaya</p> <p>Lobsang Sangay Research Fellow East Asian Legal Studies Program Harvard Law School</p>	4:30-5:00pm	Break
3:00-3:30pm	<p>Presentation Asia Society-Bank of America Merrill Lynch Public Service Award</p> <p>Award Presentation By Arnel Paciano Casanova Executive Director Asia Society Philippine Foundation, Inc.</p> <p>Michael Joo Chief Operating Officer, Global Markets Bank Of America Merrill Lynch</p> <p>Rashneh Pardiwala Founder & Director Centre for Environmental Research & Education (CERE)</p> <p>Hendra Sutandinata Founder & CEO MVCommerce Indonesia</p> <p>Award Winner Prisoners Assistance Nepal (PA Nepal)</p> <p>Presentation by Representative from Awardee Organization Indira Rana Magar Founder</p>	5:00-6:00pm	<p>Session 6 Breakout Session: Public Service Projects</p> <p>Members of each breakout session jointly develop one public service project for the group to carry out over the course of the next year. Public service project ideas were solicited prior to the Summit and delegates signed up for a particular project.</p> <p>Asia 21 Helps Asia 21 Resource Exchange Connecting Young Thinkers in the Asia-Pacific One Response Public-Private Partnerships Tales from Enchanted Lands Wash Your Hands, Asia! When Numbers Matter</p>

Sunday, November 22, 2009

7:30am	National Breakfast Tables Venue: Starhill 1 & 2, Level 4, JW Marriott
8:30-10:00am	<p>Venue: Mayang Sari Grand Ballroom, Lower Level 3, JW Marriott</p> <p>Leadership in Action: Moments of Truth Speakers describe critical choices made at turning points in their lives that have shaped their identities and careers.</p> <p>Moderators Ming Fan Producer, News Probe China Central TV</p> <p>Mitchell Pham Director Augen Software Group</p> <p>Truc Pham-Dinh Head of Department, Power Machines and Equipment Faculty Of Electrical And Electronic Engineering Vietnam National University</p>
10:00-10:30am	Break
10:30-1:30pm	<p>Venues: Starhill 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, and Bintang 5, Level 4, JW Marriott</p> <p>Breakout Public Service Projects and Group Presentations</p> <p>Building on the public service project sessions from the day before, groups gather again to finalize the processes and timelines for moving forward. Each group receives a box filled with recyclable supplies. Using these “tools” and drawing from the experience and lessons of this Summit and the farthest limits of group creativity, delegates work to develop a presentation describing their group public service project.</p> <p>Lunch served during the breakout</p>
1:30-3:15pm	<p>Venue: Mayang Sari Grand Ballroom, Lower Level 3, JW Marriott</p> <p>Group Presentations Groups reconvene to present their ideas to the other delegates.</p>
3:15-3:30pm	<p>Closing Remarks Jamie Metzl Executive Vice President Asia Society</p>

A photograph of a park with large, mature trees and a grassy area. Long shadows are cast across the grass, suggesting late afternoon or early morning light. The scene is peaceful and natural.

"We must become the
change we want to see
in the world."

- Mohandas Gandhi

“1Malaysia is the clarion call for Malaysians from all walks of life to rise to this singular challenge.”

YAB Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak
Prime Minister, Malaysia



KEYNOTE ADDRESS

DIVERSITY IS A BLESSING/ 06

Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak, Prime Minister, Malaysia

Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
Assalamu'alaikum and good evening

Thank you for inviting me to join you on this first evening of the Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit. A warm welcome to those of you who have travelled from all over Asia and beyond to be here. I hope that in your visit to Malaysia you have the chance to experience a little of our country, its wide diversity, and warm hospitality.

This conference is particularly important because, as Asia continues to break new ground – and old stereotypes – in the global community, nowhere is there a greater need for the discussion of tomorrow's leadership. This certainly means a new generation of leaders that look beyond traditional borders and expectations, but also new forms of leadership that allow collaboration on issues that increasingly transcend nationality, ethnicity, and local interest. Leadership for an era of falling barriers, instant communication and easy travel. Leadership that places the public interest – mankind's interest – ahead of corporate or political expediency.

Ongoing and fundamental changes to our political, social, and economic environments will

define the leadership needs of the next generation. And today, managing change is increasingly what leadership is all about. It is about identifying vulnerabilities in the status quo, educating stakeholders, preparing people and processes to accommodate change and, in some cases, carrying those less willing to embrace change to the goal. It is the idea that we are better served by today's needs, rather than tomorrow's, that is the fundamental leadership challenge of our time. Change will happen. It is our job as leaders to ensure that change arrives to the betterment of our communities and that our communities are prepared to accept it.

So I would like to focus today on the role of identifying and managing change amidst the extraordinary challenges of our time. As a case in point, allow me to tell you about Malaysia's current challenge and how we – as a community – are working to address it. Our work is far from complete and, indeed, may never be. But as we move forward, we continue learning from one another and I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to share our story and solicit your perspectives.

Malaysia is a multi-racial, multi-religious society. Its people and its government face long standing social challenges and not always positive patterns of co-existence and accommodation. We face, as do all countries, increased pressure and scrutiny created by global trends beyond the control of any single nation.

As a nation, Malaysia is young in almost every way. We have been an independent country for just over fifty years. We are also young in the sense that 75% of our population is under forty years of age. While our economy continues to grow, we consider ourselves a developing country and have the drive and optimism to achieve our objectives and take a substantive place in the global community.

We are widely viewed as a multi-racial, multi-religious society that has managed its diversity with some success. We have some of the largest and most independent Indian and Chinese communities outside of China and India. We are a majority Muslim Malay country and a leading member of the Islamic world that has, within our national school system, the largest network of Chinese medium schools outside of Greater China. Our print, broadcast and online media are multilingual. We are Malay, Chinese, Indian, Orang Asli, Iban and Kadazan. We are Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, and Hindu.

There are few places in the world in which you will find Asian communities so deeply commingled, yet distinct. This is because Malaysia is not just diverse in the sense of having people from many cultures and religions. Many countries are diverse in this sense. Malaysia is diverse also in the sense that our people have formed thriving communities each with its own language, culture, history and religion. Our communities have lived side by side for centuries and traded influences and ideas, but they remain distinct. The major groups have become Malaysian each in its own way. Remember that Asian cultures are more different from one another than European ones. Westerners are prone to underestimate the problem of unity in Asia if they assume that Indians differ from Chinese and Chinese from Malays the way Scandinavians differ from Spaniards. Despite shared cultural elements, Asian differences are more fundamental. Malaysian diversity is not dissolvable in a melting pot, and the challenge of our living together will not yield to a single, once for all, solution. We have had to learn to deal with our problems in a concrete and pragmatic fashion. We make alliances, build bridges and share power on a community-by-community basis.

To those accustomed to tidier schemes this might seem an impossibly complex situation, especially for a country going through the growth pains of early nationhood. However we have resisted cultural assimilation in favour of pragmatic bridge-building and power sharing. Instead of grand social plans we favour rolling up our sleeves to form alliances, make friends and build links. We have relied on good sense to make compromises and come to accord on specifics. At our best we have preferred growing our unity organically, beginning from where we are, rather than forcing down schemes conceived at the top.

In recent decades, however, the forces unleashed by our ethnic mix have grown stronger. Our communities seem to have grown apart. Our schools have become less diverse and our communities more polarized. Religious practice has taken on less tolerant interpretations. With a demographic composition in which no single group is in a comfortable majority, this is not a problem we can ignore in the hope it will go away.

One way we are meeting this challenge is to give the theme of unity in diversity a name, and making an all out effort to have our people understand and accept diversity as the basis of our unity. Our diversity

must be a blessing if it is not to be a curse. Therefore a key objective of my administration to make every Malaysian understand and accept our diversity as a blessing: a source not just of cultural vitality but also of economic advantage. Malaysia is the clarion call for Malaysians from all walks of life to rise to this singular challenge.

Indeed the benefits of embracing that diversity are clear to see: Malaysia is a coming together of peoples with origins in Southeast Asia, North and South Asia. The Malay peninsula has for millennia been the trading post of Malay, Arab, Indian and Chinese merchants. The Malay language originated as the lingua franca of trade in the region. Diversity is in the genes of this nation, and has always been linked with travel, trade and exchange rather than, say, conquest or conflict.

Before the colonial era that suspended it, that trade was what we would today call intra-regional, and it was one of the most prosperous in the world. Today, as China and India rise again to their historical levels of global economic prominence, and in the wake of a financial crisis that has reworked the pattern of trade flows focussed on the West, Malaysia, sitting astride the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, is poised to rediscover itself at the nexus of regional trade flows. We are a trading country with the DNA of the Islamic

Middle East, China, India and the Malay Archipelago, sitting at the geographical nexus of these worlds.

The 1Malaysia message says that if we embrace the truth of our essential diversity at home, we find within us a historical and natural openness to the rest of the world, and a sense of being at home on its high seas and trade routes. We have the languages, attitudes and skills to be at the heart of the Asian Transformation.

Malaysia is not a readymade programme being pushed down by the government. It is a reminder of the single most important issue we face as a society, one that will make our break this beautiful country: our unity in diversity. If we are at least agreed on the problem, and on the priority of the problem, we are some way towards sitting down together to solve it.

Malaysia is not an answer but a question, repeated constantly and in different real-life circumstances: how do we build community, how do we forge unity out of diversity, how do we manage tensions that set community against community? How do we prevent or reduce such divides? It is an attitude of constant openness to solutions around a single key challenge. Malaysia is a steady focus on mending alienation, preventing polarization, and bridging social

divides because there cannot be unity without a basic equity and a deep rooted sense that we all belong here.

Is our story of any interest beyond our shores? I think so. Malaysia is not alone in facing the challenge of diversity. Two things are happening which make the challenge of diversity global.

One is that nations are becoming more diverse through emigration, and that this diversity is challenging communities that were once more cohesive and homogenous. Cheap air travel and communications means not only that more people are migrating but also that people remain in close contact with their countries of origin after they have settled in their new homes. As a result, they have assimilated less rapidly by remaining connected with their past.

A second trend is that all over the world, we have seen ideology recede and identity rise to replace it as the organizing principle of social conflict. In Malaysia we have from the start had to deal with being a multi-ethnic society. We have always had the challenge to be 1Malaysia, and so we have had some experience in facing this issue squarely and confronting its many dimensions, cultural, social and economic. We may not always have come up with the right answers, and some of our right answers now need updating, and shall be updated, but above all we have stayed with this question.

Today, however, when we look around the world we find that even societies founded more securely on the European model of the nation state, that is, as sovereign entities whose political boundaries coincide with ethnic and linguistic ones, are turning into multi-ethnic societies. Already this has caused serious social conflict. The nation-state model is increasingly unworkable but the alternative to it is not well developed. Creating a cohesive society out of diverse communities has always been Malaysia's key challenge. It is a challenge we have lived with from our birth. But today it has become everyone's challenge.

The Malaysia question is about the unfinished business of nation-building with a full appreciation and acceptance of our robust and complex diversity. To Malaysians it is an invitation to find the answers to the problem of unity within the specifics of Malaysian life: with neighbours, friends, in local community and in our workplaces, schools and universities. To the world it is an invitation to join us in thinking about, and finding solutions to one of the most central questions of our time. I hope you will enjoy your interactions and deliberations over the next few days as you ponder on this issue and others concerns that affect us collectively as humanity.

Thank you.

PHOTOS/ 07



- 1: Food at the Opening Dinner was all served in eco-friendly dishes, including fruit skins and bamboo plates
- 2: Vishakha N. Desai, President of the Asia Society
- 3: 2009 Asia 21 Young Leaders Summit Delegates



4: Public Service Award Presentation to Prisoners Assistance Nepal
 5: Danwen Xing leads a Night Cap session
 6: Public Service Project presentation

SETTING THE STAGE/ 08

- What are the current issues and challenges within the global financial, environmental and security arenas?
- What is the impact of these challenges and what is required to address these issues accordingly?

SUMMARY

- The world is experiencing three crises at once: financial, environmental and security.
- The challenges we face include our reliance on the Internet, security risks, the banking and financial systems collapse, and climate change concerns.
- To manage through crises, leaders must be capable of transforming such times into opportunities, improving partnerships at all levels, and recognizing the interdependencies and impact of various problems on each other.

The session was facilitated by four delegates and discussions revolved around the financial, environmental and security aspects of what is possibly the worst combination of crises the world has seen. Our overwhelming dependency on the Internet and its underlying structure, security concerns, the global-scale banking and financial collapse, and the energy race were the issues highlighted as being symptomatic of, or contributing to, these crises.

With the advent of technology, and the lines between virtual and real worlds blurring, our lives have become increasingly intertwined with the Internet. We are almost scarily dependent on it and one of the biggest complications with this reliance is the security risks associated with the Internet. For instance, according to one delegate, the Internet is managed by 13 central computers based in the United States, two of which

were attacked recently. In the event that all 13 are hacked into, there is a possibility of a global Internet shutdown. With our financial, social and security systems heavily dependent on the Internet today, this could have crippling effects on a global scale.

There have also been several other recent Internet attacks such as the 2007 attack in Estonia which completely cut-off the nation's communications system as well as the attacks in Pakistan in 2008 which disconnected access to YouTube worldwide. In most Internet attacks, it proves exceedingly difficult to identify and prosecute the culprits.

Natural disasters also illustrate the vulnerability of the Internet's infrastructure. For example, a massive earthquake in 2007 completely severed the Internet connections in Taiwan. As the Internet presence in Asia is generally enabled by underwater cables, it can take up to weeks in certain areas to resolve disconnections resulting from earthquakes or tsunamis.



“Action, to be effective, must be directed to clearly conceived ends.”

- Jawaharlal Nehru

Recognizing these risks and infrastructure flaws, it is **imperative for governments to collaborate to address all security-related issues pertaining to the Internet.** Restrictions to the Internet will only hinder such integration, whereas open access laws will encourage better collaboration amongst nations.

Security risks are not just confined to the Internet. They can, in fact, be categorized as:

1. Wicked Problems: complex problems where solutions in a particular area may result in unintentional adverse impact, which in turn creates other problems.
2. Black Swans: problems that occur due to unforeseen possibilities, i.e. they are unanticipated.
3. Wild Cards: events which have a low probability occurrence but which cause a paradigm shift – an example is the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US.

Each of these categories requires its own resolution, although their impact may interweave. With the occurrence of any of these problems being difficult to anticipate, policy-makers are in the difficult position of finding solutions to address issues which may or may not be interdependent. They need to recognize and anticipate this additional layer of risk and uncertainty in their strategies and approaches.

The discussions then moved on to environmental and climate change issues. Despite the lack of a sufficient framework and resources, the race for energy is heating up. The Northeast Blackout of 2003 in the United States was a classic example of the insufficiency of resources to cater to a surge in demand. **There is a pressing need for sustainable solutions which minimize the environmental impact of acquiring energy.** It is also important for leaders to identify opportunities and

an example cited was the President of the Maldives, who has committed his country to becoming carbon-neutral within a decade by moving to wind and solar energy as alternative sources.

To manage through the current adversity, leaders must be capable of transforming crises into opportunities and understand the inter-dependencies surrounding crises. Their capabilities can be enhanced through strengthened collaboration between governments and partnership between the public and private sectors.

Leaders must be vigilant in spotting early warning signs of crises, have a clear understanding of the issues and, most importantly, be in control of the situation. **To prepare for future crises, leaders must act now.**

THE CHANGING REQUIREMENTS OF LEADERSHIP IN TIMES OF CRISES/ 09

- What are the characteristics of a global leader?
- How can national leaders develop a global vision?
- How can leaders turn crisis into opportunity?
- What distinguishes leaders in times of crisis?
- How do you develop leadership in times of crisis?

SUMMARY

- The nature of crises and the face of leadership in addressing these situations have not changed much over the decades, and the principles of good leadership remain the same.
- While crises can lead to despondency, there are opportunities in difficult times and it is vital that leaders are able to identify these.
- Governments play a critical role in addressing global issues, but ultimately, public-private partnerships are key to effecting change.
- Increased communication and collaboration are necessary to overcome crises. The urgency of local issues, however, may be an obstacle for developing countries in tackling global issues.
- We need courageous, passionate leaders who will forge partnerships to coordinate a global response. With the stakes higher than ever, the time to act is now.

When posed the question, “How can leaders turn crisis into opportunity?”, the discussion centered around: the role of government and the collaborations between stakeholders necessary to address global issues, the qualities that are required of leaders to bring about positive and sustainable community impact, and the unique challenges faced by developing nations.

A genuine crisis creates a very real opportunity to demonstrate impactful and creative leadership.

In fact, as one delegate put it, it sometimes takes a catastrophe to get the world moving. Take the 9/11 example: in the two years after, there were many political changes, and in some instances, the ingenuity of administration shone through.

In fact, during difficult times like these, governments around the world have introduced necessary and sometimes, controversial, policies to address the issues involved. While these solutions are critical, it is fundamental for leaders to clearly define the issues (often

complex ones) as the solutions they design may have unintended consequences. For instance, in the response to the 9/11 attacks, it was evident that there was a lack of appropriate frameworks for strategising the war on terror as some of the policies were considered a violation of human rights. Therefore, despite the urgency in responding to crises, it is important not to oversimplify the issues in the process

At the same time, the single-person leadership models of the past will no longer work in today's interconnected world - **leadership on a global scale is essential and the private sector can play a key role in providing this form of leadership, particularly large organizations with the necessary influence and reach.**

Meanwhile, developing nations face a unique set of challenges. Although they too need to support global issues such as climate change, domestic policies created to address these must also be mindfully catered to the specific needs of a developing



country's socio-economic environment. Governments of these nations should also increase international relations and forge strong partnerships – through improved cooperation between countries, the cost of managing crises may be reduced, and the involvement of third parties minimized.

Various nations may face their own distinct challenges, but the traits of effective leaders are largely universal. In this vein, delegates shared their personal experiences and thoughts on the types of leaders who can inspire action and effect change.

One delegate emphasized that as leaders themselves, all participants need to “take it personally”. A personal commitment and sacrifice is required. As leaders are perceived to be the bridges between different communities, they are expected to exert their influence and lead by example. This ultimately requires moral integrity in the leaders of today.

The military is not the answer to wars and conflicts. With people at the ground level struggling on a daily basis, it will take teams of military, education and economic experts to address the root causes of serious societal problems. There is a crisis of imagination in tackling conflict, and it is imagination that will spur the reconciliation and economic development necessary to end conflict.

Another delegate introduced the concept of the ‘Informal Leader’ - a leader who may not be in a position of power nor at the forefront, but who makes change happen by gaining confidence and trust from the community. He or she works in discretion, has a strong moral compass and because they are in the background, can often work in the capacity of an effective agent of change.

The challenges of designing and developing appropriate solutions are well acknowledged. Leaders should encourage innovative solutions and emphasize potential opportunities. Leading in times of crisis requires considerable sacrifice and it takes solidarity to generate a strong and effective impact.

Finally, representatives from developing nations shared that there is a need to reconcile and end any ongoing conflict within the Asian region. To have a full appreciation of the wide range of issues that are evident in the communities, leaders may benefit from working with local communities at the ground level and truly getting their hands dirty. There is no denying the importance of working-level communities in times of crises, and governments must invest in their people to ensure an effective and sustainable change.

In essence, to overcome crises, leaders must be committed to the cause, sincere, and fully accountable for their actions.

Breakout sessions: Ethics & Responsibility



CENSORSHIP & FREE SPEECH/ 10

SUMMARY

- There is a growing trend towards repression of freedom of speech in certain states across the world.
- Alternative media plays an important role in increasing the awareness of people through dissemination of unbiased information.
- International networks can not only increase pressure on repressive governments but collaborate to provide assistance to members of the media who are subject to these governments' measures.

Delegates felt that there is increasing repression of freedom of speech in certain countries. Governments in these parts of the world continue an intensive crackdown against the opposition by limiting media space, proliferating censorship and controlling media through indirect legislative measures.

Some countries have spent millions of dollars investing in censorship of the Internet to prevent social networking sites and news sites from spreading alternative news regarding the country to its people.

Independent institutions are also under threat in certain countries and journalists have been the main target of violent attacks to curb alternative reporting.

Then there are countries which take a more subtle, but no less significant approach. Their method of repression is to indirectly control the media through ownership of newspapers, appointing key proponents of their views in media companies and enforcing biased laws that create an environment of fear

Alternative media can play a powerful and key role in addressing and containing this oppression. For example, in some parts of the world where the mainstream media may be heavily controlled by government,

the rising influence of blogs and social networking tools have proven a strong alternative platform for disseminating information. This has helped to improve transparency and open up the space for public debate.

There should be a counter-response by democratic countries around the world in the form of investment in technological advancement to counter censorship crackdown by governments.

International pressure will also be vital to bring about change within repressive governments. International organizations and networks should be utilized to communicate stories of repression in order to raise international awareness and pressure. Collaboratively, they will be able to provide assistance, for example providing safe houses to journalists or assistance to families of journalists who are in detention.

Increased collaboration, the use of technology and alternative media are key to defending the rights of the press. **It is through networks like Asia 21 and their members that we can build the capacity for effecting change, and help uphold the tenets of freedom of speech.**

CORRUPTION AND GOVERNANCE/ 11

SUMMARY

- Corruption is a global problem but especially in Asia, and it is intertwined with the issue of governance.
- The main challenges are the lack of enforcement of the rule of law, as well as a lack of transparency at leadership and government levels.
- Access to information, educating the public and engaging the young are key to combating corruption.

Delegates agreed that corruption is not a local problem but a global one, and is particularly prevalent in Asia. It appears that corruption and governance are very much interconnected, and the challenge lies in the enforcement of laws and policies.

In some countries, corruption abounds at the government and administrative levels due to an absence of institutions and measures to monitor politicians and their activities. This often results in a lack of transparency in the handing out of projects and tenders. In situations such as these, it is **access to information which can help curb issues of corruption.**

Because corruption at the leadership level acutely affects the rest of the system, countries need more conscientious leaders with a keen sense of justice, who are open and transparent in their decisions and dealings. **Many developed countries have found that the best way to break the bond between corruption and governance is to ensure the accountability of government and key stakeholders.**

The discussion also focused on the importance of the rule of law. In some countries, corruption is ingrained in the culture, and those who are responsible for creating the law and regulations are themselves

corrupt. In countries under military rule, corruption laws do not even apply. It is places such as these where there is a pressing need to instill the rule of law.

Delegates agreed that cultural and societal issues too can often confuse the matter. In some cultures, giving gifts is the norm – how does one differentiate between gift-giving and bribery? In smaller societies where everyone knows each other, there is an issue of doing favours. How do you stop personal favours and where do you draw the line?

The fundamental right to information will be key to combating corruption. Having a free and empowered media is critical. **Educating people on the ground will also help them better understand and participate in tackling corruption, as they will be social allies in the fight.**

One delegate suggested that young people can play an important role in the battle against corruption. Corruption has a language of its own so it was suggested that we turn the corruption discussion into a popular issue – use the lingo of the young to better reach out to them on the matter. Dispensing information is important but even more relevant is making people understand this information so that they are encouraged to participate.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE/ 12

SUMMARY

- Health care is not always accessible and affordable at all levels of society, particularly the needy, due to a lack of public funding and corruption within the system.
- Global and regional drivers can help bring healthcare to rural areas and the less fortunate.
- Multi-skilled rather than highly specialized healthcare workers should be a focus – this works especially well in rural areas.
- There needs to be more holistic training for medical practitioners, to include management skills and awareness of good governance.

In many parts of the world, healthcare is not always available or affordable to all who need it. For the less wealthy, a lack of publicly funded hospitals, medical systems and infrastructure, and the rising cost of medical care means that many who lack the financial means have to go without care. In addition, red tape and paperwork associated with insurance claims and procedures sometimes delay the delivery of medical care to patients.

Corruption within the healthcare system is a growing issue. It is most noticeable in drug distribution where pharmaceutical companies approach doctors to ensure their drugs are being prescribed to patients. Doctors may end up prescribing expensive drugs instead of cheaper generic ones, in return for kick-backs. To address this, better education for patients on their drug options will help them make the right decisions.

The current medical education system can also be improved. **Doctors need to be better equipped with management skills in addition to their medical knowledge, so that they can run hospitals and healthcare systems efficiently.** Awareness

of the corruption that has plagued the healthcare system needs to be built in as well so doctors come out into the real world knowing what to expect and prepared to take action.

Getting healthcare into rural areas is another concern. Health workers have to be skilled in many areas, not just one. Such cross disciplinary expertise within the healthcare system will open up more doors for the less fortunate.

To address these challenges, **it was suggested that healthcare be included in human rights bills, to ensure that it is provided to people at all levels of society, regardless of material wealth or position.**

Healthcare workers need to be more exposed and open minded in order to allow change to happen. More public-private partnerships could help to minimize bureaucracy, for example through the introduction of a universal insurance system. Co-operation at regional and global levels will be key to making medical care more accessible, affordable and efficient.

GENDER EQUALITY/ 13

SUMMARY

- Gender equality has been and continues to be a passionately debated topic. While many opportunities have opened up for women in the fields of politics, academia and business, much remains to be done to truly realise gender equality.
- Education, increased awareness and a higher number of women in positions of power and influence are necessary to address the issues associated with gender equality.
- Leadership traits required to drive this agenda are the ability to motivate and inspire others, networked and connected leadership, and the ability to respond to crises.

In the pursuit of gender equality, discrimination remains prevalent in aspects like labour market provisions, salary, access to education, gender-biased legislations and religious restrictions. While these issues likely have an overwhelming impact on women around the world, there is insufficient documented data to assess the full extent of the problem.

Representatives from India highlighted that **although an increasing number of women have been successful in securing top corporate positions, they still battle with the lack of access to 'privileges' like specific career-boosting information, which is only discussed in the 'Old Boys Club'.**

The small number of women in significant political positions also contributes to the lack of representation of women's rights in Asia. The handful of female Presidents and Prime Ministers constantly come under more intense scrutiny than their male counterparts.

The socioeconomic disparity between genders is also a concern. In developed countries, roughly 60% of women with professional backgrounds are not the decision makers in their respective households. Society tends to frown upon women leading families in the Asian culture. This may also be

attributed to restrictions of certain religions, which limit the contribution and participation of women in socioeconomic activities.

Although women are increasingly involved in entrepreneurship and other informal economic activities, there is still a negative perception associated with the professions they typically pursue (e.g. salon beauticians) due to the smaller impact they may have on local economies.

Several best practices from around Asia include the work of the NGO, Sisters in Islam, which promotes women's rights within the framework of Islam. The revamping of the education syllabus in tertiary schools in Tamil Nadu, India to adhere to non-gender biased content is a milestone. In Afghanistan, the launch of the ARMAN FM radio station introduced the first male-female deejay pairing to the country – initially blasted by critics, it now reaches over 8 million listeners.

For the gender equality agenda to gain traction, a mass movement approach should be adopted. This could be enabled through collective leadership or informal leaders who can exert their influence to the masses via their strong networks. **Gender equality requires its champions to possess resilience, courage and determination so they may promote a sustainable paradigm shift.**

ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION/ 14

SUMMARY

- There is a stark difference in the challenges faced by developing and developed nations. However, teaching quality and allocation of resources are a universal problem.
- Initiatives to address the issue of attendance in schools include supplementary nutritional programs to improve students' mental and physical development, and practical workshop training, in which students develop a trade to supplement household income as well as a knowledge database for education policy makers.
- Leadership traits necessary to overcome this are innovative solutions, the ability to motivate and inspire others to achieve ambitious goals, and the drive to work endlessly towards those goals.

The facilitator posed the question, "What do you want for your children?" to the floor to kick off the session. The answers received centered around the hope for a normal childhood, happiness and the opportunity to follow one's interest/passion, instilling of good values to aid in making life's important decisions; and most importantly, for the child to be loved.

The discussion then moved to the topic of challenges faced in developing nations such as India, where bureaucratic red tape proves a stumbling block to the effective allocation of resources and budget to the most needed areas of educational reform. Unfortunately, there seems to be a lack of emphasis or recognition for the need to develop strategies which instill the fundamental skills and values children need to succeed in life – instead, government officials here are preoccupied with implementing policies for record keeping purposes.

Insufficient training for teachers, the lack of autonomy and accountability for schools to customise education standards to meet local needs, poor access to vocational tertiary education, and systemic corruption are other challenges developing countries face. Amongst all of these, however, **one of the biggest stumbling blocks is convincing parents to send their children to school while they battle for their daily survival.**

On the other end of the spectrum, developed nations were plagued by the performance disparities and the

stark difference between government-funded and private-funded schools: **the impact of deep-rooted systems has led to social and hierarchical tensions, an ongoing debate on the depth or breadth of syllabi, access to financial aid for tertiary education, and the lack of resources to assist education policymakers.**

Key intervention strategies shared by the delegates include a government funded nutritional programme to provide protein supplements (like eggs or meat) to students in refugee schools -costing as little as USD 100 a year per child, this has succeeded in increasing classroom performance by 15-20%. Certain schools in rural India offer jewelry making workshops to help young girls supplement their household income while attending school. In Korea, an online portal to disseminate information and assist in securing financial aid for tertiary education has been hugely successful. A vocational training system in Vietnam has provided the opportunity for street children to escape the vicious cycle of poverty.

Though the issues and problems may differ, the elements central to achieving access to quality education are universal. They include governments that acknowledge the critical need for effective strategies to address fundamental and long-term educational issues, and forward-thinking leaders who can develop innovative solutions to address specific needs in their community, while motivating others to carry initiatives through.

CREATIVE LEADERSHIP: FROM ARTISTS TO ENTREPRENEURS/ 15

SUMMARY

- While not all entrepreneurs may be artists or vice versa, all share one thing in common, i.e. culture.
- Over time, artists have often led social revolutions, calls for justice and change.
- Key challenges include funding, distribution, censorship, copyright/piracy issues, maintaining authenticity vs. marketability, and a lack of business acumen.
- Strategies to address these challenges include innovation and adaptation, ensuring work is community-based and inclusive, and increasing communication and collaboration.



The group comprised a variety of entrepreneurs - artists, writers, musicians, social entrepreneurs and environmentalists. Funding is a universal issue. The creator's/artist's big challenge is to find the right source of funds for their projects; meanwhile, investors look for that return on investment – which creative project do I invest in for definite return? And once a piece of art has been produced, how do artists get people to see it? How do they get the right distributors involved?

Some in the group felt that there would have to be some compromise between authenticity and marketability – one delegate suggested picking the path you intended to go on, and having the discipline to stick to that decision throughout your career. Others felt that with the right partnerships and frameworks in place, artists can be left to focus on what they do best, i.e. create art and leave it to agents/distributors/galleries to do the selling for them.

The group also agreed that as artists who put their work out there, there needs to be some relevance to their work. They need to ensure they're not working in a vacuum – if it doesn't resonate with the public at some point, there's no point in putting it out there in the first place.

Education is a key concern for many, especially in developing countries where there seems to be a pulling away from the arts, with an increased focus on science and math and language. Due to a lack of government support, there is a real danger of culture and art being eroded and eventually lost. **However, the group agreed that it is vital for these to be ingrained in the education system to continue to foster innovation.**

The ability to innovate and adapt will require communication and collaboration between artists and entrepreneurs. Creating community-based projects which are inclusive, rather than being purely based on the artist's own interests, resonated as a principle for success. Again, all of these are ideas which cut across borders and cultures.

Finally, governments must play a part in fostering the right environment to breed and encourage creativity. A good example is the UK Creative Futures Programme, which supports artists by giving them international exposure and with limited censorship or state interference.



“We have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize.”

- Thich Nhat Hanh

ISLAM IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES/ 16

SUMMARY

- In the 21st century, religion has often become a political tool. Sometimes, Islam is no exception. In many parts of the world, including some moderate nations, the approach towards Islam is becoming increasingly conservative.
- Governments need to ensure there is equality and justice for all citizens (Muslim and non-Muslim, conservative and liberal) to create harmonious societies.
- Young leaders can no longer remain disinterested or neutral but need to step up and take an interest in religious issues to ensure an Islam of peace, love and equality.

With guest speaker Zainah Anwar (founding member of Sisters in Islam and currently Project Director, Musawah), this dialogue session was a frank, insightful and impassioned look at Islam in the 21st century.

Although Islam is a religion founded on kindness and justice, the perception of Islam today does not always fall along these lines. In some parts of the world, the face of Islam is changing amidst struggles for women's rights, and there appears to be a shift towards intolerance.

Women's rights in Islam are not always fairly represented, especially in countries where there is no dedicated administrative body that has been assigned to the cause. There is also a disinterest or silence of the elite in certain societies, including among young leaders, when it comes to religious issues. They often prefer to stay neutral or to focus their energies on economic or other matters.

The issue of conflicting laws and policies can exacerbate the issue. For example, in the multi-cultural and multi-religious landscape of Malaysia, there are two types of laws that govern the people – civil law and Shariah law. Muslims are governed by Shariah law (in certain aspects) while everyone else is governed by civil law. This creates an inequality of rights for Muslim women vis-a-vis the rest.

There is some misinterpretation of Islam which has been carried from generation to generation. Some people, especially those in rural areas, are not unaware of their rights and the deeper meaning of the religion. **Education is key to helping people to better understand the substance of religion, not just its form.**

A number of delegates agreed that in some countries, politics needs to be decoupled from religion to prevent politicians from using the religious card to win favor or push legislation through. However, a delegate shared



his view that in some populous Muslim nations such as in parts of Indonesia, religion is perceived and treated as a personal belief. How it is practiced and to what extent it is practiced is up to each individual, and the government does not interfere.

It is critical that the public space be opened to all members of society, to allow a diversity of voices, including the voices of moderation. All citizens, regardless of religion, should be engaged in the political futures and constitution of their respective nations.

As Zainah stressed, **the time is now for young leaders to stand up and be counted on religious matters.** There is much to be proud of in one's Muslim heritage. How Muslims live their faith in this world remains a work in progress. **It is imperative to demand that their religion not be a representation of intolerance and repression, but of peace, love and equality.**

ASIA SOCIETY-BANK OF AMERICA MERRILL LYNCH PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD/ 17

The Asia Society-Bank of America Merrill Lynch Public Service Award is aligned with Asia Society's long-term initiative of having a positive impact on communities around the world through the replication of strong social development initiatives. Past winners include an HIV/AIDS children's foundation in China, a social development initiative to help victims of prostitution in India, and an HIV & AIDS initiative in Iran.

The selection for 2009 was intensely competitive. The decision for selecting the winner was based on: quantifiable impact of the initiative, its growth potential and its overall sustainability. The winner is selected by the Asia 21 2009 Class of Fellows, and is given a USD\$10,000 grant along with the support of the Fellows Class.

The winner for the 2009 Asia Society-Bank of America Merrill Lynch Public Service Award is Prisoners Assistance Nepal, a rehabilitation centre for prisoners in Nepal, with an emphasis on assisting women and children. The Award was accepted by Ms. Indira Ramanagar, who started the initiative with the simple intention of bringing back smiles to the young children born in the dreary prisons of Nepal.

A gutsy woman, Ms Ramanagar never thought of becoming a leader or a politician, but instead naturally transitioned into this role of assisting her fellow citizens who were often victims of an archaic system, which sometimes imprisoned women for having abortions or miscarriages. She quickly realised the importance of communicating and networking internationally.

Her project is a collaborative initiative to link prisons with homes, schools and the surrounding community. A constant challenge she faces is getting prisoners to believe in themselves and to win their trust, which she tackles by accepting them for who they are and motivating them about their future. Her work also explores the root causes of why certain segments of society are pushed into crime, and increases awareness of the plight of women and children in prisons across Nepal, some of whom include the mentally ill.

Prisons in Nepal are often in poor physical condition and lack access to healthcare for prisoners. Ms Ramanagar's rehabilitation initiatives include alternative education to help children integrate into schools and communities, and site visits to the mountains of Nepal to help youth understand the potential and beauty of their homeland. Young prisoners are frequently taken swimming and

climbing, with the aim of getting rid of the notion that they are rejects of society and to help them realise their capabilities.

Her initiative also manages projects that aim to provide sustainable skills to prisoners to aid their transition to freedom. This includes the provision of seed money, mushroom farming, basic management skills and farming equipment.

Ms Ramamagar, a past Asia 21 delegate, had partnered with another delegate from the 2007 Summit, Adam Gilmore, Mechanical Systems Lead at the International Space Station for NASA, to build science lessons relevant to Nepalese youth and introduce them to a world of science outside their daily lives. Adam journeyed halfway around the world to talk about living in space to Indira's wards, prisoners children living at a PA Nepal shelter.

Other follow up projects include engaging the students of PA Nepal with NASA's EarthKAM project, which will allow them to remotely access a camera on board the International Space Station and photograph any location on earth. Adam is also negotiating with a local US school to transfer select excess resources, such as books and lab equipment, to PA Nepal.



Ms Indira Ramanagar, whose organization, Prisoners Assistance Nepal, was the winner of the 2009 Asia Society-Bank of America Merrill Lynch Public Service Award

LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT/ 18

SUMMARY

- In rural areas where food and water are the biggest problems, creating awareness for sustainability is secondary.
- Businesses have yet to change their mindsets from being predominantly profit and output-focused to doing business in a truly sustainable manner.
- Various frameworks can be established to ensure sustainable leadership, but these should include multi-stakeholder involvement, and interaction that is balanced and contextual.
- Corporations and individuals play important roles and should not rely solely on governments to lead change.
- To accelerate the process of change, measures to incentivise and catalyze change are important – these include ensuring monetary benefits of sustainability are visible to companies and making sustainable products cheaper for consumers.

Discussions revolved around what a successful framework that fosters sustainable leadership would look like. Platforms for interaction between leaders were highlighted such as the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit, with a stress on multi-government involvement and interaction to ensure inclusivity and cohesiveness of views and opinions. Stakeholders involved in such interaction should include leaders of nations as well as leaders of industries, especially those that are the biggest pollutants, such as the transportation sector.

The role of the corporate world was discussed next. There is more accountability expected of companies today – they need to rise up to the role expected of them to contribute towards environmental conservation through self-regulation.

Organizations need to incorporate sustainable thinking into their business processes, rather than just looking at their corporate responsibility to the environment. **They need to understand that in order for their business to exist in the future, action needs to be taken today.**

Corporations will also be more inclined to act on energy conservation and environmental preservation if they see a monetary benefit attached. It is important that regulation be in place, which requires companies to report preservation activities more holistically.

Meanwhile, the challenge for developing nations is to make environmental preservation a priority when there are other more urgent matters to attend to, including basic necessities. How do we make people think of sustainability in areas where they have much bigger problems such as the shortage of food or water? In poor countries and rural areas the need to address starvation is much more immediate than sustainability; even if they are



educated on the need to change lifestyles for a more sustainable future, they will see little point in putting it into practice when they don't even know if they can survive the month.

The issue of new technologies also came up. **Higher investment should be placed on energy conservation and technology development to promote more energy-efficient machines.** Alternative energy, including renewable sources, is key to addressing climate change. The biggest problem with renewable energy is, unfortunately, its cost. However, if countries are able to remove fuel subsidies and direct those towards renewable energy, the price actually becomes affordable.

Governments, too, need to do their part in ensuring that people have access to sustainable options. Pollution, for example, can be reduced if better public transportation is readily available. People can make the change in their lifestyle but options need to be available. If governments make conscious efforts to ensure sustainability is incorporated at all levels, it will be easier to get people

on board. Tax structures could also be modified to ensure there are incentives for individuals to purchase sustainable goods or to provide tax breaks to green investors and consumers.

Perhaps one of the most encouraging yet simplest suggestions was a request by one of the delegates. **He asked his fellow delegates to join him in a pledge to never drink bottled water again – the large number of attendees who immediately raised their hands in support of this was testimony to this group's honest desire to make a difference.**

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: MOMENTS OF TRUTH/ 19

SUMMARY

- We all have the ability to survive under the most dire circumstances and sometimes it is these trying times that strengthen us.
- The interest we take in those around us and the opportunities we choose to give them may have a life-altering impact.
- Solidarity is key in any struggle for justice and equality.
- The next generation of politicians are leaders with a conscience and heart, and as voters, we need to believe in them.
- Our successes and failures are largely up to us – we should strive to make the right choices and take responsibility for our own lives.

A delegate recounted the seven days she spent in prison for allegedly inciting hatred against the government. Following a devastating natural disaster in her country, the national media had been strictly patrolled to minimise what the government saw as damaging coverage. This delegate decided she would make up for the lack of information by shooting an independent documentary on what had happened. She uncovered a large amount of corruption between the construction companies and local officers, which led to her being beaten up by local gang members who then called the police on her – she was thrown into jail. This incident reminded her of the omnipotence of state power, her ability to survive under the most extreme circumstances, and strengthened her resolve as a journalist.

An Asia 21 fellow then spoke of the parallels between himself and another young man: both of roughly the same age, race and upbringing and with the exact same name. Hailing from a tough background, the speaker could easily have turned to drugs or crime but was fortunate enough to have been given the right opportunities by those around him – he ended up a Rhodes Scholar with a successful career in investment banking. His almost-doppelganger, however, is serving a lifetime imprisonment sentence because of his involvement in a cop killing. The fellow spoke of how either one of their stories could so easily have been the other's. The only difference was the opportunities the speaker had been given. The lesson he left with the crowd was the significance of being involved in and concerned with the lives of those around you. To quote him, **“They need to think that you care before they care what you think”**.



Another delegate shared his experiences as a political refugee. His involvement in his country's nation-wide student uprising for liberation sparked off decades of running away from the authorities while having to see his family members being arrested because of him. The speaker never started out with heroic intentions but a simple desire to correct what was wrong, and despite the overwhelming odds, he never gave up. He met Nelson Mandela in 2003 where they commiserated on **how they managed to turn guilt - over circumstances which seemed at the time to be beyond their control - into something positive.** The speaker also spoke about how during the time he was on the run, people often sheltered and fed him at huge risk to themselves. These moments of solidarity are what kept him going – it is solidarity that is key to the fight for justice.

One of the delegates, a politician, spoke of her hometown, a province known as the 'Asian sugar bowl'. She was invited to join one of the political parties in an environment

where one had to have the right connections, resources, and backing of the party, in order to succeed. One day, she found herself kicked out of the party because she had dared to sue a hospital (which turned out to be a big contributor to the party) for negligence which led to the death of a friend. This left her having to choose between turning independent or giving up her campaign. Despite having the odds stacked against her, she chose to campaign and won - she had the mandate of the people, even without the money to buy votes. Her lesson to the audience was to not assume that all politicians are bad. The next generation are politicians with a conscience.

A delegate who was an Olympic bronze medalist then shared his story about his journey towards the Olympics. Twice he participated in the Olympic trials. Both times, despite coming in fourth then third, he was only named an alternate for the Olympic team. The first time this happened to him, it almost broke him. Eventually, however, through

sheer will and perseverance, he chose to pull himself together for the next round of trials. The second time it happened, armed with his new never-give-up philosophy, he wrote down the following, a thousand times: "I am on the 2008 Olympic team." The day before the Beijing games, he received the call that changed his life forever – he went on to participate in and win the team bronze medal. **His takeaway is that all men and women are born equal – we are solely responsible for our destinies and it is only the choices we make that distinguish us.**

With so many dynamic young leaders gathered together, this session was the most personal and intense. Needless to say, there were countless truly inspirational, unique and meaningful experiences shared. It would be hard to do justice to all the stories shared on that day in the scant few pages available here, so those described are but a sampling.

PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECTS/ 20

- The delegates formed groups to focus on specific public service projects throughout the following year in the lead-up to next year's summit.
- Presentations were delivered describing each group's project

Group 1 Asia 21 Helps

An international hotline for migrant workers, immigrants, and trafficked persons.

Transnational migration is increasing at a faster rate today than ever before due to globalization and the transnationalism of labor. Labor flows are moving from countries and continents, and migrants workers or trafficked persons sometimes find themselves displaced, disoriented, or in need of communities and support in their host countries. This project will develop a hotline that helps to ease the transition from home to host countries, and one that will function simultaneously as a crisis helpline, a support hotline, and an information portal.

Group 2 Tales from Enchanted Lands

A project that connects people in fragile ecosystems around the world with exceptional filmmakers to craft a treasure of extraordinary short films.

The idea behind this public service project is to collect success stories in the environmental field from different corners of the planet. The project aims to create a resource of material to share learning and best practices in the environment sector from around the world as well as to highlight problems and showcase innovative solutions. It also aims to have practical tips and on the ground project ideas that people can implement in their community to make our Earth a greener, more peaceful place. The project seeks to connect people with path-breaking success stories with filmmakers to craft a treasure of extraordinary short films.

Group 3 When Numbers Matter

Exploring the global impact of demographic change in Asia.

This project will provide a better understanding of demographic change within Asia and what effects it will produce not only in the region, but for the world. The proposal is to create and sustain an awareness and information program and portal that are both cost-effective and technologically-advanced. By engaging key stakeholders including youth, policy makers, and entities involved in addressing population and demographics, the project will gather valuable insight into the existing conditions and immediate prospects that a burgeoning population implies. The project's strength resides in the network of Asia Society Young Leaders who will provide access points and information on demographic changes in their own countries.

Group 4 **Asia 21 Resource Exchange**

An open source forum to connect the capacities and needs of Asia Society Fellows and Summit delegates.

At the conclusion of this Summit, many ideas, recommendations, and business cards were shared. This project will facilitate the continued exchange of information by creating an easy-to-use website where Asia 21 Fellows and Summit delegates can report on their existing and nascent projects, seek advice and support, and offer recommendations and contributions to their peers. Through this online community, we will be able to grow our endeavors, identify those who have the appropriate expertise and resources to aid us, and benefit from each others' experiences. The medium will serve as a convenient and efficient forum to connect Asia Society affiliates' needs and resources.

Group 5 **Connecting Young Thinkers in the Asia-Pacific**

Using social media to foster critical dialogue among secondary school students throughout the Asia-Pacific.

This Asia 21 service project seeks to connect young people throughout the Asia-Pacific and engage them in a social media campaign designed to foster discussion on pressing contemporary social issues in the region. Secondary school students across the Asia-Pacific are interested in building bridges between their communities, but few have the opportunity to interact directly with their peers from other countries. Even fewer have outlets to share their ideas broadly and shape debates on key social issues. This project would seek to do both – building bridges and providing a platform for discussing important regional issues. To start, Asia 21 delegates would build a network of participating secondary schools. Delegates would be responsible for identifying schools in their home countries with an interest in participating in the project and visiting those schools to explain the project, promote

it, and facilitate live discussion. Students from each participating school would be invited to engage in a discussion mediated by Asia 21 delegates on contemporary social issues. Teachers could also elect to require participation as part of their curricula. A central website would be established to mediate exchange of ideas on selected topics, and each delegate would ensure a certain number of submissions from his or her home country. Submissions would be made in a variety of forms – including video vox-pops, blog posts, Twitter comments, etc. The exchange would be fuelled and marketed by contributions from high-profile opinion shapers across the region on what they see as the major challenges, encouraging input, discussion, and debate from young people in response. At the end of the year, Asia 21 delegates will prepare a report assessing the findings from the discussion. That report will provide valuable insights into how young people view the region's challenges, as well as offering some creative ideas from on addressing them.

Group 6

One Response

Fostering a community-driven Asian perspective on humanitarian response standards, rights, and best practices.

Natural disasters do not respect political boundaries. Asian peoples have frequently suffered at the hands of the same natural calamity, but across territorial boundaries. Their preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery have varied widely from region to region. The tsunami, the Kashmir earthquake, and floods in the Gangetic delta are recent examples of disasters spanning several countries and peoples. In addition to these natural calamities there occur complex humanitarian emergencies with significant repercussions on large swathes of populations that become disenfranchised, isolated, and desolate; the vulnerability of internally displaced people (IDPs) is a striking example. While the Sphere Project holds response agencies and governments to minimum standards in humanitarian relief, local communities know what works best for them beyond

the Sphere guidelines. This project seeks to give voice to the marginalized communities at both ends of the spectrum – those that were able to return to their lands, regenerate livelihoods, and recover, and those that are now trapped in a seemingly endless vortex of misfortune. The One Response project will provide a platform to share the greatest challenges and successes from marginalized communities across national borders and provide recommendations to policy makers. It not only documents past experiences but also will identify ways forward in providing assistance and empowering IDPs, host communities, and those who have returned to their land. Some of the questions that will be flagged to start the discussion are: How was information most effectively disseminated and assistance provided to the IDPs in Sri Lanka after the tsunami and during the conflict? What are the best practices to empower IDPs, host communities, and returnees with knowledge of their rights and access to resources? What innovative methods were used by people in Bhuj to ensure

food security? How was potable water accessed in Kashmir after the earthquake? How prepared are the people of Sabah thirteen years after the typhoon? What were the best shelter practices in the tsunami affected regions? What health needs were best met, or left unmet, and how were those decisions made? The One Response project will identify communities from participating regions, record their experiences in several formats (text/ audio/video), share this information with all participants through simple online portals, and organize a culminating a seminar that brings together representatives to learn from each other's experiences and formulate recommendations for an improved response in future conflicts and disasters. The Asia Society network would be utilized to identify these communities and help translate their experiences into a regional policy working paper which will be shared with various policy makers including governments, donors, the UN, and other relief service providers.

Group 7

Public-Private Partnerships

*Enhancing the business-social relationship:
Aligning “hearts” and “minds”.*

With the growing focus on Corporate Social Responsibility, pressure is building on businesses to do more to leverage their position to better their communities. Businesses are looking for ways to engage their own staff and are increasingly looking for ways to better interact with NGOs, NPOs, and charities. As the number of social organizations grows, there is increasing competition for finite business sector resources and a call for transparency and good governance to identify the more credible social organizations to support. This project will assess how NGOs currently engage the business sector to source funding, manage their operations (management, marketing, finances, etc), and manage their aid/assistance programs. We will help prioritize what NGOs need from businesses and we will engage companies to understand their existing levels of philanthropy and desire to move to a more involved relationship with social organizations. Our project will develop guidelines for better NGO-business engagement in Asia and will select an NGO and company to test pilot these guidelines.

Group 8

Wash your hands, Asia!

Combating deadly diseases with compelling public service media.

We are now surrounded by warnings about the danger of bird flu, swine flu, and other transmittable diseases and the potential for epidemic and pandemic conditions. Millions of poor people living in rural areas of Asia are very vulnerable to such outbreaks. In many cases, basic hygiene can prevent these diseases. Experts repeatedly state that washing hands is the most significant step for safeguarding against the spread of germs and illness. If we could manage to have celebrities and public figures in our own societies to make a variety of video/radio/multimedia public service announcements to educate people on how hand washing habit can prevent diseases and save lives, it would be a great service to the whole region and beyond. Through its Fellows and networks, Asia Society could facilitate the creation of a “Resource Bank” to make these clips available to local media outlets and other interested parties such as NGOs. Working with local partners, the project will create a two minute recorded announcement featuring local icons that can be distributed free-of-charge to the national and regional media outlets. Due to the lack of resources, local media are not often able to undertake such public service education campaigns. With its network of experts and regional contacts, Asia Society is well-positioned to help address this need.

CAPTURED MOMENTS
FROM THE SUMMIT/ 21





CAPTURED MOMENTS FROM THE SUMMIT/ 21



01. Zheyu Yang, Truc Pham-Dinh, and Danny Levinson
02. Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Tun Razak, Keynote Address during the Opening Dinner
03. Opening Dinner
04. Karen Goulder-Pham and Mitchell Pham lead a dance lesson
05. Ching Jorge, Lobsang Sangay and Dorjee Sun
06. Delegates in their national dress, Opening Dinner
07. Philippines 21 Delegation
08. Sutapa Amornvivat and Navin Thukkaram
09. Zainah Anwar and a delegate
10. Hsu-Ming Teo, Greg Fox, and Kok Jwee Foo
11. Rashneh Pardiwala



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Our world needs leaders
who can help her citizens.
Take action now.

Talk to us.

Sustainability solutions
and climate change advice

- Carbon and climate change advice
- Corporate Responsibility (CR) strategy and framework
- Measurement and valuation of CR initiatives
- CR function set-up
- CR assurance and reporting
- CR tax optimisation and structuring
- CR due diligence

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