



Politics in Action: Updates from Southeast Asia

4-13 May 2020

Online event: Tune in on the [SSEAC Facebook page](#)
for video updates.



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Sydney Southeast
Asia Centre

Sydney Southeast Asia Centre

The Sydney Southeast Asia Centre is forging Australia's relationship with one of the world's fastest growing regions by educating students and building new partnerships with academics and governments based on research excellence.

With more than 500 academics across six faculties and three schools working on and in Southeast Asia, the University of Sydney has one of the highest concentrations of regional expertise in the world.

Event proceedings

In this public forum, invited experts provided an analysis of the current political situation in Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Vietnam, and discuss the broader implications of events in these countries for our region.

Each of our country-specialists will record a 15-minute video presentation which will be made available in the week of 4-8 May 2020.

Following each presentation, audience members will be invited to send in their questions by filling out [this survey](#) by **4pm, Friday 8 May 2020**.

The speakers will then record short videos responding to the main questions raised by the audience, which will be made available in the week of 11-15 May 2020.

All videos recorded as part of Politics in Action 2020 will be made available for public viewing on our [Facebook page](#) and our [YouTube channel](#) from the 4th of May 2020 onwards.



Program:

Week 1 - Video presentations

Day	Time	Topic	Presenter	Institution
Monday 4 May	17.00	Laos	Dr Kearrin Sims	James Cook University
Monday 4 May	17.30	Vietnam	Dr Huong Le Thu	Australian Strategic Policy Institute
Tuesday 5 May	17.00	Malaysia	Dr Sebastian Dettman	Singapore Management University
Tuesday 5 May	17.30	Myanmar	Dr Susan Banki	University of Sydney
Wednesday 6 May	17.00	Philippines	Dr Jean Franco	University of the Philippines, Diliman
Wednesday 6 May	17.30	Indonesia	Dr Risa Toha	Yale-NUS, Singapore
Friday 8 May	09.00	Wrap-up	Dr Thomas Power	University of Sydney
Friday 8 May	16.00	<i>Deadline to submit your questions to SSEAC</i>		

Program:

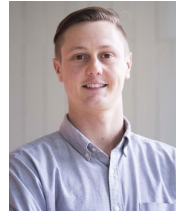
Week 2 – Q&A videos

Day	Time	Topic	Presenter	Institution
Monday 11 May	17.00	Laos	Dr Kearnin Sims	James Cook University
Monday 11 May	17.30	Vietnam	Dr Huong Le Thu	Australian Strategic Policy Institute
Tuesday 12 May	17.00	Malaysia	Dr Sebastian Dettman	Singapore Management University
Tuesday 12 May	17.30	Myanmar	Dr Susan Banki	University of Sydney
Wednesday 13 May	17.00	Philippines	Dr Jean Franco	University of the Philippines, Diliman
Wednesday 13 May	17.30	Indonesia	Dr Risa Toha	Yale-NUS, Singapore

Laos

Dr Kearnin Sims

James Cook University



Kearnin Sims is a critical development scholar trained in sociology and international relations. Kearnin has a keen interest in China's growing presence in Mainland Southeast Asia, and particularly how the Belt and Road Initiative is transforming the livelihoods and wellbeing of impoverished communities. Kearnin coordinates and lectures into James Cook University's (JCU) Master of Global Development. Kearnin is a Member of the Development Studies Association of Australia Executive Committee and Treasurer of the Association of Mainland Southeast Asia Scholars.

Twitter: [@KearninSims](https://twitter.com/KearninSims)

Vietnam

Dr Huong Le Thu

Australian Strategic Policy Institute



Huong Le Thu is a senior analyst at ASPI, Defence and Strategy Program. Prior to this, she worked at the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs (ANU), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore), and Institute of International Relations (Taiwan). Her research interests include multilateral security in Asia and foreign policy in post-socialist countries. She has held research fellowships at the University of Malaya and the ASEAN Secretariat. She is an alumna of the DKI Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (Honolulu) and a recipient of the US State Department Fellowship for East Asian Security and IISS ShangriLa Dialogue Southeast Asian Fellow.

Twitter: [@le2huong](https://twitter.com/le2huong)

Malaysia

Dr Sebastian Dettman

Singapore Management University



Sebastian Dettman is an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Sciences at Singapore Management University. He researches politics in Southeast Asia, particularly Malaysia and Indonesia, focusing on political parties, electoral competition, and democratization. He completed his PhD in the Department of Government at Cornell University in 2018, and a Masters in Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Michigan in 2012. Prior to SMU, he was a 2018-19 Postdoctoral Fellow in Contemporary Asia at the Shorenstein Center at Stanford University. His research has been published in *Electoral Studies*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, and *South East Asia Research*.

Twitter: [@sebdettman](https://twitter.com/sebdettman)

Myanmar

Dr Susan Banki

University of Sydney



Susan Banki's research interests lie in the political, institutional, and legal contexts that explain the roots of and solutions to international human rights violations. In particular, she is interested in the ways that questions of sovereignty, citizenship/membership and humanitarian principles have shaped our understanding of and reactions to various transnational phenomena, such as the international human rights regime, international migration and the provision of international aid. She is currently investigating the local, regional and international mechanisms (and the interactions between them) that serve as potential levers for change.

Twitter: [@susanbanki](https://twitter.com/susanbanki)

Philippines

Dr Jean Franco

University of the Philippines, Diliman



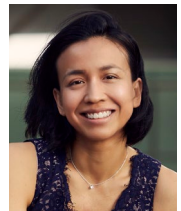
Jean Encinas-Franco is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines, Diliman. Her publications cover issues on gender and the politics of international migration from the Philippines. Her dissertation explores the politics of labor out-migration in the Philippines and the discursive representation of overseas Filipino workers as “modern-day heroes”. Prior to this, she worked for 15 years at the Senate of the Philippine. Currently, she is editing a volume for the Philippine Migration Research Network and the Philippine Social Science Council assessing 50 years of state-sponsored labor migration from the Philippines.

Twitter: @francojean825

Indonesia

Dr Risa Toha

Yale-NUS, Singapore



Risa Toha is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yale-National University of Singapore. She completed her PhD at the University of California, Los Angeles. Prior to joining Yale-NUS, she was a postdoctoral Indonesia Fellow at the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, MA, and a Visiting Assistant Professor at Wheaton College, IL. Her current research lies at the intersection of ethnic politics, political violence, elections, and new democracies. Her book, *Rioting for Representation*, examines the rise and subsequent decline of ethnocommunal rioting during Indonesia’s transition to democracy, is under contract with Cambridge University Press.

Closing remarks

Dr Thomas Power
University of Sydney



Tom Power is a lecturer in the Department of Indonesian Studies at the University of Sydney, and undertook his doctoral studies at the Australian National University. His research focuses on democratisation and party politics in Indonesia. He is the co-editor of *From Stagnation to Regression: Indonesian democracy after twenty years* (ISEAS Publishing, forthcoming).

Twitter: @tpjpower





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T +61 2 9114 0953 | E sseac@sydney.edu.au

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