

# INSIGHTS

March 2024



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## ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY INSTITUTE (ISI)

The International Strategy Institute (ISI) is a not-for-profit organisation that helps connect governments and businesses across Asia.

We stand for universal ethical business values such as: equality, transparency, fair trade, and sustainable development. Our dialogues, research and networking platforms, are designed to drive economic growth in the region. We aim to:

- 1 Build platforms for regional dialogue and networking opportunities that allow businesses, industry captains and governments to come together to drive economic growth of the region;
- 2 Provide timely research to keep our members and governments informed and updated on global trade and political issues that may have an impact on their operations;
- 3 Match businesses to the right investors and ensure that the companies are paired with the right strategic investment partner.

## VISION AND MISSION

International Strategy Institute (ISI) aims to be the leading regional connector and networking platform for governments and businesses across Asia and the Pacific.

Through our networking events, conferences, and rigorously research publications, we hope to promote a robust Asian business environment that is strategic, inclusive, innovative and sustainable.

# ARTICLES FEATURED

## ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOLUTION FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

### CY Cheah

Chairman & Founder of  
International Strategy Institute (ISI)



The concept of “New Normal”, will demand a new and more flexible approach to weather the storm of the pandemic. With Covid-19 hit at the end of 2019, the entire world was caught off-guard by the unprecedented health crisis. In addition to the ensuing panic, the world economy has become virtual since the spread of Covid-19 has single-handedly disrupted the world. In what seems like the blink of an eye, this disease has upturned our lives and our daily activities.

We are seeing many businesses across multiple sectors come to a standstill, delivering a significant blow to the global economy. However, as they say, within every crisis, there is an opportunity. Many of our businesses have drastically changed their business models to stay competitive. The use of technology, mainly to keep their businesses running and connected with the people has made many of us somewhat at a turning point: a make-or-break time.

Industry leaders are finding themselves in a transformational landscape, and are rolling out solutions that will not only help mitigate the impact of Covid-19 but also allow the nation's economy to bounce back from the MCO safely and responsibly.



Over the last few years, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have stood out as the key driver behind economic development and emerged as an important and dynamic sector for the economy.

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM), SMEs contributed 38.9% (RM 553 million) of the total GDP in 2019, and it is anticipated that the contribution will push to or surpass the 50% mark within the next decade, this is supported with the continued outperformance of the year-to-year SME GDP growth to the total Malaysia's GDP.

The statistic above foresees that Malaysia will soon be driven by the SMEs as the main engine for the economy and as it grows, there is a need to ensure funding options are available and aware of by the SMEs in order for them to continue growing. This sector, if provided with the right support, has the potential to spread industrial growth throughout the country.

For many years, the SMEs have been mainly relying on banks to provide financing for their expansion agenda, and many of them have failed to secure the funding due to the risk associated with SMEs generally, in which banks often avoid. With the current economic recession, arising from the pandemic, the banks are more reluctant than ever to approve financing applications from SMEs.





One of the alternative funding solutions that Malaysia's capital market has to offer, is crowdfunding. Crowdfunding as defined in the Cambridge Dictionary, is "the practice of getting a large number of people to each give small amounts of money in order to provide the finance for a business project, typically using the internet". There are four types of crowdfunding; donation-based, reward-based, equity-based (commonly known as equity crowdfunding (ECF)), and lending-based (commonly known as Peer-to-Peer (P2P) financing). The first two types do not provide any financial returns to the contributors, nor are they regulated, the latter two are otherwise and they are of concern to this article.

The crowdfunding market has been gaining attraction, especially during this pandemic as it has accelerated the adaptation of digitalisation by all of the relevant stakeholders, crowdfunding offers several value propositions as compared to the conventional financing option, main ones are:

- 1 It takes shorter time to obtain funding through crowdfunding as it does not go through rigorous process as how banks would normally do. However, there are safety measures that are required by the crowdfunding platform operator to undertake to ensure legitima.
- 2 Crowdfunding offers access to larger audience/investors as compared to banks, in which it increases the funding success rate relatively.
- 3 SMEs that seek funding through crowdfunding are required to pitch their businesses/projects to the crowd/ investors directly via online crowdfunding platform, which provides an opportunity for the SMEs to leverage on to gain media exposure, especially through social media.
- 4 SMEs that list their business/project on a crowdfunding platform will also get sense of the market reaction towards their business/project. Hence, it would provide opportunity for the SMEs to enhance their operation or change their business strategy depending on the reaction they gets from the crowd/investors.
- 5 SMEs that seek to list their businesses/projects on ECF or P2P platforms will be coached by the platform operators to ensure that the funding target is achieved and also ensure that the SMEs continue to grow. The platform operator does this to increase its rate of successful campaigns listed on its platforms and also in some cases, to manage their own risk as the operators are allowed to invest in the SMEs' businesses/projects directly, but limited to a certain percentage.

## ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOLUTION FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

There are two types of crowdfunding that are regulated by the Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) (under the Guidelines on Recognised Market); ECF and P2P financing. Both of these types provide financial returns to the investors.

The InvestSmart (an investor empowerment body initiated by the SC) defines ECF as “a form of fundraising that allows a start-up or other smaller enterprises to obtain capital through small equity investments using online portals to publicise and facilitate such offers to crowd investors”. In short, it refers to micro-funding activity targeted at the general public, where in return, the investors (crowd) will obtain portion of the equity of the company/issuer, similar to purchasing stock of a public listed company in Bursa Malaysia. As of January 2021, there were 10 ECF platform operators registered from the SC, and these platforms have collectively raised RM 129.64 million with 119 successful campaigns (as of 30 September 2020).

P2P financing however, it is defined by InvestSmart as “a leading and borrowing activity between businesses and investors, facilitated through an online marketplace i.e., a P2P financing platform operator.

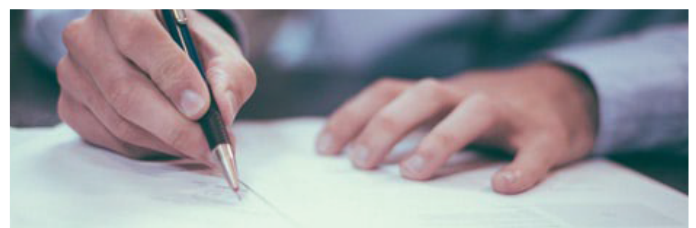
The funding needs are met by a group of investors putting in small amounts of money for a particular business need that has been vetted by a P2P financing platform operator”. In layman’s terms, it refers to micro-funding activity funded by the general public/crowd for a specific business/project where investors expect interest/profit in return. As of January 2021, there were 11 P2P platform operators registered with the SC, and these platforms have collectively raised RM 921.83 million with 13,039 successful campaigns (as at 30 September 2020).

ECF or P2P platform operators that facilitate the offering of Islamic campaigns are required to appoint Shariah adviser as stated in Chapter 12 of the Guidelines on Recognized Markets, to ensure the campaign complies with Shariah rules and principles at all times. Currently, there are one from each ECF and P2P platforms that facilitate the offering of Islamic finance campaigns, which are Ethis Ventures Sdn Bhd and P2P Nusa Kapital Sdn Bhd, respectively.

SMEs that are interested may contact the licensed ECF or P2P platform operators directly to understand further. Additionally, the platform operators, normally provide information on successful campaigns which would allow the SMEs to comprehend further and learn from the past experience of others.

Lack of access to affordable funding can easily trap SMEs in a “downward spiral”. They are unable to grow without more funds, and they cannot get funds without more growth. One of the ways to help in reducing financing hurdles for SMEs is to strengthen the infrastructure that supports the financial transactions, which includes the laws, regulations, and institutions to create, register and enforce collateral insolvency regime and credit reporting tools. It would also help for the government to develop a credit guarantee schemes for SMEs businesses, private SME lenders, and establish a hometown investment trust funds for financing risky SMEs and start-up businesses.

The lack of SME databases is another challenge for our SMEs. Their financial and non-financial accounts are often difficult to access. Hence, reducing their chances in getting financial loans or any form of finance assistance. Japan has created a Credit Risk Database (CRD) that shows how SMEs can be rated based on financial and nonfinancial data. This CRD will include data that can be used to rate SMEs through statistical analysis. This is something that we should be looking at in helping our SMEs and at the same time keeping track of their business developments.



This article was written by:

CY Cheah  
Chairman & Founder of International Strategy Institute (ISI),  
and was published in Nanyang Siang Pau.





# **2024** EVENTS

## Inter-Regional Business Forum 2024 (IRBF)

07 & 08 March 2024 - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



### Inter-Regional Business Forum 2024: Empowering Relations Between Latin American- The Caribbean & Southeast Asian Countries

The Inter-Regional Business Forum (IRBF) themed “Empowering Relations Between Latin American-The Caribbean & Southeast Asian Countries,” held on 7th and 8th March 2024 in Malaysia, concluded successfully. The forum served as a pivotal platform for fostering collaborative efforts and strengthening ties between the regions.

Throughout the two-day event, esteemed delegates and industry leaders engaged in insightful discussions surrounding key areas of mutual interest, including trade facilitation, investment promotion, market access, innovation, and sustainable development. The diverse range of perspectives and expertise contributed to a rich exchange of ideas aimed at driving economic growth and prosperity for both regions.



Welcome address by Mr. CY Cheah, Founder and Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI).



Luncheon Address by YBhg Dato' Seri Reezal Merican, Chairman of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE).



Opening keynote address by YBhg Datuk Hanafi Sakri, Deputy Secretary General (Industry) of the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI).



Opening remarks delivered by His Excellency Manuel Jose Balaguer Salas, Ambassador of Argentina & the Dean of GLULAC.



A highlight of IRBF 2024 was the diversity of perspectives brought by speakers for topics below:

#### **Panel Discussion 1: Agricultural and Halal Trade: Exploring Opportunities and Partnerships**

On the first day of the Inter-Regional Business Forum (IRBF) on March 7th, 2024, a compelling panel discussion titled 'Agricultural and Halal Trade: Exploring Opportunities and Partnerships' was held, where the complexities of international trade, particularly focusing on agriculture and the halal industry, were navigated. Under the expert moderation of Mr. Fazil Irwan, Director of Communications of Penang Institute (Certified Halal Officer & Former CEO of Penang Halal International), the session saw participation from esteemed panelists including Mr. Alejandro Nerveña, Director of Goods Export Promotion from Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship; Mr. Mohamad Romzi Sulaiman, Senior Manager at Halal Development Corporation Bhd (HDC) from Malaysia; and Mr. Erick Aponte, Trade Commissioner for ASEAN at the Peru Export and Tourism Promotion Board (Promperu). Their insightful discourse laid a solid groundwork for potential collaborations and provided invaluable insights into the future of agricultural and halal trade relationships.

#### **Panel Discussion 2: From Local to Global: Empowering SMEs For Inclusive Trade Growth**

The second panel discussion, titled 'From Local to Global: Empowering SMEs For Inclusive Trade Growth,' was dedicated to practical strategies for empowering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to expand globally, fostering inclusive trade growth and economic development. Under the guidance of an experienced moderator, Mr. Fazil Irwan, Director of Communications of Penang Institute (Certified Halal Officer & Former CEO of Penang Halal International), and with contributions from respected panellists, including Ms. Natalia Arcos from Chile's Export Promotion (PROCHILE), Ms. Ezzwanee Ahmad from Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Mr. Alfonso Soria from Colombia's ProColombia office in India, and Ms. Rita E-mei representing the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (ApexBrasil) office in Beijing, this discussion initiated a productive dialogue. It paved the way for impactful collaborations and offered valuable insights for sustainable business growth.

#### **Panel Discussion 3: Connectivity: Enhancing Logistics and Infrastructure for Trade Excellence**

On March 8th, 2024, the Inter-Regional Business Forum (IRBF) delved into the crucial realm of Connectivity: Enhancing Logistics and Infrastructure for Trade Excellence, marking its second day. The discussion aimed to explore strategies and innovations for bolstering logistical frameworks and infrastructure to facilitate seamless trade operations and elevate global connectivity. Throughout the session, panellists, including Mrs. Teresa Mera, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade of Peru, and Mr. Marco Neelsen, Executive Director of MMC Ports Holding Sdn Bhd from Malaysia, highlighted innovative solutions such as leveraging digital technologies and investing in infrastructure upgrades. Moderated by Dato' Edward Jules Esquire Savarimuthu, Strategic Advisor of the Malaysia Exporters Association (MEXPA), the panel provided valuable insights into enhancing trade connectivity, fostering collaboration, and driving sustainable economic growth.

#### **Panel Discussion 4: Sustainable Development and Trade Practices: A Pathway to Economic Growth and Environmental Harmony**

On March 8th, 2024, the Inter-Regional Business Forum (IRBF) embarked on a deep exploration during Panel Discussion 4, which centred on the crucial theme of Sustainable Development and Trade Practices: A Pathway to Economic Growth and Environmental Harmony. This engaging session sought to unravel the intricate connections between sustainable business practices and the twin goals of fostering economic growth and environmental preservation. Led by an accomplished moderator, Malaysia's Dr. Chris Daniel Wong, Former UN Global Compact - Malaysia Vice Chairman (2017-2019), and featuring esteemed panellists, including Brazil's Mr. Paulo Viana, Deputy Head of the Division of Industry and Services Promotion, and Malaysia's Dr. Daniele Gambero, President of Malaysia PropTech Association, the session aimed to uncover strategies for fostering sustainable economic growth while maintaining environmental harmony. With a spotlight on innovative trade strategies and environmentally conscious policies, participants delved into how businesses can drive economic prosperity while mitigating their environmental footprint.

#### **Panel Discussion 5: Innovate to Collaborate: Forging Synergies in Science, Technology, And Innovation**

During panel 5, which focused on Innovate to Collaborate: Forging Synergies in Science, Technology, And Innovation, the session aimed to explore innovative approaches for collaborative endeavours in science, technology, and innovation, fostering synergies across borders. With an experienced moderator at the helm and a panel of esteemed speakers, this session delved into the transformative power of collaborative efforts in science, technology, and innovation. Moderated by Brazil's Dr. Isabela Ribeiro, Viral Diseases Cluster Director at DNDi, the panel featured Uruguay's Mr. Cristhian Martinez, Uruguay Innovation Hub (UIH) Communication Coordinator; Brazil's Dr. Marco Krieger, Vice-President of Production and Innovation in Health at Fiocruz; Cuba's H.E. Florentino Batista-Gonzalez, Ambassador of Cuba; and Malaysia's Mr. John Tay, President of ChangeMaker.



## INTER-REGIONAL BUSINESS FORUM 2024 (IRBF)



*Attended by 200 participants comprising thought leaders, government officials, and experts mainly from South-east Asian and Latin American countries.*



*A collective demonstration of reverence towards the national anthem, 'Negaraku'.*



*The opening ceremony - (from left to right) Mr. CY Cheah, Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI), His Excellency Manuel Jose Balaguer Salas, Ambassador of Argentina & the Dean of GLULAC & YBhg Datuk Hanafi Sakri, Deputy Secretary General (Industry) of the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI).*



## Panel Discussion Day 1 &amp; Day 2



*Panel Discussion 1 - (from left to right) Mr. Alejandro Nerveña, Mr. Erick Aponte, Mr. Mohamad Romzi Sulaiman & Moderator.*



*Panel Discussion 2 - (from left to right) Ms. Rita E-mei, Mr. Alfonso Soria, Ms. Ezzwanee Ahmad, Ms. Natalia Arcos and Moderator.*



*Panel Discussion 3 - (from left to right) Moderator, Mrs. Teresa Mera and Mr. Marco Neelsen.*



*Panel Discussion 4 - (from left to right) Mr. Paulo Viana, Dr. Daniele Gambero & Moderator.*



*Panel Discussion 5 - (from left to right) Dr. Marco Krieger, Moderator, Mr. Crithian Martinez, H.E. Florentino Batista-Gonzalez & Mr. John Tay.*

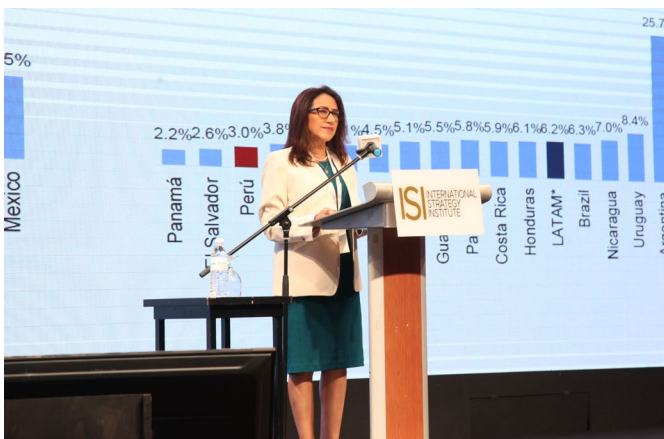


## INTER-REGIONAL BUSINESS FORUM 2024 (IRBF)



Photo Session (from left to right) Mr. Marcos Savinni, Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of Brazil, Mr. Luis Enrique Vertiz Avelar, Charge d'affaires of Mexico, H.E. Jaime Alexis Munoz Sandoval, Ambassador of Chile, H.E. Ricardo Estanislao Morote Canales, Ambassador of the Republic of Peru, Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of ISI, YBhg. Datuk Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz, Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), YBhg. Datuk Hanafi Sakri, Deputy Secretary General (Industry), Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry, Ms Teresa Mera Gómez, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade Peru, His Excellency Manuel Balaguer Salas, Ambassador of Argentina & the Dean of GRULAC, YBhg General (Rtd) Tan Sri Dato Seri Zamrose Mohd Zain, Honorary Advisor of International Strategy Institute (ISI), H.E. Florentino Batista Gonzalez, Ambassador of Cuba, H.E. Valeria Csukasi Cabrera, Ambassador of Uruguay, Madam Morella Antoni Barreto López, Charge d'affaires of Venezuela & H.E. Alejandro Rossellii, Ambassador of Colombia.

## Market Insight Day 1 &amp; Day 2



Market Insights from Mrs. Teresa Mera, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade at the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism Peru.



Market Insights from Ms. Rita E-mei, Representative of the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (ApexBrasil) office in Beijing.



Market Insights from Ms. Natalia Arcos, International Director Export Promotion - ProChile.



Market Insights from H.E Valeria Csukasi, Ambassador of Uruguay to Malaysia.





*Market Insights from Mr. Alejandro Nerveña, Director of Goods Export Promotion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship.*



*Market Insights from H.E. Alejandro Rosselli Londoño, Ambassador of Colombia to Malaysia.*



*Market Insights from Mr. Manuel Cumbrado Muñiz, Director of The Center for the Promotion of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment of Cuba (Procuba).*



*Market Insights from Mr. Luis Enrique Vertiz, Chargé d'affaires of Embassy of Mexico.*





# 2023 EVENTS



## 2023 World Anti-Corruption Conference (WACC)

16 November 2023 - Royal Kuningan Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia



### World Anti-Corruption Conference 2023: A Unified Step Toward a Transparent Future



The World Anti-Corruption Conference 2023 (WACC), held at the prestigious Royal Kuningan Hotel in Jakarta, marked a watershed moment in the ongoing battle against corruption. This year's theme, "Towards a Corrupt-Free Future: Strengthening Global Governance Together," encapsulated the event's spirit, drawing esteemed leaders, experts, and practitioners from around the globe.



Datuk Seri Shamshun Baharin Mohd Jamil, the Organising Chairman of the World Anti-Corruption Conference.



Keynote address from Tan. Sri. Dato' Sri. Haji Azam Bin Baki, Chief Commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).

The conference opened with insightful remarks from Datuk Seri Shamshun Baharin Mohd Jamil, the Organising Chairman of WACC, followed by a keynote address from Tan. Sri. Dato' Sri. Haji Azam Bin Baki, Chief Commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission.

Chief Commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), Tan. Sri. Dato' Sri. Haji Azam Bin Baki shared the exciting news, announcing the upcoming launch of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2024-2029 (NACS 2024-2029) by mid-2024. Emphasising the importance of preventing corruption and enhancing governance, he highlighted the successful implementation of 62% of initiatives under the expiring National Anti-Corruption Plan 2019-2023 (NACP 2019-2023). He underscored the significance of forums like WACC, stating, "Conferences like WACC are crucial as each panel shares its experience and best practices in tackling corruption."

A highlight of WACC 2023 was the diversity of perspectives brought by speakers for topics below:

#### Panel Discussion 1: Law Enforcement on Prevention and Persecution

The panel featured H.E Kyaw Win Thein, Commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission of Myanmar; Mr. Mohammad Sukri HJ Ariffin, Senior Special Investigator from the Corruption Prevention Section of the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Brunei Darussalam; and Ms. Huiji Kim, Deputy Director of the Anti-Corruption Bureau at the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) of South Korea. Their discussion emphasized ethical behaviour and cross-border collaboration in law enforcement.

#### Panel Discussion 2: Strengthening Global Governance Mechanisms

This panel included Assoc. Prof. Soh Kee Hean, Associate Professor at Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), Singapore; Mr. Mick Symons, Managing Director of Anti-Corruption Consultants Australia (ACCA), Australia; and Dr. Laode M. Syarif, Executive Director of KEMITRAAN, Indonesia. The discussion explored the balance between effective global governance and national sovereignty, offering valuable perspectives from the Asia-Pacific region.

#### Panel Discussion 3: Preventing the Misuse of Laws to Evade Accountability

Speakers were Mr. Eduardo Valera Bringas, Former Deputy Director General of the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA), the Philippines; Mr. Haji Jais Abdul Karim, President of Malaysia Corruption Watch (MCW), Malaysia; and Dr. Chanroeun Pa, President of the Cambodian Institute for Democracy (CID), Cambodia. They delved into strategies for preventing legal manipulation and enhancing accountability in legal systems.

#### Panel Discussion 4: Combating Government Corruption - Ensuring Accountability for Clean Governance

The final panel featured Prof. Vicha Mahakun, President of The Anti-Corruption Foundation, Thailand, and Mr. Tsutomu Hiraishi, Committee Officer at the Anti-Bribery Committee Japan (ABCJ), Japan. The discussion focused on the judiciary's critical role in combating corruption and ensuring government accountability.

The conference concluded with closing remarks from Mr. CY Cheah, ISI's chairman, and Dr. Nurul Ghufon, Vice Chairman of Indonesia's KPK. Dr. Ghufon highlighted the WACC's role in facilitating the exchange of views and best practices in combating corruption, underscoring the importance of learning and collaboration.

WACC 2023 served as a crucial gathering for leaders and experts determined to fight corruption. The discussions emphasized the need for global cooperation and robust and transparent governance systems. Participants left with new insights and strategies, poised to effect positive change in their nations.



Attended by 200 participants comprising thought leaders, government officials, and experts mainly from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and other regions.



## 2023 WORLD ANTI-CORRUPTION CONFERENCE (WACC)



Unified gesture of respect for the national anthem, 'Indonesia Raya'.



Presentation of token to the supporting organization of WACC, the Anti-Bribery Anti-Corruption Center of Excellence (ABAC).



The ribbon-cutting ceremony - (from left to right) Mr. Mohamad Khairol, Representative of ABAC, Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of ISI, Tan. Sri Dato' Sri Haji Azam Bin Baki, Chief Commissioner of MACC, and Datuk Seri Shamsun Baharin Mohd Jamil, Chairman of WACC.



Panel Discussion 1 - (from left to right) Moderator, H.E Kyaw Win Thein, Mr. Mohammad Sukri HJ Ariffin, and Ms. Hui Kim.



Panel Discussion 2 - (from left to right) Moderator, Assoc. Prof. Soh Kee Hean, Mr. Mick Symons, and Dr. Laode M. Syarif.



Panel Discussion 3 - (from left to right) Moderator, Mr. Eduardo Valera Bringas, Mr. Haji Jais Abdul Karim, and Dr. Chanroeun Pa.



Panel Discussion 4 - (from left to right) Moderator, Prof. Vicha Mahakun, and Mr. Tsutomu Hiraishi.



## 2023 WORLD ANTI-CORRUPTION CONFERENCE (WACC)



Photo Session (from left) Datuk Shamshun Baharin, Dr. Nurul Ghuftron, and Mr. CY Cheah



Speech by Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of ISI during the closing ceremony.



Closing remark by Dr. Nurul Ghuftron, Vice Chairman of KPK.



Media interview by Malaysian media.



# 12<sup>th</sup> World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF) 2023

12 - 13 November 2023 - Qingtian County, Zhejiang, China



## Celebrating Success at the 12<sup>th</sup> World Chinese Economic Forum



The 12<sup>th</sup> World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF), held in Qingtian County, Zhejiang Province, concluded successfully, marking a significant stride in global economic collaboration. This event was graced by prominent figures like Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI), Mr. Xu JinLi of the China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC), Mr. Ge Xuebin of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), and Mr. Pan Wei, Deputy Secretary of Qingtian County Committee, CPC and County Chief.



Opening remarks by Mr. CY Cheah, WCEF Chairman cum Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI).



Mr. Xu Jin Li, Head of the Bilateral Cooperation Department at CCOIC.



Mr. Ge Xuebin, Vice Chairman of the Zhejiang Provincial Committee of CCPIT.



Mr. Pan Wei, Deputy Secretary of the Qingtian County Committee, CPC & County Chief.

Mr. CY Cheah, in his opening address, highlighted the forum's legacy and its commitment to the global Chinese community's economic empowerment. He also set the stage for the forum's theme: "Harmonising Mutual Success Through Global Connectivity: Advancing Chinese Economic Development." He highlighted the upcoming 50th anniversary of China-Malaysia diplomatic relations, emphasising bilateral cooperation for future prosperity.

### The forum's sessions delved into three key areas:

**Panel Discussion 1: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP): Explored digital transformation opportunities.**

Featured Speakers Dato' Lee See Nee (Vice President of IT, Flextronics Technology, Malaysia), Mr. Andy Zhou (Deloitte China Consulting Enterprise Technology & Performance Leader), and Mr. Ahmed Larouz (CEO of Bridgizz & ClimateLaunchPad, National Lead Impact Entrepreneur, Morocco). Focused on the integration of digital technologies to enhance trade efficiency and innovation

**Panel Discussion 2: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Shaped global connectivity and economic prosperity.**

Featured Speakers Mr. Damian Santosh Samson (Trade Commissioner, MATRADE China-Malaysia Region), Mr. Wang Shangfeng (Chairman, Beijing Juxian Talent Group, China), Mr. Sam Horn (Board Director, YEAC, Cambodia), and Prof. Omar Narrea (Research Affiliate, CECHAP, Peru). Explored the impact of the BRI in creating new trade routes and fostering economic collaboration across the globe.

**Panel Discussion 3: World of Qingtian: Harnessed Overseas Chinese Resources to elevate the 'Sweet Potato Economy'.**

Featured Speakers Mr. Zhou Yong (President, Qingtian County Qiaoxiang Import Commodities City Chamber of Commerce, China), Ms. Bao Han Li (Chancellor, Huaqiao College, Wenzhou University, China), Mr. Pan Yigang (Deputy Director, Zhejiang Provincial Development Planning Institute, China), and Mr. Fu Xumin (President, European Chinese Chamber of Commerce, China). Examined the role of the Overseas Chinese community in driving the economic and cultural development of Qingtian.

With nearly 300 delegates from regions including China, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, Indonesia, and other parts of the world, the event was a melting pot of diverse insights. The overarching takeaway of the 12<sup>th</sup> WCEF is clear: in an ever-evolving global landscape, the power of collaboration and connectivity cannot be overstated. This year's forum provided a platform for insightful discussions on vital economic initiatives like the RCEP and BRI and underscored the significant role of diaspora communities in fostering economic development.

A heartfelt thank you to our esteemed supporting organisers – the Executive Committee of the 5<sup>th</sup> Overseas Imported Commodities EXPO & Qingtian Imported Wine Trade Fair Executive Committees, China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC), Wenzhou University Overseas Chinese College, Sabah-China Chamber of Commerce, Thai-Chinese Culture and Economic Association, the Young Entrepreneur Association of Cambodia, and Asia Success Media Group. Their steadfast support was crucial to the success of the 12<sup>th</sup> World Chinese Economic Forum.



12<sup>th</sup> WCEF opening ceremony with (from left to right) Mr. Ge Xuebin, Mr. CY Cheah, Mr. Pan Wei, and Mr. Xu Jinli.



## 12th WORLD CHINESE ECONOMIC FORUM (WCEF) 2023



Panel Discussion 1: (from left to right): Dato' Lee See Nee, Mr. Andy Zhou, and Mr. Ahmed Larouz.



Panel Discussion 2: (from left to right) Mr. Damian Santosh Samson, Mr. Wang Shangfeng, Mr. Sam Horn, and Prof. Omar Narrea.



Panel Discussion 3: (from left to right) Mr. Zhou Yong, Ms. Bao Han Li, Mr. Pan Yigang, and Mr. Fu Xumin.



300 participants at 12th WCEF mainly from China, Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, Indonesia, and other parts of the world.





Group photo of Mr. CY Cheah and the esteemed speakers.



Mr. CY Cheah, WCEF Chairman cum Chairman & Founder of ISI, engaging in an insightful interview with RTM Chinese News at the 12<sup>th</sup> WCEF hall in Qingtian County.



# Welcoming Dinner for MACC 2023 Mercosur-Asean Chamber of Commerce 22 May 2023 - Tournament Room, KLGCC



*Tokens of appreciation.*



*Welcome address by Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI).*



*Datuk Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz, CEO of Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE).*

## Welcoming Dinner for MACC (Mercosur-Asean Chamber of Commerce) 2023

The Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI), CY Cheah, emphasised the organisation's mission to serve as a vital connector, facilitating collaborations between the Mercosur Asean Chamber of Commerce (MACC) and the Asean region. The ISI aims to promote meaningful interactions, boost trade and investment, and create a thriving business ecosystem. Cheah highlighted their commitment to being a catalyst for transformative partnerships, driving economic growth, and supporting sustainable development. Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) CEO, Datuk Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz echoed the sentiment, urging aggressiveness in creating new contacts and friendships with emerging partners, expressing anticipation for future collaboration.

Dr. Rodolfo Caffaro Kramer, the Global President of the Mercosur-Asean Chamber Of Commerce, expressed enthusiasm about building a South-South relationship, specifically between South America and Southeast Asia. He emphasised the potential for a direct connection between these regions without the need to involve the United States or Europe. Kramer highlighted the valuable experience that each region could share and stressed the importance of learning from Southeast Asia in terms of integration. He views ASEAN as a model of integration and sees the region as the right partner for Mercosur. He conveyed a strong conviction that both regions can benefit mutually and expressed a desire to convince Southeast Asia that Mercosur is also the right partner for them.

The evening was filled with engaging conversations, insightful exchanges, and exploration of potential avenues for cooperation.



*Dr. Rodolfo Caffaro Kramer, Global President of Mercosur-Asean Chamber Of Commerce (MACC).*



*H.E. Valeria Csukasi, Ambassador of Uruguay.*



*Mr. Jorge Oscar Abate, Deputy Head of Mission of the Argentina Embassy.*



*Mr. Marcos Rodrigues Savini, Minister Counselor of the Brazil Embassy.*



## Welcoming Dinner for MACC (Mercosur-Asean Chamber of Commerce) 2023



*Tokens of appreciation to the distinguished guests from Latin America.*



*Mr. CY Cheah, engages in a fruitful conversation with H.E. Valeria Csukasi.*



*Group photo of Mr. CY Cheah and the esteemed guests.*



*Group photo of H.E. Valeria Csukasi and the esteemed guests.*





# 2022 EVENTS





## 3<sup>rd</sup> Malaysia Tax Policy Forum (MTPF)

01 August 2022 - Everly Hotel, Putrajaya

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Malaysia Tax Policy Forum was held on 1 August 2022 (Monday) at The Everly Hotel Putrajaya. With this year's theme, "Reinforcing Malaysia's Ultimate Pecuniary Resilience", the Forum focused on bringing all of these concerns to light, allowing us to identify the most effective ways of strengthening economic recovery, rebuilding national resilience, and catalysing changes.

Besides, the Forum was well attended with about 250 participants from the government, private sector, academia, and NGOs. The Forum was officiated by YB Datuk Mohd Nizom Bin Sairi, Chairman Executive Officer, the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (LHDN).

Concerns about Malaysia's restricted tax base have grown more serious since the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was replaced by the Sales and Services Tax (SST) in 2018. According to Malaysian Rating Corp Berhad (MARC), after the reversal, direct tax rates did not rise to pre-GST levels as the indirect tax base fell. To accomplish this, the government said that it would maintain an expansionary fiscal policy, which resulted in a record-high budget of RM332.1 billion, including a larger allocation of RM75.6 billion for gross development expenditure.



Group photos (from left to right) Dato' Sri Alex Siow, Dato' Mohamed Fazin Mahmud, Mr. CY Cheah, YB. Datuk Mohd Nizom Bin Sairi, Dato' Sri Shamshun Baharin bin Mohd Jamil, Dato' Sri Liong Kee Huat, and Mr. Vang Hua Cheng.



YB Datuk Mohd Nizom Bin Sairi, Chairman Executive Officer, Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (LHDN).



Opening remarks by Mr. CY Cheah, Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI).

## 3rd Malaysia Tax Policy Forum (MTPF)

Budget 2022 included many additional taxes to restore the government's dwindling funds. In addition, initiatives aimed at increasing tax revenue were proposed as part of the 2022 budget. Corporate income tax collection is estimated to climb by 8.1% to RM65.5 billion in 2019, above pre-pandemic levels. This is encouraging, but it remains difficult because many firms are still attempting to recover from Covid-19. The COVID-19 crisis has significantly weakened state finances, necessitating a rethinking of tax and spending policies once the recovery is well established.

Containment measures, greater government spending, and fewer tax collections have increased budget deficits and government debt, which have reached their highest levels in decades as a proportion of GDP. Former Menteri Besar of Perak, Prof Adjung Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abdul Kadir, delivered a closing keynote address at a forum. He highlighted the forum's purpose, which is to gather opinions for formulating the 2023 Budget. Dr. Zambry also addressed the topic of political financing, mentioning that the BN (Barisan Nasional) has initiated the process of introducing a Political Funding Bill.



Opening Ceremony with (from left to right) Mr. Vang Hua Cheng, Dato' Mohamed Fazin Mahmud, Mr. CY Cheah, YB. Datuk Mohd Nizom Bin Sairi, Dato' Sri Shamshun Baharin bin Mohd Jamil, and Dato' Sri Liong Kee Huat.



Special luncheon address by Pn. Roszita Binti Dim, the Deputy Director General of Customs Malaysia International Taxation Branch.



Prof Adjung Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abdul Kadir, the Former Menteri Besar of Perak delivered a closing keynote address.



Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI) presents a token of appreciation to YBhg. Prof Adjung Dato' Seri Diraja Dr. Zambry Abdul Kadir.



## Majlis Makan Malam Amal Bersama Bossku 2022

29 July 2022 - Casuarina Convention Centre, Ipoh, Perak



The Charity Dinner, meticulously organised by the International Strategy Institute (ISI), unfolded at the Casuarina Convention Centre in Ipoh, Perak, on the evening of Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022. The primary objective of this benevolent event was to gather donations for orphanages and disabled associations navigating challenges in the current economic climate.

With a specific focus on aiding orphans and disabled individuals, this gathering was made possible through the unwavering generosity of private donors and the supportive business community.



Group photos (from left to right) Datuk Sri Vermillion Ng, Datuk Seri Navaratnam Narayanan, Mr. CY Cheah, Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Datuk Heng Sei Kie, Dato' Sri Liong Kee Huat, and Mr. Vang Hua Cheng.



Welcome remarks by Mr. CY Cheah, Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI).



Welcome Address by Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Former Prime Minister of Malaysia & Member of Parliament for Pekan.



## Majlis Makan Malam Amal Bersama Bossku



Token of appreciation presented to sponsor Dato' Sri Liang Kee Huat, Malaysia Swap Group.



Datuk Sri Vermillion Ng secured the BOSSKU Manchester United Jersey signed by Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib with a winning bid of RM50,000.



The soccer ball, signed remarkably, fetched a winning bid of RM50,000 from Mr. Vang Hua Cheng.



The framed golf ball was won by Datuk Seri Navaratnam Narayanan with a winning bid of RM60,000.



Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, distinguished VIPs, victorious auction bidders, and representatives from 16 charitable organisations gathered for a commemorative group photo session.



## 3rd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum (MACF)

**3rd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum (MACF)**

24 May 2022 - Everly Hotel, Putrajaya

The 3rd Malaysian Anti-Corruption Forum organised by ISI on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022, provides a platform that brings together concerned citizens, government authorities, policymakers, media and the private sector to discuss, exchange ideas, and formulate key proposals to be submitted to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), with the hope that Malaysia will soon be able to tackle corruption head-on to claim back our title as a trusted and transparent nation.



Group photos featuring the distinguished VIPS gathered during the 3rd Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum 2022.



Welcome remarks by Mr. CY Cheah, Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI).



Keynote address from Tan. Sri. Dato' Sri. Haji Azam Bin Baki, Chief Commissioner of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).



Opening Ceremony with (from left to right) Mr. Nattachak Pattamasingsh Na Ayuthaya, Mr. CY Cheah, Tan. Sri. Dato' Sri. Haji Azam Bin Baki, Dato' Sri Liong Kee Huat, and Dato' Sri Shamshun Baharin bin Mohd Jamil.



## The forum's sessions delved into four key areas:

### Panel Discussion 1: Integrity As The Basis For Good Governance.

Explored the foundations of good governance with insights from distinguished speakers Saut Situmorang (Former Deputy Head of Indonesia Anti-Corruption Commission (KPK)) and Nattachak Pattamasingsh Na Ayuthaya (Commissioner, National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) Thailand). The panel delved into the economic dimensions of corruption, emphasizing the need for collaborative anti-corruption initiatives that addressed root sources, fostering a system of strong, balanced institutions.

### Panel Discussion 2: Restoring Trust By Collective Action - Civil Society Perspectives.

Gain perspectives on rebuilding trust through collective action from notable speakers Mohamed Azmi Abdul Hamid (Council Committee Member, Consumers Association of Penang (CAP)), Dato' Sri. Ayub Yaakob (Senior Vice Chairman, Malaysia Crime Prevention Foundation (MCPF)), and Cynthia Gabriel (Founder, Centre to Combat Corruption and Cronyism (C4)). Discussed additional anti-corruption measures and highlighted civil society's role in supporting government efforts.

### Panel Discussion 3: Integrity Vs Perception.

Delve into the dynamics between integrity and perception with insights from esteemed speakers Prof. Dato' Dr. Jayles Yeoh (President & CEO, AIMSMET), Phillip Koh Tong Ngee (Senior Partner, Messrs Mah-Kamariyah & Philip Koh Advocates & Solicitors, Adjunct Professor UM), and Datuk Seri Abdul Razak Bin Musa (Former Solicitor General). Emphasised the crucial need to instil attitudes towards the fight against corruption and the understanding of integrity from a young age, considering research findings on perceptions towards corruption and integrity among Malaysians.

### Panel Discussion 4: Can Economic Incentives Reduce Corruption?

The last panel explored the impact of economic incentives on corruption with perspectives from distinguished speakers Prof. Khaeruddin Sudharmin (FCILT, Adjunct Professor, Asia Metropolitan University (AMU) Malaysia), Christopher Tock (Chief Executive Officer, Digitally.Asia Group), and Rani Wemel (Co-Founder & COO, LTT Global Communications Sdn. Bhd.). Addressed the longstanding emphasis on punitive anti-corruption efforts in the country and the need to consider economic conditions enabling corruption.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Anti-Corruption Forum at The Everly Putrajaya was well-attended, with approximately 250 participants from the government, private sector, academia, and NGOs. Centred around the theme 'Restoring Trust With Collective Action,' this forum aimed to instil hope that Malaysia will effectively combat corruption and reclaim its status as a trusted and transparent nation.

During the forum, participants engaged in robust discussions, sharing valuable insights and collaborating on formulating key proposals. These proposals are intended for submission to the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC). The overarching goal is to empower Malaysia to confront corruption directly and reclaim its position as a trusted and transparent nation on the global stage.





3<sup>rd</sup> Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum (MACF)

Panel Discussion 1: (from left to right) Saut Situmorang, Datuk Seri Azman Ujang, Nattachak Pattamasingsh Na Ayuthaya and his secretary.



Panel Discussion 2: (from left to right) Cynthia Gabriel, Mohamed Azmi Abdul Hamid, and Dato' Sri. Ayub Yaakob.



Panel Discussion 3: (from left to right) Phillip Koh Tong Ngee, Datuk Seri Abdul Razak Bin Musa, and Prof. Dato' Dr. Jayles Yeoh.



Panel Discussion 4: (from left to right) Rani Wemel, Prof. Khaeruddin Sudharmin, and Christopher Tock.



Group photo of Mr. CY Cheah, Tan. Sri. Dato' Sri. Haji Azam Bin Baki, Tun. Mohamed Raus Bin Sharif and the esteemed guests.





## 2<sup>nd</sup> Penang International Business And Investment Summit (PIBIS)

25 March 2022 - Setia SPICE Convention Centre, Penang

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Penang International Business and Investment Summit (PIBIS) took place on 25 March 2022 (Friday) at the Setia SPICE Convention Centre with the theme "Growth Through Partnerships, Capitalising On Opportunities." The summit aimed to showcase Penang's flagship projects, including the Penang Port, Penang International Airport, and other promising investment opportunities within the state. Additionally, it highlighted the green development initiatives in Penang, where sustainability is a key focus in the economic sector, as exemplified by Penang 2030.



An impactful discussion unfolded from left to right featuring Mr. CY Cheah, Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, and Dato' Tan Teik Cheng.



(From left to right) Dato' Sri Dr. Md Zabid Bin Haji Abdul Rashid, Dato Sri Clement Lee, Mr. CY Cheah, Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Dato' Tan Teik Cheng, Dato' Lee Teong Li, and Dato' Sri Liong Kee Huat during the Opening Ceremony.



## The forum's sessions delved into three key areas:

### Panel Discussion 1: Penang Economic Outlook 2030: Where Are We At Now?

Featured Speakers Dr. Chan Tze Haw (Graduate School of Business, Universiti Sains Malaysia), Dato' Lee Teong Li (Chairman, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers Penang), and Mr. Saiful Bahari Baharom (Former CEO, Labuan IBFC Inc). Focus on encompassing infrastructure projects, business initiatives, environmental sustainability efforts, and any other factors contributing to or influencing the economic outlook of Penang.

### Panel Discussion 2: Paving The Future Of Penang Logistics and Transportation Systems

Featured Speakers Mej. Prof. Logistician Chang Kah Loon (President of LogM and Director of AK Shipping Sdn. Bhd.), Log. Leong Kin Wah (Managing Director of EW Logistics and Transport), and Dato' Sasedharan Vasudevan (CEO of Penang Port Sdn. Bhd.). Discussion delves into the transformative initiatives and advancements propelling the future of Penang's logistics and transportation systems, fostering efficiency, sustainability, and economic growth.

### Panel Discussion 3: #Techdebate: Is Penang Really Ready for a Digital Makeover?

Featured Speakers Dato' Lee See Nee (Vice President of IT, Flextronics Technology, Malaysia), Mr. Chan Huan Gee (Chief Operating Officer of Tourplus) and Mr. Kishva Ambigapathy (Chairman of Commonwealth Youth Innovation Center). Examined Penang's preparedness for a digital transformation, delving into key technological considerations, challenges, and opportunities that shape its readiness for a digital makeover.

In the gala dinner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Penang International Business and Investment Summit (PIBIS) a significant philanthropic effort is underway as an autographed cap and three BOSSKU crew neck shirts generously contributed by Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak take centre stage in an auction.

The proceeds from this auction, marked by the benevolence of Dato' Clement Lee, who bid twenty-five thousand ringgit for the autographed cap, and Mr. Ma Xiu Jin, who secured the three BOSSKU crew neck shirts with a bid of sixteen thousand ringgit, will be entirely donated to the Non-Profit OKU Disabled Person Cooperation Team Group (ODP).

This initiative not only underscores the intersection of commerce and compassion but also showcases the influential role that individuals like Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak play in contributing to meaningful causes within the community.



*Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Former Prime Minister of Malaysia & Member of Parliament for Pekan.*



*Mr. CY Cheah, Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI).*



2<sup>nd</sup> Penang International Business And Investment Summit (PIBIS)

Panel Discussion 1: (from left to right) Dr. Chan Tze Haw, Dato' Lee Teong Li, and Mr. Saiful Bahari Baharom.



Panel Discussion 2: (from left to right) Mej. Prof. Logistician Chang Kah Loon, Log. Leong Kin Wah, and Dato' Sasedharan Vasudevan.



Panel Discussion 3: (from left to right) Dato' Lee See Nee, Mr. Chan Huan Gee and Mr. Kishva Ambigapathy.



2<sup>nd</sup> Penang International Business And Investment Summit (PIBIS)

*Closing Address by Dato' Seri Dr. Md Zabid Bin Haji Abdul Rashid, the Vice President of Persatuan Muafakat One Belt One Road Malaysia (PMOBOR).*



*Token of appreciation to Ms. Koh Lee Peng, recognized as the Inspirational Individual of the Year Award recipient for her resilience and positive contributions to society.*



*Dato' Clement Lee and Mr. Ma Xiu Jin have respectively placed bids on the autographed cap and crew neck shirts.*



*Group photo of Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Mr. CY Cheah, Dato' Sri Dr. Md. Zabid Bin Haji Abdul Rashid and the esteemed award recipients.*





# 2021 EVENTS



## 2021 World Chinese Economic Forum (Special Edition)

27 December 2021 - Sheraton, Petaling Jaya



The World Chinese Economic Forum is a world-class premier event connecting China and other countries with investment opportunities and business linkages. It is a global platform with a track record of more than 11 years, where pertinent issues related to China are discussed. Government officials, private sector leaders, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders gather to explore potential collaboration that can create a positive impact on the global economy.

After the successful WCEF Forum in Hangzhou, China from 7 to 8 November 2019, the 2021 WCEF Special Edition is set to have government leaders, captains of industries, emerging entrepreneurs and strategists exchange views related to the global economy amidst the pandemic. The forum will be held back in Malaysia. The decision to move back to Malaysia this year is partly due to Covid-19 pandemic, where strict restriction for foreign travellers into China is in place at the moment. Hence, the forum this year will be held in hybrid mode for the first time.



Group Photo of Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak with all the award recipients.



Opening keynote address by Dato' Sri Haji Mohammad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Former Prime Minister of Malaysia & Member of Parliament for Pekan.



Opening address by Mr. CY Cheah, Founder & Chairman of International Strategy Institute (ISI).



## The forum's sessions delved into three key areas:

### Panel Discussion 1: Multilateralism The Way Forward In Tackling Global Crises

Featured Speakers Datuk Iskandar Bin Sarudin (President of Persatuan Muafakat One Belt One Road Malaysia (PMOBOR)), Mr. Isham Jalil (Information Chief of Barisan Nasional Selangor), and Datuk R. Ramathan (Chairman of Kuala Lumpur & Selangor Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry). Delved into the imperative of multilateralism as the optimal approach for addressing complex global crises, emphasising collaboration, shared responsibility, and coordinated efforts among nations.

### Panel Discussion 2: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) for a sustainable future

Featured Speakers Mr. Soh Yi Da (President of ASEM Young Leaders Network Singapore), and Mr. Bakhtiar Talhah (Managing Partner of JEJAWI Advisors). Examined the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a strategic framework that fostered sustainable development, infrastructure connectivity, and economic cooperation among participating nations.

### Panel Discussion 3: Belt And Road Initiative (BRI) On Managing Capital Movement In The Digital Era

Featured Speakers Ts Dr Nor Azman Hassan (Deputy Director - General Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Malaysia), Dato' Fadzli Shah Anuar (Senior Advisor of Zetrix Zinghuo BIF International Backbone and Supernodes), and Dr. Wong Chin Yoong, Associate Professor of Economics of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. Delved into the impact of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on managing capital movement in the digital era, examining how this ambitious infrastructure project navigated the challenges and opportunities posed by the evolving landscape of digital finance and globalisation.

After the morning session, the 2021 WCEF Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony is presented to honour Malaysia's top companies and individuals for their contributions to the economy and society. The awards include the World Chinese Outstanding Credible Global Financial Award, World Chinese Outstanding Young Person Award, World Chinese Most Outstanding Host Award, World Chinese Most Talented Celebrity Artist Award, World Chinese Excellent Sports Achievement Award, World Chinese Top Ten Young Entrepreneur Award, World Chinese Top Ten Entrepreneur Award, and World Chinese Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony has gathered different industry elites. It included the sports industry, entertainment industry and business industry. Cheah Liek Hou is the national athlete who had an outstanding performance in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games. WCEF has honoured him with the World Chinese Excellent Sport Achievement Award due to his demonstrated dedication and perseverance in his respective fields. Jack Lim and Jasper Lai attended the awards ceremony to receive the World Chinese Most Outstanding Host Award and World Chinese Most Talented Celebrity Artist Award, respectively. Tan Sri Dato' Sri (Dr.) Mohamad Norza Zakaria is being honoured at the World Chinese Economic Forum 2021 for his outstanding contributions to the Olympic Movement, Commonwealth Sports Movement, and the sport's growth in Malaysia. Tan Sri Norza's dedication to the sport is outstanding, and he truly deserves this Lifetime Achievement Award.



2021 WCEF Opening Ceremony with (from left to right) Datuk Iskandar Sarudin, Mr. CY Cheah, Dato' Sri Haji Mohamad Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, and Ms. Michelle Low.



## 2021 World Chinese Economic Forum (Special Edition)



Panel Discussion 1: (from left to right) Mr. Isham Jalil, Mr. Tai Zee How (Moderator), Datuk Iskandar Bin Sarudin, and Datuk R. Ramanathan.



Panel Discussion 2: (from left to right) Mr. Lau Zheng Zhou (Moderator), Mr. Soh Yi Da, and Mr. Bakhtiar Talhah.



Panel Discussion 3: (from left to right) Ts Dr Nor Azman Hassan, Dato' Fadzli Shah Anuar, and Dr. Wong Chin Yoong.



Closing address by Datuk Iskandar Bin Sarudin, President of Persatuan Muafakat One Belt One Road Malaysia.



Group photo of Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Mr. CY Cheah together with awards recipients.



## 2021 TYT Charity Golf Tournament

17 - 22 December 2021 - Dalit Golf Club Sabah

The TYT Charity Golf Tournament event was organised by International Strategy Institute (ISI) and Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai (MPSP) in conjunction with TYT's 72nd birthday during a working visit to Sabah. This event is proposed to be held annually as a fundraiser event. The golf tournament took place from the morning until late afternoon on 20 December 2021.

The working visit was held from 17 - 22nd December 2022. ISI was invited to be the main Secretariat to organise the one-day charity event. The event was held at Dalit Golf Club Sabah. Over 60 participants have participated in the tournament. TYT has delivered the opening and closing speeches during the event.



The proceeds for this event will directly benefit the services and projects involving health, education, and youth development. As a not-for-profit institution, ISI counts on friends and business organisations in the community to help make this tournament a success. It is important to note that the money raised through this golf tournament remains local.

The TYT Charity Golf Tournament is being organised mainly to provide an opportunity for local non-profit and charity organisations to help raise awareness of their organisations, their mission, and their mandate to the public. The event also provides fundraising opportunities for the local non-profit and charity organisations serving in the state of Penang.





## ISI Covid-19 Initiative And Food Drives in Penang

30 July 2021

ISI expresses deep gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate with our partners in providing essential items to 500 families in Penang. These food baskets were distributed in cooperation with the PDRM Penang IPD Branch, including Daerah Seberang Perai Tengah, Daerah Seberang Perai Utara, Daerah Seberang Perai Selatan, Daerah Timur Laut, and Daerah Barat Daya.

The Officer in Charge of Police District from the Seberang Perai Tengah District warmly received the food baskets, which will be distributed to families in need during this challenging pandemic period. ISI looks forward to implementing more programs to assist the nation during these tough times.





## Digital Inclusion And Literacy Culture Outreach for Orang Asli Community in New Norm

22 April 2021 - Orang Asli Village Kampung Jeram Kedah Ulu Beranang, Negeri 9

The Digital Inclusion and Literacy Culture Outreach Programme for the Orang Asli community in the new normal is jointly organised by the International Strategy Institute and Digital Education Organisation Malaysia, mainly focusing on the efforts from various participating parties and creating awareness of the importance of ICT knowledge, health, healthy lifestyle practices, and community service activities that empower the natives and maintain the welfare of the Orang Asli community.





## Malaysia Democracy Forum (MDF) 2021

30 March 2021 - InterContinental Hotel Kuala Lumpur

The Malaysia Democracy Forum with the theme "Charting the Future of Parliamentary Democracy in Malaysia" was organised on 30 March 2021 at the InterContinental Hotel Kuala Lumpur. The forum marked a landmark event with an objective to increase the quality of discourse in Parliament, one that befits Malaysia's aspiration to become a mature and efficient parliamentary democracy, and to increase the voice and participation of the youth in our political process in order to do away with racial politics that has stifled our country's progress for decades.



As the world is transformed through this pandemic crisis, Malaysian democracy also finds itself at a unique crossroads. The window for reform has been thrown open by the uncertainties of the pandemic, affording us an opportunity to revisit the institutions that have served the people all this while.



Group photo of YB Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Mr. CY Cheah together with the VIP guests.



Special Political Party Dialogue with YB Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, President of People's Justice Party (PKR).



Closing Keynote Address by Dato' Sri Haji Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Former Prime Minister of Malaysia & Member of Parliament for Pekan.



Media interview.



Mr. CY Cheah and YB Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim engaged in a meaningful conversation.



## The forum's sessions delved into three key areas:

### Panel Discussion 1: Are Political Parties Essential in a Parliamentary Democracy?

Featured Speakers YB Tuan Khalid Bin Abd Samad (Director of National Trust Party (Amanah)), YB Senator Mohd Yusmadi bin Mohd Yusoff (Member of Malaysia Parliament for Balik Pulau Penang), and Shahril Sufian Hamdan (Deputy Youth and Info Chief, UMNO). Delved into the essential role of political parties in a parliamentary democracy, examining their function as crucial vehicles for representation, governance, and the articulation of diverse political ideologies.

### Panel Discussion 2: Parliamentary Democracy in Malaysia - Perspective of the Civil Society

Featured Speakers Prof. Dr. Shamrahayu A.Aziz (Chair Holder of the Institution of Malay Rulers Chair, UTM), Dato' Mah Weng Kwai (Commissioner of SUHAKAM), and Isham Jalil (Information Chief of Barisan Nasional for Selangor). Examining the perspective of civil society, this exploration delved into the dynamics of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia, shedding light on its impact, challenges, and the active role citizens played in shaping the democratic landscape.

### Panel Discussion 3: Funding in Politics

Featured Speakers YB Teresa Kok Suh Sim (Member of Parliament for Seputeh), Mourhrna Anetha Reddy (Spokesperson for Social Equality and Vice Chairman of Bureau SMED, Gerakan), Dato' Dr. Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki (Youth Chief, United Malays National Organisation (UMNO)), and Dato' Mohana Muniandy (Former MIC National Women Leader and President Power Malaysia). Scrutinised the intricate dynamics of funding in politics, delving into its implications on transparency, accountability, and the democratic process.



Panel Discussion 1: (from left to right) Kamarul Bahrin Haron (Moderator), YB Tuan Khalid Bin Abd Samad, YB Senator Mohd Yusmadi bin Mohd Yusoff, and Shahril Sufian Hamdan.



Panel Discussion 2: (from left to right) Jamal Raslan (Moderator), Prof. Dr. Shamrahayu A. Aziz, Dato' Mah Weng Kwai, and Isham Jalil.



Panel Discussion 3: (from left to right) Tai Zee How (Moderator), Jamal Raslan (Moderator), Prof. Dr. Shamrahayu A. Aziz, Dato' Mah Weng Kwai, and Isham Jalil.





# **2020** EVENTS



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum (MACF)

03 September 2020 - The Everly Putrajaya

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum was held at The Everly Putrajaya. The forum was well attended, with about 250 participants from the government, private sector, academia, and NGOs. With this year's theme, 'Restoring Trust and Building a Culture of Integrity', the forum focused on the importance of trust and a culture of integrity in our constant journey towards nation-building.

The forum was officiated by YBhg. Dato' Sri Shamshun Baharin Mohd Jamil, Deputy Chief Commissioner (Prevention) of the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC).



Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of (ISI) presents a token of appreciation to YBhg. Dato' Sri Shamshun Baharin Mohd Jamil



Speakers Session: (from left to right) Ms. Rajifah Ramli and Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Malaysia Tax Policy Forum (MTPF)

29 September 2020 - The Everly Putrajaya

ISI organised the Malaysia Tax Policy Forum with the theme 'Strengthening Malaysia's Fiscal Future.' The keynote address for the forum, delivered by YB Dato' Wira Ir. Haji Amiruddin bin Haji Hamzah, Deputy Minister of Finance Malaysia, was read by YBhg. Dato' Sri Dr. Sabin bin Samitah, CEO and Director General of the Inland Revenue Board Malaysia. The forum drew 200 participants from various sectors, including the government, private industry, tax practitioners, academicians, and the public at large. The issue of taxation remains a hotly debated topic among Malaysians and has unfortunately become a source of division within the country, often along political lines.



Taxes and their impact on the people were central to the discussions. Fiscal policy, in addition to addressing economic concerns, should also aim to help individuals fully participate in and adapt to a changing economy. This includes improving access to education, jobs, health services, and social insurance, which can enhance people's ability to recover from job losses or illnesses.



A group photo featuring YBhg. Dato' Sri Dr. Sabin bin Samitah, Mr. CY Cheah, and all the distinguished participants who attended the Malaysia Tax Policy Forum in 2020.



## World Islamic Trade Forum (WITF) 2020

14 May 2020 - LIVE @ Zoom

The World Islamic Trade Forum (WITF), organised by ISI, facilitated a special dialogue that united government representatives, private sector entities, and civil society from 12 countries in the Muslim World. These countries include Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, France, UK, Germany, Nigeria, Kazakhstan, Spain, Saudi Arabia, and Senegal. The objective of the forum was to exchange policy ideas and trade solutions amidst the global challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. This gathering provided invaluable insights into the future of our world in the current era. The WITF Honorary Chairman, YTH Bapak Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno, delivered the Special Keynote Address during the forum.



## World Chinese Economic Forum 2020

29 April 2020 - LIVE @ Dingtalk

ISI, together with the China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC), organised the World Chinese Economic Forum 2020 (Special Live Conference). The world is facing the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the first country to see the first surge in the outbreak, China sacrificed freedom and its economy to successfully curb the epidemic. Today, China has resumed life and business, while other countries are experiencing lockdowns and standstill economies. The WCEF 2020 brought together government and private sector representatives in China to share their experiences, as well as speakers from Asia and Europe, to exchange ideas on how to solve this looming crisis.





# Malaysia Tax Policy Forum (MTPF) 2020

09 January 2020 - The Everly Putrajaya

ISI organised the Malaysia Tax Policy Forum with the theme “Strengthening Malaysia’s Fiscal Future”. The forum keynote address by YB Dato’ Wira Ir. Haji Amiruddin bin Haji Hamzah, Deputy Minister of Finance Malaysia was read by YBhg. Dato’ Sri Dr. Sabin bin Samitah, CEO and Director General of the Inland Revenue Board Malaysia. The forum received 200 participants from the government sector, private, tax practitioners, academicians and public at large.



The issue of taxation is a hotly debated topic among Malaysians and has been the centre of an intense debate which has unfortunately divided the country along political lines. Taxes and the people. Fiscal policy should also help people fully participate in and adapt to a changing economy. Better access to education, jobs, health services, and social insurance, can make it easier for people to spring back from a job loss or illness.







# 2019 EVENTS



## 11<sup>th</sup> World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF)

11 - 12 December 2019 - Midtown Shangri-La, Hangzhou, China

The 11<sup>th</sup> World Chinese Economic Forum, titled "Realizing the Vision of Shared Development for a Better World," was held in Hangzhou, China, on 11-12 December 2019.

The event was co-hosted by the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) and the International Strategy Institute (ISI), with the China Chamber of International Commerce (CCOIC) as the organizer.

The forum achieved great success in strengthening ASEAN-China trade under the Belt and Road Vision. Speakers and delegates from various countries actively participated in discussions on the future of global trade, redefining global trade through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the impact of the new tech wave and 5G on the world, and enhancing the long-term partnership between China and ASEAN.



Group photo of the VIP guests with the participants.



Welcome Address by Mr. CY Cheah, Chairman of the International Strategy Institute (ISI).



Special Keynote Address by the Hon. CY Leung, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Former Chief Executive of HKSAR of the People's Republic of China.





Group photo of Mr. CY Cheah with VIP guests.



Participants from around the world visited Alibaba Group on a site visit.



Participants from Thailand.



11<sup>th</sup> WCEF Awards Recipient.



## Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum (MACF)

05 December 2019 - Sunway Resort Hotel & Spa

The Corruption Perception Index (CPI) has ranked Malaysia in 2018, number 61 out of 180 countries. These perceptions determine to an extent whether foreign direct investments come in or bypass us. Businesses must be committed to high standards of integrity, fairness and accountability. With this in mind, ISI organised the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Forum with the theme “Understanding and Addressing the World’s Biggest Problem” and was well attended with almost 300 participants from the government, private sector, academia and NGOs. YB Dato’ Seri Anwar Ibrahim, President Parti Keadilan Rakyat delivered the Opening Keynote Address.



## Malaysia Domestic Trade & Consumer Forum

28 May 2019 - The Everly Putrajaya

The Malaysia Domestic Trade and Consumer Forum was organised following the closed-door ISI Ministerial Dialogue between YB Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution, Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs and private sector members. This important Forum brought together policymakers, business associations and entrepreneurs, the media and concerned citizens of the country, towards addressing the most pressing issues on domestic trade, the rights of consumers and the necessary measures to be taken in the foreseeable future.

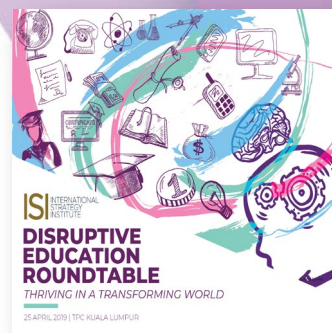




## Disruptive Education Roundtable 2019

25 April 2019 - TPC Kuala Lumpur

Policymakers and practitioners in the education sector actively engaged in a discussion on the evolving role of the Malaysian education system in response to the rapid changes brought about by disruptive advanced technology. This productive dialogue took place at the Disruptive Education Roundtable organised by ISI.



## ISI Ministerial Dialogue 2019

09 April 2019 - Le Meridien Putrajaya

The ISI Ministerial Dialogue with the Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Malaysia, YB Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution bin Ismail focused on the future of domestic trade in Malaysia, its policies and future direction, in line with the "Malaysia Baharu" spirit under the leadership by the Pakatan Harapan government.





## Penang International Business And Investment Summit (PIBIS) 2019

26 February 2019 - Hotel Equatorial Penang

Penang International Business and Investment Summit (PIBIS) is a high-level networking summit that brings together stakeholders from the government and private sectors to explore business and investment opportunities in the state of Penang.

This strong partnership will contribute to the realisation of Penang's vision for 2030. The Keynote Address was delivered by YB Dato' Haji Abdul Halim Haji Hussein, Penang Exco for Domestic & International Trade, Consumer Affairs & Entrepreneurship Development, on behalf of the Chief Minister of Penang, YAB Chow Kon Yeow.







# 2018 EVENTS



## Kedah International Business And Investment Summit (KIBIS) 2018

13 December 2018 - Aloft Langkawi, Pantai Tengah

Kedah International Business and Investment Summit (KIBIS) was graced by the Chief Minister of Kedah, YAB Dato' Seri Hj. Mukhriz Tun Mahathir. With the theme "Kedah in a New Malaysia-Building a Resilient Economy", the summit focused on the strategic development plans of the state of Kedah, and how the state builds a resilient economy amidst the drastically changing landscape both politically and economically.



## World Muslim Leadership Forum 2018

06 - 07 December 2018 - Lambeth Palace & House of Commons London, United Kingdom

ISI, as the WMLF Asian Secretariat in Kuala Lumpur, was honoured to be given the opportunity to partner with Global One Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation based in the UK, to organise the World Muslim Leadership Forum. Held biannually, WMLF is an effort initiated in 2010 where its main purpose is to provide a platform to address leadership issues which are critical for the upliftment of the ummah, the global community at large and the Muslim community in particular. The Hon. Datuk Seri Dr. Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia delivered the forum Keynote Address.





## World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF) 2018

09 - 10 November 2018 - Palace of The Golden Horses, Selangor

2018 marked the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia. In view of that, the World Chinese Economic Forum (WCEF) was held to celebrate the 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Malaysia-China diplomatic relations. More than 500 delegates including 200 from China as well as delegates from 50 countries attended the Forum, which also discussed the US-China Trade War, the Belt and Road Initiative and the Digital Economy.



YAB Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia delivered the Keynote Address and the Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, H.E. CY Leung also delivered another Keynote Address.



## New Malaysia Summit 2018

18 October 2018 - Connexion Conference & Event Centre, KL

This inaugural national summit was set as a platform for Ministers and related Ministries, agencies, business leaders, NGOs, and civil society to address emerging issues, exchanging ideas, sharing knowledge and experiences, with an aim to collectively develop the nation under the new administration. With the theme 'Building a New Malaysia, Fulfilling Hope', the summit was officiated by YB Senator Tuan Waytha Moorthy, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department for National Unity and Social Wellbeing.





## #Women in TECH 2018

18 September 2018 - Sime Darby Convention Centre, KL

ISI organised #Women in Tech Summit with the theme “Preparing Women for the Digital Age and the 4th Industrial Revolution”. The summit aimed at providing a platform for women leaders in addressing emerging issues, exchanging ideas, sharing of knowledge and experiences, all in pursuit of exemplary leadership as we move towards IR4.0.



## Corporate Malaysia Summit 2018

04 September 2018 - Sime Darby Convention Centre, KL

ISI organised the Corporate Malaysia Summit to provide a much-needed platform, especially in the context of a New Malaysia to connect the new government and the business sector of this country. The summit focuses on the fundamental issues affecting the business climate in Malaysia. The summit was officiated by YB Puan Teresa Kok, Minister of Primary Industries Malaysia.





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To promote Asia in the global market

To promote investments into Asia, particularly into ASEAN and Malaysia

To promote sustainable development in Asia

To promote dialogue between Government and Business

To promote social enterprises and Asian young entrepreneurs

To conduct research and dialogue with key decision and policy makers



## SUPER CONNECTOR BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, BUSINESSES AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION (CSO)



ISI is dedicated to providing quality programmes and we can only achieve this with your honest feedback.

We also know that no man is an island. Together, we can create impactful programmes that can improve the well-being of our shared economy and society. We are therefore, open to proposals for partnerships and collaborations, and we hope you can join us in this journey.

Do drop us a line at [info@istrategyglobal.org](mailto:info@istrategyglobal.org) or give us a call at **+6 03 2242 3799**

## The Vertical Business Suite

A-15-02 & A-15-03, The Vertical Business Suite Tower A, Avenue 3, No. 8, Bangsar South, 59200 Kuala Lumpur, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur.

Office Number : +603-2242 3799  
E-Mail : [info@istrategyglobal.org](mailto:info@istrategyglobal.org)

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