

THE ICCS YOUNG LEADERS PROGRAMME BRINGS TOGETHER LIKE-MINDED YOUTHS TO COLLABORATE ON COMMUNITY-BUILDING INITIATIVES

7 September 2022 (Wednesday), Singapore – About 120 delegates signed up for the Young Leaders Programme (YLP), which provides a platform for young local and international leaders to network and collaborate on initiatives to strengthen social cohesion.

2. Supported by Temasek Foundation, the YLP aims to develop a core of young leaders who can speak and lead with confidence on issues affecting ethnic and religious harmony today.

3. A flagship segment of the ICCS, the YLP provides various opportunities for youths to learn and share from one another throughout the three days. Day 1 commenced yesterday with the Community Showcase, an interactive showcase of four ground-up initiatives by young community leaders, and Collaboration Whitespace, a session to encourage collaboration through facilitated gameplay.

- Project “EMBRACE!” by CHIO Architects was one of the projects to liven up Singapore’s Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) track pillars to spark conversation around diversity. President Halimah Yacob and Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law applied the finishing touches of paint to a panel intended for sprucing up an MRT track pillar.



4. The YLP programme continued today with more dialogues and a Fireside Chat that discussed how social media can be used to foster cohesion. Reverend Chris Lee, Father Fiel Pareja and fashion designer Yasmin Jay shared how they tapped on their online presence to foster interfaith understanding and respect.



5. There will be a workshop tomorrow, facilitated by local peer facilitators and former YLP delegates to equip and inspire young civic leaders.

Plenary Sessions

6. The second plenary session discussed how diversity can be harnessed for the common good. Moderated by Assistant Professor Jack Meng-Tat Chia, History and Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore, the panel included Mr André Azoulay, Adviser to H.M. King Mohammed VI of Morocco; Professor Yoshiko Ashiwa, Professor of Anthropology and Global Studies, Founding Director of Institute for the Study of Peace and Reconciliation, Hitotsubashi University; and Dr Iyad Abumoghli, Founder and Director of the United Nations Environment Programme's Faith for Earth Initiative.

7. **Dr Abumoghli** said: "Dignity, respect, tolerance and peace are the principle key prerequisites for cultural diversity and environmental integrity. A dialogue is

needed to prevent polarisation [...], promote respect and build confidence amongst cultures”.



8. **Professor Ashiwa** said: “In a society of super-diversity, intersectionality, and overlapping identities, we cannot stay in compartmentalised cosy space with indifference towards others and being afraid of ambiguity.”

9. **Mr Azoulay** said: “I was taught by my Rabbis [...] that to be a good Jew, means first to try to give a chance to the one I have in front of me, to enjoy the same dignity, to enjoy the same freedom, to enjoy the same sovereignty than yourself. The day you accept that the one who is in front of you doesn't enjoy the same dignity you lost your Judaism.”



10. The third plenary session discussed the importance of technology in leveraging and fostering mutual trust. Dr Terri-Anne Teo, Lecturer in the Politics of Race and Ethnicity, Newcastle University, United Kingdom moderated the panel which featured Mr Jasvir Singh, Founding Chair of City Sikhs, United Kingdom; Associate Professor Patrice Brodeur of the Institute of Religious Studies, University of Montreal (Canada); and Dr Sashi Jayakumar, Head of the Centre of Excellence for National Security (CENS) at S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS).

11. **Dr Jayakumar** said: “Engage in the spirit of tolerance and civil discourse – and recognise that there are differences. Keep the middle ground for civil discourse and don’t let it be obliterated because not every difficult conversation is necessarily polarising.”

12. **Mr Singh** said: “There is a disconnect which is probably due to less exposure to ‘otherness’ and less of an ability to engage with people to who look and sound like you, and that’s a challenge which social media can overcome.”

13. The ICCS from 6 to 8 September 2022 is organised by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) and supported by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY). More information and updates on ICCS is available on the official website www.iccs.sg and ICCS’ [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) channels.

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About the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)

The S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) is a global think tank and professional graduate school of international affairs at the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. An autonomous school, RSIS’ mission is to be a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic and international affairs in the Asia Pacific. With the core functions of research, graduate education, and networking, it produces research on Asia Pacific Security, Multilateralism and Regionalism,

Conflict Studies, Non-traditional Security, Cybersecurity, Maritime Security and Terrorism Studies.

About the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY)

The Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth seeks to inspire Singaporeans through the arts and sports, strengthen community bonds, and promote volunteerism and philanthropy. Since its inception in November 2012, MCCY has been actively engaging the arts, heritage, sports, community, and youth sectors. The Ministry aims to bring into sharper focus the efforts to build a more cohesive and vibrant society, and to deepen a sense of identity and belonging to the nation. MCCY will work with its stakeholders to create an environment where Singaporeans can pursue their aspirations for a better quality of life and together, build a gracious and caring society we are proud to call home.

About the Temasek Foundation

Temasek Foundation supports a diverse range of programmes that uplift lives and communities in Singapore and beyond. Temasek Foundation's programmes, made possible through philanthropic endowments gifted by Temasek, strive towards achieving positive outcomes for individuals and communities now, and for generations to come. Collectively, Temasek Foundation's programmes strengthen social resilience, foster international exchange and regional capabilities, advance science, and protect the planet.

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