

KUIK Cheng-Chwee, Ph.D.

Professor of International Relations

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[Google Scholar](#) h-index: 26 Citations: 3591

Kuik Cheng-Chwee is Professor of International Relations at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), National University of Malaysia (UKM). He is concurrently a nonresident senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University. He is currently on sabbatical as the Japan Foundation 2025 JFSEAP Visiting Fellow (September 2025-February 2026) at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University. Professor Kuik's research focuses on the external policies of small and secondary states, big powers in the Indo-Pacific, Asian security, and international relations. Cheng-Chwee is a regular invited speaker to international conferences and closed-door policy roundtables. His publications have appeared in such peer-reviewed journals as *International Affairs*, *Pacific Review*, *Journal of Chinese Political Science*, *Chinese Journal of International Politics*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, and *Contemporary Southeast Asia*. He is author of *Theorizing Hedging: Explaining Shifts and Variations in Alignment Choices* (Cambridge, forthcoming), co-author (with David Lampton and Selina Ho) of *Rivers of Iron: Railroads and Chinese Power in Southeast Asia* (2020) and co-editor (with Alice Ba and Sueo Sudo) of *Institutionalizing East Asia* (2016). Cheng-Chwee's essay, "The Essence of Hedging", won ISEAS's Michael Leifer Memorial Prize. He serves on the editorial boards of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *Asian Politics and Policy*, and several other international journals. He holds an M.Litt. from the University of St. Andrews and a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. He has been listed in Stanford University's Top 2% Scientists, subfield International Relations, since 2023.

Academic Positions

Professor, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), National University of Malaysia (UKM), April 2022 -

Associate Professor, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), National University of Malaysia (UKM), March 2019 – March 2022

Associate Professor, Strategic Studies and International Relations Program, National University of Malaysia (UKM), 2012 – March 2019

Senior Lecturer, Strategic Studies and International Relations Program, UKM, 2010-2012

Lecturer, Strategic Studies and International Relations Program, UKM, 1998-2010

Tutor, Strategic and Security Studies Unit, UKM, 1996-1998

Education

Johns Hopkins University, SAIS, Washington DC (Sept 2003 – May 2010) ▪ Ph.D. ▪ Distinction in Dissertation ▪ Committee Members: Karl Jackson, David Lampton, Francis Fukuyama

St. Andrews University, Fife, Scotland, United Kingdom (September 1997 – September 1998) ▪ M. Litt. in International Security Studies ▪ Distinction in Dissertation (Thesis)

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia (July 1992 – November 1995) ▪ Bachelor of Public Administration ▪ Distinction in Undergraduate Thesis (in Malay)

Awards (Selected)

- Japan Foundation ▪ [JFSEAP Visiting Fellowship @ Kyoto University's CSEAS](#) ▪ September 2025 – February 2026
- The Asan Institute for Policy Studies (South Korea) ▪ Visiting Research Fellowship ▪ June-August 2025
- [Newton Advanced Fellowship](#), British Academy & Akademi Sains Malaysia ▪ 2016-2018
- [Princeton-Harvard China and the World Program](#) Postdoctoral Fellowship ▪ 2013/2014
- ISEAS's [Michael Leifer Memorial Prize](#) ▪ 2009
- William and Marie-Daniele [Zartman Fellowship](#), Johns Hopkins SAIS ▪ 2009
- Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation (CCKF) Doctoral Fellowship, Taiwan ▪ 2008/2009
- Lee Kong Chian Research Fellowship Award, Singapore ▪ 2007
- [Fulbright](#) Graduate Study Scholarship ▪ 2003/2004 & 2004/2005
- British High Commissioner's [Chevening](#) Award ▪ 1997/1998

Publications (Selected) <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6318-085X>

- 2026 ***Theorizing Hedging: Explaining Shifts and Variations in Alignment Choices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).**
- 2026 “Actively Choosing Not to Choose: The Agency of Neutrality-Plus in Southeast Asia”, in Patrick Kollner, Robert Patman and Balazs Kiglics, eds., *Small State Agency: Analytical Perspectives and Empirical Evidence from the Indo-Pacific* (Palgrave, forthcoming).
- 2026 (with Alex L. Vuving), “The Limits of China’s Influence: How and Why Smaller States Defy whilst Deferring Selectively”, in Steve Chan, ed., *Gauging China’s Influence Abroad: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).
- 2026 “Assessing Malaysian Neutrality: Is Hedging Still Possible in the Trumpian World?” *Trends in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: ISEAS - Yusuf Ishak Institute, forthcoming).
- 2026 “Malaysia’s Bid for BRICS: Geoeconomic, Geopolitical, and Domestic Drivers”, *ASEAN Goes BRICS* (Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, forthcoming).

- 2026 “**Malaysia Reassesses Security: Reviewing the Mid-term Review of Malaysian Defence White Paper**”, *ISEAS Perspective* (forthcoming).
- 2025 “**Narrating ASEAN Centrality, Unity, and Neutrality**”, in Faiz Abdullah, ed., *ASEAN in 2025: Shaping an Inclusive and Sustainable Future* (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia), pp. 36-50.
- 2025 “[Malaysia’s Push for the ASEAN-GCC-China Summit: Connecting Past and Present](#)”, Fulcrum: Analysis on Southeast Asia, 22 July 2025.
- 2025 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad), “**The Geopolitics of BRICS+: Between (and Beyond) Institutional Balancing and Institutional Hedging**”, in Heiwai Tang and Brian Wong Yue Shun, eds., [Towards a Future for BRICS+](#) (Hong Kong: Asia Global Institute and HKU Press, 2025), pp. 61-99.
- 2025 (with Lai Yew Meng and Fikry A. Rahman) “**Ambivalence in Alignment: The Politics of Malaysia-U.S. Relations**”, in Ann Marie Murphy, ed., [Southeast Asia Views the United States: Perceptions, Policies, and Prospects](#) (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield), pp. 253-280.
- 2025 “[Hedging as a Policy Without Pronouncement: A Tale of Three Defense White Papers](#)”, *NIDS ASEAN Workshop 2025: New Strategies in Southeast Asia?* NIDS Joint Research Series No. 22 (Tokyo: National Institute for Defense Studies), pp. 5-21.
- 2025 “[Balanced Connectivity Building in Infrastructure Cooperation: A Southeast Asian Perspective](#)”, “Development as Strategy” Initiative Report (New York: Asia Society Policy Institute), <https://asiasociety.org/policy-institute/balanced-connectivity-building-infrastructure-cooperation-southeast-asian-perspective>
- 2025 “The DOC and Dispute Management in the South China Sea: Maintaining Dialogue, Maximizing Convergences”, in Yanjun Guo and Sothirak Pou, eds., *Sustainable Peace of the South China Sea* (Singapore: World Scientific), pp. 193-208.
- 2025 (with Yew Meng Lai). “[Deference and Defiance in Malaysia’s China Policy: Determinants of a Dualistic Diplomacy](#)”, *International Journal of Asian Studies* 22(1): 5-24.
- 2025 (with Chanintira na Thalang et al.) “[The State of the Discipline: How Far Along Are We in Developing an IR Theory Based on Southeast Asia’s Experiences](#)”, *International Studies Perspectives*, 26(3): 335-355 <https://doi.org/10.1093/isp/ekae009>
- 2024 (with Nur Shahadah Jamil) “[The Feasibility and Future of Middle-state Hedging](#)”, *East Asian Policy* 16(4): 7-28.
- 2024 (with David M. Lampton and Da Wei) [U.S.-China-Southeast Asia Relations: Challenges and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation](#), The Asia Foundation Report (Washington, DC: The Asia Foundation, October 8).
- 2024 “[Tilting Towards Beijing? Malaysia’s Relations with China after Li Qiang’s Visit](#)”, Carnegie China (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, July 8).

- 2024 (with Guido Benny) “[Linking Local Insights to Global IR: Locating Malaysian Contours and Contributions](#)”, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 43(3): 357-386. <https://doi.org/10.1177/18681034241246014>
- 2024 “[Impossible Trinity Drives Prudent Hedging in Southeast Asia](#)”, *East Asia Forum* 16(2): 15-16.
- 2024 “[The Belt and Road Initiative at 10: Regional Perspectives on China’s Evolving Approach](#)”, *CSIS Interpret: China* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, May 9).
- 2024 “[Explaining Hedging: The Case of Malaysian Equidistance](#)”, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 46(1): 43-76.
- 2024 “[Southeast Asian Responses to the U.S.-China Tech Competition: Hedging and Economy-Security Tradeoffs](#)”, *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 29: 509-538.
- 2023 “[Malaysian Conceptions of International Order: Paradoxes of Small-State Pragmatism](#)”, *International Affairs* 99(4): 1477-1497.
- 2023 (with Zikri Rosli) “[Laos-China Infrastructure Cooperation: Legitimation and the Limits of Host-country Agency](#)”, *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies* 12(1): 32-58, DOI: 10.1080/24761028.2023.2274236
- 2023 “[Navigating the Narratives of Indo-Pacific: ‘Rules’, ‘Like-mindedness’, and ‘De-risking’ in the Eyes of Southeast Asia](#)”, *Georgetown Journal of Asian Affairs* 9 (August), pp. 51-56.
- 2023 “[Active Neutrality: Malaysia in the Middle of U.S.-China Competition](#)”, United States Institute of Peace, October 11, 2023.
- 2023 “[Binary Trap Threatens ASEAN’s Hedging Role](#),” *East Asia Forum*, August 1, 2023.
- 2023 (with Matt Ferchen) “[EU-ASEAN Trade, Investment, and Connectivity Cooperation](#)”, in Lizza Bomassi, ed., *Reimagining EU-ASEAN Relations: Challenges and Opportunities* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace).
- 2023 “[Southeast Asia Hedges Between Feasibility and Desirability](#),” *East Asia Forum*, 4 July.
- 2023 (with Fikry Abd Rahman) “[ASEAN’s Dialogue Mechanisms: Institutionalizing ASEAN Centrality](#)”, in Jörn Dosch and Frederick Kliem, eds., *The Elgar Companion to ASEAN* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar), pp. 177-195
- 2023 “[Shades of Grey: Riskification and Hedging in the Indo-Pacific](#)”, *Pacific Review* 36(6): 1181-1214.
- 2022 “[Hedging via Institutions: ASEAN-led Multilateralism in the Age of the Indo-Pacific](#)”, *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 10(2): 355-386.

- 2022 (with Chen-Dong Tso) "[Hedging in Non-Traditional Security: The Case of Vietnam's Disaster Response Cooperation](#)", *Chinese Journal of International Politics*.
- 2022 **"Southeast Asian States and ASEAN"**, in David Shambaugh, ed., *The International Relations of Asia*, 3rd edition (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield), pp. 189-227.
- 2022 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad) **"Southeast Asia-U.S. Relations in the Indo-Pacific Era"**, in Gilbert Rozman, ed., *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies 2022* (Washington, DC: KEI).
- 2022 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad and Ayman Rashdan Wong) **"Malaysia and Northeast Asia: What Drives Small-State Forward Diplomacy"**, *Issues and Studies* 58(3).
- 2022 (with Thomas Daniel) **"Malaysia's Relations with the United States and China: Asymmetries (and Anxieties) Amplified"**, *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2022, pp. 211-231.
- 2022 **"Locating Host-Country Agency and Hedging in Infrastructure Cooperation"**, in Seth Schindler and Jessica DiCarlo, eds., *The Rise of the Infrastructure State: How US-China Rivalry Shapes Politics and Place Worldwide* (Bristol University Press), pp. 194-210.
- 2022 **"The Politics of Thailand-China Railway Cooperation: Domestic Determinants of Smaller State BRI Engagement"**, in Suthiphand Chirathivat, Buddhagarn Rutchatorn, Anupama Devendrakumar, eds., *China's Belt and Road Initiative in ASEAN* (Singapore: World Scientific), pp. 223-250.
- 2021 **"Elite Legitimation and the Agency of the Host Country: Evidence from Laos, Malaysia, and Thailand's BRI Engagement"**, in Florian Schneider, ed., *Global Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative* (Amsterdam University Press), pp. 217-244.
- 2021 **"Getting Hedging Right: A Small State Perspective"**, *China International Strategy Review*, December, 1-16.
- 2021 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad) **"Malaysia's Resilient (but Ambiguous) Partnership with the United States: The Dilemmas of Smaller States in the Indo-Pacific Era"**, *Asia Policy*, October, pp. 86-95.
- 2021 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad and Lai Yew Meng) **"PLA Overflight near Malaysian Airspace: A Precarious Provocation"**, *Fulcrum: Analysis on Southeast Asia*, June 30.
- 2021 **"Irresistible Inducement? Assessing China's Belt and Road Initiative in Southeast Asia"**, Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)'s *Asia-Unbound*, June 15.
- 2021 **"Laos' Enthusiastic Embrace of China's Belt and Road Initiative"**, *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 45, No. 4, pp. 735-759.
- 2021 **"Malaysia's Fluctuating Engagement with China's Belt and Road Initiative"**, *Asian Perspective* 45(2): 421-444.

- 2021 **“Asymmetry and Authority: Theorizing Southeast Asian Responses to China’s Belt and Road Initiative”**, *Asian Perspective* 45(2): 255-276.
- 2021 (with Lai Yew Meng and Amy Azuan Abdullah) **“Pulau Layang-Layang in Malaysia’s South China Sea Policy”**, *International Journal of China Studies* 12(2): 189-222.
- 2021 (with Lai Yew Meng) **“Structural Sources of Malaysia’s South China Sea Policy”**, *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 75(3).
- 2021 **“The Twin Chessboards of US-China Rivalry: Impact on Geostrategic Supply and Demand in Post-Pandemic Asia”**, *Asian Perspective* 45(1): 157-176.
- 2020 **“Hedging in Post-Pandemic Asia: What, How, and Why?”** *The Asan Forum: An Online Journal* (June 6).
- 2020 **“Connectivity and Gaps: The Bridging and Missed Links in China’s BRI in Southeast Asia”**, in Maria Adele Carrai, Jean-Christophe DeFraigne, and Jan Wouters, eds., *The Belt and Road and Global Governance* (Northampton, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing), pp. 76-95.
- 2020 (with David M. Lampton and Selina Ho) *Rivers of Iron: Railroads and Chinese Power in Southeast Asia* (University of California Press).
- 2020 **“Mapping Malaysia in the Evolving Indo-Pacific Construct”**, *CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2020* (Canberra: Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific).
- 2019 (With BA Hamzah) **“The Making of Defence White Paper”**, *New Straits Times* (Dec 7).
- 2018 (With Alice Ba) **“Southeast Asia and China: Engagement and Constraintment”**, in Alice D. Ba and Mark Beeson, eds., *Contemporary Southeast Asia: The Politics of Change, Contestation, and Adaptation*, 3rd edition (London: Palgrave), pp. 229-247.
- 2017 **“Explaining the Contradiction in China’s South China Sea Policy”**, *China: An International Journal* 15(1): 163-186.
- 2016 **“How Do Weaker States Hedge? Unpacking ASEAN States’ Alignment Behavior towards China,”** *Journal of Contemporary China* 25(100): 500-514.
- 2016 **“Malaysia between the United States and China: What do Weaker States Hedge Against?”** *Asian Politics and Policy* 8(1): 155-177.
- 2015 (With Gilbert Rozman) **“Light or Heavy Hedging: Positioning between China and the United States”**, in Gilbert Rozman, *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies 2015*, Vol. 26 (Washington, DC: Korea Economic Institute of America), pp. 1-9.
- 2015 **“Variations on a (Hedging) Theme: Comparing ASEAN Core States’ Alignment Behavior,”** in Gilbert Rozman, *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies 2015*, Vol. 26 (Washington, DC: Korea Economic Institute of America), pp. 11-26.

- 2015 **“Malaysia’s Relations with Major and Middle Powers”**, *Observatoire Asie du Sud-est* (Paris: Asia Centre, Sciences Po).
- 2015 **“[Malaysia’s Balancing Act](#)”**, *New York Times* (December 7), p. 8.
- 2015 **“An Emerging 3rd Pillar in Asian Architecture? AIIB and Other China-led Initiatives”**, *Asia-Pacific Bulletin* 305, March 26 (Washington, DC: East-West Center).
- 2013 **“Making Sense of Malaysia’s China Policy: Asymmetry, Proximity, and Elite’s Domestic Authority,”** *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 6:429-467.
- 2013 **“Malaysia’s U.S. Policy under Najib: Structural and Domestic Sources of a Small State’s Strategy,”** *Asian Security* 9(3):143-164.
- 2012 (With Nor Azizan Idris and Abd Rahim Md Nor) **“The China Factor in the U.S. ‘Reengagement’ with Southeast Asia: Drivers and Limits of Converged Hedging,”** *Asian Politics and Policy* 4(3): 315-344.
- 2008 **“The Essence of Hedging: Malaysia and Singapore’s Response to a Rising China”**, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 30(2): 159-185.
- 2008 **“China’s Evolving Multilateralism in Asia”**, in Kent Calder and Francis Fukuyama, eds., *East Asian Multilateralism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 109-142.
- 2005 **“Multilateralism in China’s ASEAN Policy: Its Evolution, Characteristics, and Aspiration,”** *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27(1): 102-122.
- 2004 《中国参与东盟主导的地区机制的利益分析》 [An Interest-based Analysis on China’s Participation in the ASEAN-led Regional Institutions], *世界经济与政治* [World Economics and Politics] No. 9 (September), pp. 53-59.

Invited Talks and Presentations (Selected)

- “[Non-Alignment via Multi-Alignments: Evidence from Southeast Asia in the Trump 2.0 Era](#)”** ▪ CSEAS (Centre for Southeast Asian Studies) Colloquium, University of Kyoto ▪ 23 January 2025
- “How Geopolitical Competition is Managed in Southeast Asia”** ▪ The Pacific Dialogue, organized by The University of South Pacific, Suva, Fiji ▪ 1-2 December 2025
- “[When Geoeconomics Meets Geopolitics: Southeast Asia-Japan Partnerships in the Trump 2.0 Era](#)”** ▪ Faculty of Economics Seminar Series, Kansai University, Osaka ▪ 25 November 2025
- “[Between \(and Beyond\) Alliance-First and Alliance-Allergic Outlooks: The Politics of Alignment-Plus in the Indo-Pacific Era](#)”** ▪ @ National Chung-Hsing University Seminar Series, Taichung ▪ 13 November 2025

[“The Seven ‘Sins’ of Hedging? Unpacking Blindspots in Alignment Literature”](#) ▪ Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica (IPSAS), Taipei ▪ 12 November 2025

[“The Logic and Limits of Hedging in the Trump 2.0 Era: East Asia’s Evolving Alignment Choices”](#) ▪ National Taiwan University, Taipei ▪ 11 November 2025

“Writing and Publishing in International Relations: Substance, Structure, Styles” ▪ Workshop on “International Publishing: Skills and Practical Experience”, organized by Vietnam Academy of Diplomacy, Hanoi ▪ 6 November 2025

[“Beyond Hedging? Southeast Asian Responses to Indo-Pacific Realignments under Trump 2.0”](#) ▪ Institute of Advanced Studies on Asia Seminar Series, Tokyo University ▪ 22 October 2025

“Challenges and Opportunities for Regional Security Arrangements” ▪ 26th Asia-Pacific Programme for Senior Military Officers (APPSMO 2025), organized by S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore ▪ 14 October 2025

“The Lure and Limits of Likeminded Alignments: A Southeast Asian Perspective of the Indo-Pacific Four” ▪ 5th Canterbury Conference on the Indo-Pacific on “Asia Pacific States: Navigating the Global and Regional (Dis)order” ▪ Institute for Indo-Pacific Affairs and the UC Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand ▪ 1 September 2025

[“Unpacking Malaysian Neutrality under Anwar: Is Hedging Still Possible \(and Desirable\) under Trump 2.0”](#) ▪ ISEAS Webinar ▪ 27 August 2025

“Southeast Asian States’ Evolving Maritime Strategies in the South China Sea under Trump 2.0” ▪ KIOST Seminar on the Law of the Sea and Maritime Security, Korea Institute of Ocean Science and Technology (KIOST), Busan ▪ 13 August 2025

“A Southeast Asian Perspective of East Asian Cooperation” ▪ East Asia Cooperation Forum (EACF), ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Seoul ▪ 15 July 2025

“U.S.-China-Southeast Asia Relations: A Southeast Asian Perspective” ▪ Panel with David Lampton and Da Wei ▪ The Asia Foundation, Washington, DC (7 October 2024) ▪ Columbia University (9 October 2024) ▪ University of California, Berkeley (11 October 2024)

“You Can’t Eat Your Cake and Have It Too: The Impossible Trinity in Middle State Alignment Choices” ▪ [Keynote Address](#), 2024 China in the World Forum, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia ▪ 28 August 2024

“Malaysian Foreign Policy under Anwar: Performance, Identity and the Politics of Survival” ▪ Seminar, Yusuf Ishak Institute ISEAS ▪ 16 July 8 2024

“Rethinking US-Southeast Asia Relations: The China Factor and Beyond” (with David Shambaugh) ▪ Southeast Asia Program Seminar, Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University ▪ 8 April 2024

“When and Why States Hedge” ▪ International Studies Association (ISA) Convention, San Francisco ▪ 5 April 2024

“Role and Limits of Host Country Agency: The Case of Laos-China Infrastructure Cooperation” ▪ Seminar at Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Tokyo ▪ 5 March 2024

“Emerging Geopolitical Trends: Implications and Options for Malaysia” ▪ Mindef Retreat, Malaysian Ministry of Defence, Port Dickson ▪ 20 January 2024

“Southeast Asian Hedging amid the U.S.-China Tech Competition: Explaining the Economy-Security Tradeoffs” ▪ Paper presented at the EAI Conference on “Coping with Security Challenges in the Post COVID-19 World: Climate Change, Pandemic, Economic and Cyberspace Security”, organized by East Asia Institute, Seoul ▪ 11-12 December 2023

“Rethinking the ‘Dual Order’ in Southeast Asia” ▪ The 6th International Workshop on “Building Regional Security Architecture in Asia-Pacific” ▪ SIIS, Shanghai ▪ 28 November 2023

“Malaysian Conceptions of International Order” ▪ Paper presented at the Panel Discussion on “Asian Conceptions of International Order: What Asia Wants”, LKY School of Public Policy, NUS, Singapore ▪ 11 September 2023

“Geopolitical Trends and Malaysia’s Interests: Manifestations, Implications, and Options” ▪ Consultative Council on Foreign Policy, Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs ▪ 17 July 2023

“International Relations Studies in Malaysia: Trajectories, Theories, and Themes” ▪ Asian Political and International Studies Association (APISA) Congress, Bali ▪ 30 June – 1 July 2023

“Hedging and Weaker States’ Multi-layered Statecraft in the Indo-Pacific Era” ▪ Keynote Speech at the 2nd Symposium on Muslim Politics and World Society, organized by UIII, Depok, Indonesia ▪ 15 June 2023

“Navigating the Indo-Pacific Narratives: Southeast Asian Perspectives on Rules, Like-mindedness, and De-Risking” ▪ Centre for Strategic Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand ▪ 6 June 2023

“Digital Silk Road in Malaysia: Host-Country Agency and Norms Diffusion in Cyberspace” ▪ International Studies Association Convention, Montreal, Canada ▪ 16 March 2023

Public Lecture on **“Southeast Asia between the U.S. and China: Why Do Smaller States (Still) Insist on Hedging?”** ▪ Organized by Asian Institute, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto ▪ 15 December 2022

Australasian Aid Conference (AAC) Panel and DFAT Roundtable on Chinese Overseas Infrastructure Investment, organized by Australian Aid; and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australian Government, Canberra ▪ 30 November 2022

“Crosstalks or Melian Dialogue: How Southeast Asia See U.S.-China Rivalry” ▪ Workshop on “The PLA in a World of Strategic Competition with the United States”, organized by RAND-NDU-USIP-CAPS, Washington, DC ▪ 18-19 November 2022

Special Session, ASEAN-Japan Expert Panel on the 50th Commemorative Years of ASEAN-Japan Relations, organized by ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (online) ▪ 27 October 2022

ASEAN Junior Fellowship Programme, Workshop on Regional Security, organized by the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta ▪ 31 August – 1 September 2022

“Asymmetry, Authority, and the Agency of Smaller States along the Belt and Road” ▪ (Online) Columbia-Harvard China and the World Program, organized by School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University, New York ▪ 29 March 2021

“Smaller States and the Twin Chessboards of Asian Geopolitics” ▪ Workshop on “The Future of Power, Norms, and Institutions in the Indo-Pacific: Implications for the Australia-U.S. Alliance”, co-organized by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the United States Studies Centre (USSC), University of Sydney ▪ Sydney, February 3, 2020

“Malaysia between the BRI and the Indo-Pacific” ▪ MGIMO ASEAN Academic Days, organized by MGIMO University ▪ Moscow, 11 October 2019

“Mind the Gaps: China, BRI, and the Politics of Connectivity Cooperation in Southeast Asia” ▪ Public Lecture on Dealing with China: Lessons from Southeast Asia, co-organized by Leiden Asia Centre and The Clingendael Institute ▪ The Hague, Netherlands, May 8, 2019

“Circles of Courtships: ASEAN-India Partnership in the Indo-Pacific” ▪ Delhi Dialogue X, co-organized by Indian Ministry of External Affairs and (RIS) ▪ New Delhi, 19-20 July 2018

“Malaysia and the Belt and Road Initiative” ▪ Working Consultation for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Technical Assistance Study of the Belt and Road Initiative with Stakeholders in the GMS and Malaysia, organized by ADB ▪ Beijing, PRC, April 24, 2018

“Southeast Asian Responses to China’s Belt and Road Initiative” ▪ Southeast Asia Seminar Series, St. Antony’s College, University of Oxford ▪ Oxford, 22 November 2017

“Malaysia-China Partnership” ▪ The Chatham House ▪ London, 20 November 2017

“Why, When, and How Do Weaker States Hedge? Explaining Southeast Asia’s Responses to China’s Rise” ▪ APARC Seminar, hosted by Southeast Asia Program, Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Stanford University ▪ Stanford, March 31, 2015

“The Origins of Hedging: Theorizing Weaker States’ Alignment Choices toward a Rising Power” ▪ 7th Annual CWP Workshop ▪ Harvard University, 6 December 2013

Peer Reviewer: Journals

Asian Journal of Comparative Politics, Asian Politics and Policy, Asian Security, Australian Journal of International Affairs, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Chinese Journal of International Politics, Contemporary Security Policy,

Contemporary Southeast Asia, Cooperation and Conflict, Foreign Policy Analysis, Global Studies Quarterly, International Affairs, International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies, International Journal of China Studies, International Politics, International Relations, International Relations of the Asia-Pacific, International Security, International Spectator, International Studies Quarterly, International Studies Review, Japanese Journal of Political Science, Journal of Current Chinese Affairs, Journal of the British Association for Chinese Studies, Journal of Cold War Studies, Pacific Affairs, Pacific Review, Strategic Studies (ISSI), TRaNS: Trans-Regional and National Studies of Southeast Asia

Thesis Supervision and Examination

PhD Supervision ▪ 8 graduated + 3 in progress

Master Thesis Supervision ▪ 77 graduated

Undergraduate Thesis Supervision (B.A. in International Relations) ▪ 15 graduated

Professional Experiences (Selected)

Nonresident Senior Fellow ▪ [The Asan Institute for Policy Studies](#), Seoul, Republic of Korea ▪ September 2025 – present

Nonresident Senior Fellow ▪ [Asia Global Institute](#) ▪ February 2025 – present

Nonresident Senior Fellow ▪ [Centre on Contemporary China and the World](#), The University of Hong Kong ▪ February 2025 – present

Nonresident Scholar ▪ Carnegie China ▪ January 2024 – present
<https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2024/04/new-scholar-spotlight-cheng-chwee-kuik?lang=en¢er=global>

Nonresident Senior Fellow ▪ Foreign Policy Institute (FPI), Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Washington, DC ▪ December 2023 – present (Non-resident Fellow, December 2018 – November 2023) <https://www.fpi.sais.jhu.edu/cheng-chwee-kuik>

Member ▪ Consultative Council on Foreign Policy (CCFP), Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs ▪ January – December 2023

Visiting Professor ▪ Department of International Politics, Universitas Indonesia, Depok ▪ September 2022

Co-Investigator ▪ JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development (JICA Ogata Research Institute) on “The New Dynamics of Peace and Development in the Indo-Pacific: How Countries in the Region Proactively Interact with China” ▪ Principal Investigator: Professor Takahara Akio ▪ July 2022 – March 2024

Co-Investigator ▪ Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway ▪ Research Council of Norway Project on “Shaping the Digital World Order: Norms and Agency along the Digital Silk Road in Southeast Asia” ▪ Principal Investigator: Dr. Ilaria Carrozza ▪ June 2021 – May 2024

Consultant ▪ Council on Foreign Relations, New York ▪ April – June 2021

Principal Writer & Head, Writing Team (External Expert Panel), Malaysia’s inaugural Defence White Paper ▪ Malaysian Ministry of Defence ▪ January – December 2019

Consultant ▪ Asian Development Bank (ADB) TA-9124 PRC: Study of the Belt and Road Initiative ▪ September 2018 – June 2019

Project Leader & Principal Investigator ▪ Newton Advanced Fellowship Project on “Asymmetry and Authority: Southeast Asian States’ Responses to China’s Belt and Road Initiative” (in collaboration with Dr. Lee Jones, Queen Mary University of London) ▪ Mar 2016 – February 2018

Co-Researcher ▪ Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) Project on “Road to Chinese Power: Railroad Infrastructure and Beijing’s Quest for Influence” (led by Professor David M. Lampton) ▪ January 2016 – December 2018

Senior Researcher ▪ Unit Perundangan Universiti Malaya (UPUM) Project on “Malaysia’s Foreign Policy as a Middle Power” (led by Tan Sri Kamal Salih), for the Malaysian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ▪ August 2016 – February 2017

Founder and Co-Convener ▪ East Asian International Relations (EAIR) Caucus, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) ▪ August 2014 – December 2025

Language Proficiency

- Bahasa Malaysia ▪ Fluency in conversation and writing
- English ▪ Fluency in conversation and writing
- Chinese (Mandarin) ▪ Fluency in conversation and writing
- Teochew/Chaozhou ▪ Fluency in conversation
- Hokkien/Fujian/Minnan ▪ Fluency in conversation

Personal

Date and Place of Birth: 23 July 1971, in Muar, Malaysia

Citizenship: Malaysian

Family: Married, two children (b. 2002 & 2005)