

**Dr. János Radvanyi**

**Opening Remarks**

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It is a great honor for me to welcome you all to our campus. The Center for International Security and Strategic Studies (CISS) at Mississippi State University is committed to focusing its research activities on issues related to international terrorism. This is the underlining reason that we joined forces with the Center for U.S.-Japan Studies and Cooperation of the Institute for Public Policy Studies (CJSC) at Vanderbilt University, and the Tokyo-based Asian Security Forum (ASF) to organize this Workshop. As you know, the purpose of this two-day discussion on “International Cooperation in the War Against Terror in the Asia-Pacific Region with Special Emphasis on the Malacca Straits” is: 1) to evaluate the level of Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups in the Asia-Pacific region, 2) to analyze the present degree of international cooperation to counter these threats with special emphasis on safeguarding the Malacca Straits, and 3) to evaluate the potential threat of bio-terrorism. The special advantage of this Workshop is that we can and will discuss the vital issues for the security for the Asia-Pacific Region in our University-based, neutral forum. Please convey your frank and blunt opinions that will help all of us to understand each other’s concerns, and find compromised solutions.

We hope to establish a lasting network of specialist for dealing with the complex issues of the growing international terrorism in this part of the world. Last, but not least, this workshop is hopefully going to build confidence among the participants.

We have in this conference room an extraordinarily talented and articulate group of experts from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. They are joined with distinguished representatives of Australia, Japan and the United States to discuss these vital issues.

I hope that you will find this worthwhile to endure a long flight and jet lag. On our part, we will do our best to accommodate you with our traditional Southern Hospitality. We have received strong institutional support from our University President and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. I would like to express our deepest gratitude also to the Japan Foundation–Center for Global Partnership, Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Earhart Foundation, and Nafco Research Institute for their generous support.

At this point, I am asking our President, Dr. Charles Lee, to take over the microphone for his Welcoming Remark.