

## Panel Proposal for EUROSEAS Conference 2017

### (1) Title:

Civil-Military Relations in South and Southeast Asian New Democracies: A Comparative Study on Dynamics and Driving Forces

### (2) Convener:

Hugh Pei-Hsiu CHEN (Email: [phchen@ncnu.edu.tw](mailto:phchen@ncnu.edu.tw))

President, Taiwan Association of Southeast Asian Studies (TASEAS)

Distinguished Professor, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, National Chi Nan University, Taiwan

### (3) Brief Description of Panel:

Most research literature conceptualized civil-military relations (CMRs) as a *dichotomy* of civilian control on one hand and military intervention on the other. Consequently, civilian control was implicitly defined as the absence of a *coup d'état* or actual military rule. Such an understanding, however, poses several problems in applying civil-military relations research in empirical analysis of newly established democracies, especially the new democracies in South and Southeast Asia.

Asia, as a region, is particularly suited to drawing inferences on CMRs and democratic transitions because it exhibits a large degree of variation. There is considerable diversity in the region regarding the outcomes of democratic transitions. In addition, there are important variations in the patterns of CMRs and in the extent of civilian control over military institutions across countries within the region. The eye-catching numbers of *coups d'état* and military regimes permit only a superficial picture of the relationship between CMRs and democratization in Asia.

In all the Asian countries that experienced democratization in the 1980s and 1990s, the 'new' political environment necessitated deep-reaching reforms of CMRs as the 'old' authoritarian pattern of civil-military interaction were no longer sustainable or acceptable under the changed circumstance: the 1999 putsch in Pakistan, the 2006 *coup d'état* in Thailand, and approximately ten failed military rebellions in the Philippines since 1986 indicate that in Asia: *Coup d'état* is not a problem of the political past, but a continuing threat, even for electoral democracies that have persisted for over decades in South and Southeast Asia.

This panel tries to explore the driving forces and dynamics of CMRs in South and Southeast Asian new democracies based on the core concept of civilian control. The levels for analysis of this panel papers include: 'reviewing CMRs typologies in new democracies under the Third Wave' (structure); 'an empirical research on CMRs in five South and Southeast Asian new democracies' (sub-structure); and 'building up an Asian mortality on civilian control and democratic transformation (locality and typology).'

**Keywords:** civil-military relations, CMRs, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Asian mortality