



Social scientist Noeleen Heyzer at the third and final session of her lecture series on Singapore And Multilateral Governance: Securing Our Future, under the Institute of Policy Studies-Nathan Lecture Series, yesterday. With her is Ambassador-at-Large Chan Heng Chee, who moderated a question-and-answer segment. PHOTO: INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES

S'pore can be hub for global public health: Social scientist

Goh Yan Han

Being a hub for global public health is one way Singapore can contribute to the larger well-being of people and the planet, social scientist Noeleen Heyzer said yesterday.

The Republic can also take the lead in helping the world by becoming a digital hub for cyber security and a financial hub that plays a role in financing projects that reduce or remove carbon emissions.

Dr Heyzer was speaking at the third and final session of her lecture series on Singapore And Multilateral Governance: Securing Our Future, which is under the Institute of Policy Studies-Nathan Lecture Series.

She spoke on the need for renewed multilateral governance that has to evolve with the changes around the world.

Dr Heyzer, a former under-secretary-general of the United Nations, is the 10th person to be appointed by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) as an S R Nathan Fellow for the Study of Singapore.

She said Singapore has played an important role in global health security during the pandemic.

"It can now be more ambitious and become a hub for global public health in three ways: linking public health to environmental health, improving health equity in healthcare delivery, and taking advantage of frontier healthcare

technology," she added.

On the topic of cyber security, she said the adoption of 5G will broaden the cyber attack surface.

She called for industry groups to take the lead in developing and harmonising best practices in cyber security.

She also highlighted the significant gender gap in cyber security, which has resulted in a lack of gender perspectives informing the issue and the development of frameworks that fail to identify and respond to cyber threats faced by women and girls.

Singapore could look into a gender analysis of the norms on responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, which could provide guidelines for a more gender-

THREE-PRONG APPROACH

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SOCIAL SCIENTIST NOELEEN HEYZER

aware approach to their implementation, and accelerate efforts to eliminate harassment and crimes in the cyberworld, she said.

In terms of sustainability, Singapore can play a strong role in wealth planning solutions that support sustainable development in Asia, she added.

Dr Heyzer said there is good potential for South-east Asia to generate carbon credits and Singapore can play a role in the financing of projects that reduce or remove emissions through these credits. A carbon credit is a permit which allows a country or organisation to produce a certain amount of carbon emissions. It can be traded if the full allowance is not used.

She noted the complexities of governing the global commons – shared natural or cultural resources – and global public goods, such as a healthy planet and peace and security.

She said any effort at improving their governance and to manage the risks in doing so must navigate the complexities and seek explicitly to incorporate new approaches where they are likely to deliver better outcomes.

"(This) means all global stakeholders realising that solidarity is self-interest and taking greater collective responsibility for managing the global commons and global public goods, and the great disruptions of the 21st century. These are issues that no country can address alone."

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