

For immediate release

## Singapore hosts EU-Southeast Asia symposium on youth radicalisation

- *EU-supported symposium addressed the current challenge of youth radicalisation, bringing together experts to discuss case studies from Europe and Asia and explore comprehensive prevention strategies.*
- *Event facilitated exchange of expertise between practitioners from Belgium, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and EU law enforcement agency Europol.*

**Singapore, 29 April 2025** — The EU-Southeast Asia Symposium on Youth Radicalisation was held in Singapore on 22-23 April with the goal of facilitating exchange of expertise between government stakeholders and practitioners from EU institutions, EU Member States and Southeast Asia partner countries on the troubling current trend of youth radicalisation.

The activity, co-organised by the EU project ESIWA+ (Enhancing the EU's Security Cooperation in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific) and the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), compared approaches to mitigating online engagement with extremist content and off-ramping young people from pathways to radicalisation.

Practitioners at the event came from Belgium, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, and EU law enforcement agency Europol.

In her opening remarks, **EU Ambassador to Singapore H.E. Iwona Piórko** said: "When a youth becomes caught up in destructive thoughts and activities that pose a danger to themselves and others, it is clearly important that we step in. Yet we must also ensure we design any course of action with the best interests of the young person at heart. Rehabilitative support should be as protective as it is preventative. Preventative efforts and measures to counter propaganda are critical to tackling this threat to our societies. That is why EU has supported a wide range of initiatives aimed at preventing radicalisation."

"This symposium is part of the various strands of dialogue that exist between Singapore and the European Union in the areas of security and defence. We also amplify our efforts through international platforms. As co-chair of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, the EU promotes international dialogue, knowledge exchange, and the development of good practices to prevent and respond to terrorism worldwide. We also work closely with ASEAN, through the ASEAN Regional Forum and under the EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership, and support multiple regional initiatives focused on youth radicalisation," she added.

Addressing the symposium, **Singapore Minister of State, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of National Development, Associate Professor Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim** said: "I would like to applaud the efforts of the EU and the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR) at RSIS for bringing together experts from different parts of the region to come together and share knowledge on how we can better tackle youth radicalisation. This symposium is a good opportunity for us to pool together our collective expertise to better understand the evolving terror situation, develop best practices and generate insights on how we can manage challenges and more effectively deal with the threat of terrorism. We must continue to work together as an international fraternity in the fight against terrorism."

Speakers and discussants included police officers from the EU and Southeast Asia, and professionals in the fields of online regulation, education, youth engagement, and multi-stakeholder initiatives to prevent/counter violent extremism (P/CVE).

According to Europol's 2024 Terrorism Situation and Trend Report, the average age of all suspects arrested for terrorism offences in the EU was 20 years old. By examining the same trends in different contexts, participants discussed innovations in prevention, from upstream resilience development and online safeguards to tailored individual engagements, accounting for the particularly sensitive nature of interventions involving young people and the imperative adoption of a human rights-based approach.

This EU-Southeast Asia symposium is a follow-up to October 2023, when ESIWA partnered with ICPVTR at RSIS to hold a roundtable on emerging technology in the context of terrorism, bringing together security officials from several Indo-Pacific partner countries and Singapore government institutions.

In July 2023, ESIWA in partnership with Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs organised an EU-Singapore roundtable on preventing violent extremism and returning extremists.

#### **About the EU's ESIWA project:**

ESIWA+ (Enhancing the EU's Security Cooperation In and With Asia and the Indo-Pacific) works to enhance cooperation in four thematic areas: counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism, crisis management/addressing hybrid threats, cyber security, and maritime security. ESIWA+ is co-funded by the European Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, the German Federal Foreign Office, and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. ESIWA is co-implemented by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), and by Expertise France.

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