



Ms Juliette LOESCH (French Institute of International Relations)
Dr Alan CHONG (S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore)

Evening conference
10 February 2025
17:00 - 18:30

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to an **evening conference** organised on **Monday 10 February 2025** from **17:00 until 18:30** by the **Centre for Security and Defence Studies** of the **Royal Higher Institute for Defence**.

Asia-Pacific is in the middle of an increasingly alarming security crisis, potentially a collision course to war between China and the United States. The next few years could reach a critical point, and an armed conflict could break out. Combined to the struggle between the Global and BRICS+ models and to various regional issues, it would have irreversible consequences at various degrees for the whole world. European and Southeast Asian countries, at each extremity of Eurasia, are particularly concerned and impacted by these troubles on the horizon. As the main international economic and industrial hub, Asia is a vital lifeline for Europe. Southeast Asia, being at the geographic edge of the initial hotspots between China and the US, is most directly exposed to the potential spreading of this conflict, which could severely threaten its security and prosperity. More generally, such a war would be most intense and long, and would result in a complete reshaping of the strategic map. Moreover, the current rising confrontation between China and the US is already generating worrying challenges and uncertainties.

Despite a major security and/or economic dependency on the US or China, European and Southeast-Asian countries have their geopolitical particularities with specific priorities, interests and limits. This is, for instance, reflected in France's "Third Way" policy between the US and China or in the non-alignment principle firmly grounded in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Charter. These countries have a lot to share in security matters, with converging views. However, at the moment, their security cooperation remains most rudimentary and underrated. In the strategic countdown we are witnessing, tackling this approach is therefore clearly an emergency.

In order to shed some light on this issue and to provide the best possible answers and comparative perspectives from various European and Southeast Asian countries, we will have the privilege of listening to Ms Juliette Loesch, associate researcher on Southeast Asia at the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), and to Dr Alan Chong, senior fellow at the Centre for Multilateralism Studies at the Singaporean S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS).

This conference will take place **in English** on **Monday 10 February 2025 at 17:00 in the conference room at campus Renaissance** (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8/Hobbemastraat 8, 1000 Brussels**). A simultaneous interpretation in French and Dutch will be provided in the conference room. It will not be possible to follow the conference online. However, subject to the consent of the speakers, a recording of their presentations will be made available afterwards on our website.

We thank you in advance for registering via the following link: www.defence-institute.be. **Registration by Monday 3 February 2025 at the latest is compulsory.**

(Signed)
Baudouin COPPIETERS DE GIBSON, MSc Eng
Rear Admiral (LH)
Director-general
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

Programme:

- 16:30: Welcome
- 17:00: Conference and Q&A
- 18:45 – 19:30: Reception