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"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."
— James Baldwin

KSI
KNOWLEDGE · STRATEGY · INNOVATION
STRATEGIC INSTITUTE FOR ASIA PACIFIC

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The Asia Independent Directors Conference - The Future Asia Boardroom



Special Message

Tan Sri Michael Yeoh
President, KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific

As we enter November, I would like to wish all Hindus a Happy Deepavali. May the Festival of Lights shine brightly upon all, bringing hope, peace and prosperity. Let there be light!

This past month, KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific collaborated with the Malaysia Independent Non-Executive Directors Association (MiNED) to jointly organise the Asia Independent Directors Conference: The Future Asia Boardroom. The conference examined corporate governance, ethical leadership and the growing role of technology in business, particularly the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on decision-making and strategic planning. Discussions also highlighted the importance of preparing corporate boards to navigate geopolitical risks and emerging global challenges.

The Economic Club of Kuala Lumpur (ECKL) also hosted a roundtable discussion with the Ambassador of France, H.E. Marc Abensour, to explore opportunities for strengthening Malaysia-France relations.

On 7 October, I attended the Executive Committee meeting of the UN ESCAP Sustainable Business Network (ESBN) in Jakarta in my capacity as Vice-Chair. The meeting was also attended by the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). During my visit to Jakarta, I also spoke at the Indonesian International Sustainability Forum, participating in a panel discussion on water security and its importance to sustainable development.

In my capacity as Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce Malaysia (ICCM), I attended the ICC Regional Coordination Meeting in Singapore. Chaired by the CEO of the Singapore Business Federation, the meeting brought together regional stakeholders and was also attended by Mr John Denton, Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce, who joined from Paris.

I was also honoured to be invited to speak at the Cambodia University of Technology and Science (CamTech) on 30 October, where I addressed its forum on the New World Order. During my visit to Phnom Penh, I had the pleasure of reconnecting with two senior Cambodian ministers, H.E. Dr Chemm Rethy and H.E. Dr Sok Siphana.

Looking ahead, KSI will be organising two major international programmes in November: the International CEO and Business Leaders Forum and the International Youth and Women in AI Summit (Y:WAIT). Both programmes are jointly organised with the World Business Chamber (WBC) and the World Digital Chamber (WDC), reflecting our continued commitment to fostering leadership, strengthening international partnerships and advancing opportunities in technology and innovation.

KSI has also established AIDT @ KSI, the AI & Design-Thinking Lab, in partnership with the Centre of Excellence AI (CEAI Global). This initiative will enable KSI to offer AI-driven services and solutions while strengthening our capacity to produce white papers and policy research reports on emerging technologies and their implications for business, governance and society. We believe in the potential of AI to drive positive change and strongly support the responsible development and application of ethical AI for the greater good.

As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions on how we can better serve our stakeholders and the wider community. Your continued support and engagement are invaluable to our work.



01 Asia Independent Directors Conference - The Future Asia Boardroom

19th October 2026, Berjaya Times Square Hotel, Kuala Lumpur

The Asia Independent Directors Conference - The Future Asia Boardroom, themed "Board Leadership for a Sustainable and Resilient Future," brought together policymakers, corporate leaders, academics and governance professionals to discuss four key priorities: artificial intelligence (AI) governance, independent directors' professional development, sustainability and geopolitical risk management.

The conference opened with a welcome address by Dato' Mona Suraya Kamaruddin, President of the Malaysia Independent Non-Executive Director Association (MiNED), who stressed the importance of integrity, independence and accountability in board leadership. Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, President of KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific, highlighted the challenges posed by geopolitical tensions, economic uncertainty and technological disruption. In her special address, Ms Aina Zahari, Director of Corporate Strategy at Bursa Malaysia, emphasised the need to integrate strategy, risk management and capital allocation while strengthening cybersecurity, AI oversight and sustainability practices.

The first panel, "The AI Oversight Mandate: What Boards Must Do Now," featured Prof. Dr. M. Nazri Muhd, Datin Dr. Ts. Habsah Nordin and Prof. Dr. Naomie Salim, moderated by Associate Professor Dr. Nicholas Lum. The discussion examined AI accountability, human oversight and organisational readiness. The second panel, "Empowering INEDs: Building Competence, Credibility and Board Effectiveness," featured Associate Professor Dr. Nicholas Lum, Adj. Prof. Dr. Jimmy Loke and Ms Jackie Mah, President and CEO of the Institute of Corporate Directors Malaysia, moderated by Mr Desmond Anil. Panellists highlighted the importance of professional certification, continuous learning, board diversity and independent judgement.

The keynote address was delivered by YB Dato' Sri Mohd Shahar bin Abdullah, Deputy Minister of Economy, Malaysia, who highlighted Malaysia's economic resilience, citing 6.0% GDP growth in the second quarter of 2026 and RM218.5 billion in approved investments during the first half of the year. He emphasised the importance of integrity, anti-corruption measures and responsible innovation in strengthening investor confidence and long-term economic competitiveness. He also underscored the role of independent directors in promoting accountability, responsible investment and sustainable economic growth.

The third panel, "Sustainability and Responsible Value Creation: From Disclosure Compliance to Board Strategy," featured Mr Hoang Quoc Anh, Ms Chuah Sze Phing and Mr Gary Scallan. The discussion examined how sustainability could be integrated into corporate strategy beyond reporting requirements. The fourth panel, "Risk, Resilience and the Geopolitical Board Agenda," featured Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, Mr Barry Tong, Mr Rajiv Biswas and Mr KC Cheng, exploring geopolitical uncertainty, supply chain resilience and effective board-level risk management.

In her closing remarks, Dato' Mona Suraya Kamaruddin reiterated that independent directors must be prepared to challenge management decisions, exercise sound judgement and adapt to emerging risks. She outlined MiNED's commitment to strengthening professional standards through certification, continuing education and regional partnerships.

The conference concluded by reaffirming that effective corporate governance depends on integrity, accountability and strategic foresight, enabling organisations across Asia to navigate uncertainty, build resilience and achieve sustainable long-term growth.







02 Speakers and Moderators

PANEL 1: THE AI OVERSIGHT MANDATE - WHAT BOARDS MUST DO NOW

Prof. Dr. M Nazri Muhd
Chief AI Architect & Advisor AI & Design-Thinking (AIDT) Lab @ KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific

Datin Dr. Ts. Habsah Nordin
Founder, Centre of AI Excellence / President, DAMA Malaysia

Prof. Dr. Naomie Salim
Professor at the Faculty of Computing, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and Director of the UTM Big Data Centre

Moderator:
Associate Professor Dr Nicholas Lum
Banking & Capital Markets | Academic Leadership | Government & Risk | Executive Education, HELP University



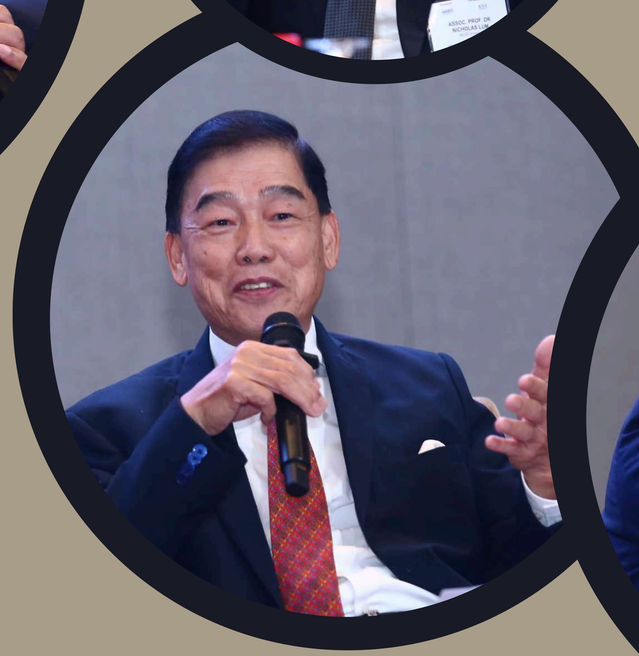














PANEL 2: EMPOWERING INEDS – BUILDING COMPETENCE, CREDITABILITY & BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

Associate Professor Dr Nicholas Lum
Banking & Capital Markets | Academic Leadership | Government & Risk | Executive Education, HELP University

Adj. Prof. Dr. Jimmy Loke
Immediate Past President, Malaysia Independent Non-Executive Director Association (MiNED)

Ms Jackie Mah
President & CEO, Institute of Corporate Directors Malaysia

Moderator:
Mr Desmond Anil
Deputy President, Malaysia Independent Non-Executive Director

PANEL 3: SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBLE VALUE CREATION - FROM DISCLOSURE COMPLIANCE TO BOARD STRATEGY

Mr Hoang Quoc Anh
Executive Director and Deputy Secretary-General, Vietnam Independent Directors Association (VNIDA)

Ms Chuah Sze Phing
Group Chief Sustainability Officer & Head of Group Marketing and Communications, Kenanga Investment Bank Berhad

Mr Gary Scallan
Founder/CEO, Future Australian Impact Foundation

Moderator:
Mr Muzahid Shah Abdul Rahman
Council Member & Research Chair, ESG Association of Malaysia / Group CEO, Brandt Group









PANEL 4: RISK, RESILIENCE AND THE GEOPOLITICAL BOARD AGENDA

Mr Barry Tong
Partner and Head of Advisory, Grant Thornton Hong Kong Limited

Mr Rajiv Biswas
Chief Executive Officer, Asia-Pacific Economics, Singapore

Mr KC Cheng
Former Deloitte Hong Kong Partner

Moderator:
Mr David Chow
President of Taiwan INED Association









03 Award Recipients



MALAYSIA WOMEN EDUCATION LEADERSHIP AWARD
Dato' Satinah Syed Saleh
Managing Director, Alpha Alsagoff Edu Resources / Adjunct Professor, University of Cyberjaya



ASIA INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARD
Dr. Anthony Fan
Founding President, Asia Independent Non-Executive Director Association / Hong Kong Independent Non-Executive Director Association



ASIA INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARD
Barry Tong
Partner & Head of Advisory, Grant Thornton Hong Kong Limited



ASIA INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARD
David Chow
President, Taipei Independent Directors Association



ASIA INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARD
Tan Sri Dato' Kamaruzzaman Shariff
Datuk Bandar Ke-5 / Non-Independent Non-Executive Chairman, Carimin Petroleum Berhad



ASIA INDEPENDENT NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXCELLENCE AWARD
Hoang Quoc Anh
Executive Director and Deputy Secretary General, Vietnam Independent Directors Association

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04 Gallery







On October 7th, , Tan Sri Michael Yeoh spoke on a panel at the Indonesian International Sustainability Forum in Jakarta



Tan Sri Michael Yeoh also attended the UN ESCAP Sustainable Business Network Executive Council meeting in Jakarta with H.E. Dr. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, UN Under-Secretary-General and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.



On October 13th, , Tan Sri Michael Yeoh, Dato' Ramesh Kodammal and Datuk Seri Mohd Iqbal Rawther called on the new High Commissioner of India to Malaysia, H.E. Shri Somnath Ghosh



On October 24th, , Tan Sri Michael Yeoh and KSI Adviser Dato Guna Mahalingam met with the current Raja Muda (Crown Prince) of Perlis, HRH Tuanku Syed Faizuddin Putra ibni Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Jamalullail

11 Updates



The KSI Review – July 2026 highlights the KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific's key initiatives and achievements during the first half of 2026, showcasing its role in advancing policy dialogue, regional cooperation and thought leadership. Through a series of high-level conferences, summits and strategic engagements, the publication explores critical issues including geopolitics, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, sustainability and economic development.



KSI has been appointed as Dorod's Strategic Partner for the Dorod Green Legacy CSR programme, in collaboration with Majlis Pusat Kebajikan Semalaysia (MPKSM). To find out more information about how you can get involved, please visit their website: https://dorodgroup.com/#/dgl



"What is worth knowing"
The third edition of KSInsights for this year has been released. For the month of August, our cohort of Fellows focused on pieces that ranged from an overarching global scale, reflected into Malaysian politics, culture and wellbeing taking centre stage.



Join us on the 24th of November at Berjaya Times Square Hotel for the International Youth and Women in AI Summit 2026. As artificial intelligence continues to transform industries, economies and the future of work, ensuring that young people and women have the skills, opportunities and platforms to participate is more important than ever. The summit will bring together youth, women, policymakers, business leaders, educators, AI practitioners and investors to explore pathways into AI education, careers, entrepreneurship and leadership.



Download the KSI app to stay informed on ASEAN and Asia Pacific developments, access KSI publications and thought leadership on the go, and receive real-time updates from our forums and summits. Scan the QR codes by the side to download the KSI Mobile App and stay connected with KSI anytime, anywhere.



Join us on 17 November 2026 at Berjaya Times Square Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, for the 2026 International CEO and Business Leaders Forum, organised by KSI Strategic Institute for Asia Pacific and the World Business Chamber. Bringing together business leaders, policymakers, strategists and industry experts, the Forum will explore the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of business, with discussions on geopolitical and geoeconomic risks, business resilience, capital raising, artificial intelligence and women's leadership.