

## RSIS launches trade research unit

A NEW policy research centre for international trade negotiation and economic development was officially launched last night.

The Temasek Foundation Centre for Trade and Negotiations (TFCTN) of the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at Nanyang Technological University was set up with an initial \$1.28 million grant from Temasek Foundation.

The centre's first offering is a six-week training programme for mid-level government officials around the region.

Policymakers from the trade and foreign ministries of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, the Maldives, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam will join their

peers here from Oct 29 to Dec 5 to be trained in world trade, international law and economics.

In particular, experts from the World Trade Organization and the European Centre for International Political Economy will share their knowledge on intellectual property rights issues in trade negotiations, as well as WTO's dispute settlement mechanism.

RSIS dean Barry Desker said: "Trade negotiations are highly complex, layered with acronyms and terms of reference that outsiders cannot follow easily.

It is his hope that "by providing leaders with additional research backed by high-quality training, TFCTN can contribute to economic growth and development in the Asia-Pacific region".

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