



Public Lecture
“Thailand’s Political Development and its Implications in Southeast Asia”

Date: 8 September 2017, 08:30am - 11:30am

Venue: CICP Conference Room, Phnom Penh

By a Distinguished Speaker



Dr. Paul Chambers

Synopsis

Since 1932, Thailand’s political development has been chaotic—involving countless coups and coup attempts, alternating economic programs and swings in geo-political alliances. What has remained generally constant is the domination of the country by monarchy and military, either divided or together. Meanwhile, elected civilian governments have either stayed in office too briefly or have been unable to bring greater political space to Thais. What has come to exist in Thailand is a cycle of politics—asymmetrically overseen by monarchy and military—whereby superficial democracy follows and is followed by military rule. While this Thai “model” of political development has often paralleled robust macro-economic development, it has kept the military in a high position of power, tended to stress ultra-nationalism and led to an increasingly deep domestic, political divide. Yet how did Thailand’s domestic situation come to evolve in this manner? What are the implications of Thailand’s political development for the countries of Southeast Asia? What might be the future of Thailand and how might this affect Thailand’s neighbors. This presentation addresses these questions.

About the distinguished Speaker

Paul Chambers is a Lecturer and Special Advisor on International Relations at the College of ASEAN Community Studies, Naresuan University, Phitsanulok, Thailand. In addition, he teaches part-time at the Institute of Southeast Asian Affairs (ISEAA), Faculty of Law, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand, and is a Research Fellow at: the German Institute of Global Area Studies (GIGA) in Hamburg, Germany, the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) in Frankfurt, Germany, and the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He graduated with a Ph.D. in political science from Northern Illinois University in 2003. Chambers’ research interests focus on civil-military relations in Southeast Asia; international politics of Southeast Asia; and the political economy of mainland Southeast Asia. He has written or co-written five books as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters about the military, democratization, and international politics of Southeast Asia. His articles have appeared in *Asian Survey*, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* and *The Journal of Contemporary Asia*, among others. His research

focuses upon Thailand, but he has also pursued research pertaining to the Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos.