

Webinar Speakers

Political Impact of COVID-19 in Southeast Asia

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LAUREN FARROW

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, INDONESIA

Lauren is a Country Director of Vriens & Partners' Jakarta office, leading and managing advisory services for Clients. This includes developing and supporting government affairs strategies, particularly in the areas of energy and health.

Before joining Vriens & Partners, Lauren worked as a journalist for more than a decade for a variety of online, print and radio news organizations.

She moved to Indonesia in 2016 as the Southeast Asia correspondent for Australian Associated Press (AAP), managing the newswire's Jakarta office and reporting across the region on politics, security, the economy and crime. Her experience in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia, has seen her build strong networks across government, the media and civil society. Through her reporting on conflicts, international summits, trade talks, social upheaval, domestic politics and court cases, Lauren has developed an extensive understanding of the political and legal frameworks in the region.

During her career, Lauren has focussed on international news, politics and the justice system.

In her hometown Sydney, Australia she was the national newswire's Chief Court Reporter, coordinating coverage across NSW's civil and criminal court. She was also NSW parliament's state political correspondent.

From 2009 to 2010, Lauren lived in Mumbai and travelled throughout India as a freelance reporter, producing radio packages focusing on the country's development challenges.

She has a Bachelor's Degree in Communications, specialising in Journalism, from the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS).



PRIYO PRAMONO

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, INDONESIA

Priyo leads Vriens & Partners' Indonesia office operations and Client services, providing advisory support for Clients on corporate affairs strategies in entering Indonesia, on government affairs strategies in operating in Indonesia, as well as on advocacy strategies to support various corporate strategic objectives.

Priyo has provided support to Clients across different sectors in Indonesia including internet / digital technology, aviation, manufacturing, healthcare, energy, and oil and gas. Priyo has also been involved on various policy issue landscape assessment and analysis including foreign investments, data

localization, over-the-top (OTT), Industry 4.0, public procurement, universal healthcare (BPJS Kesehatan), and multilateral trade.

Prior to working with Vriens & Partners, Priyo was a Consultant at Ernst & Young Advisory Services, Indonesia, where he specialized in Business Performance Improvement. Priyo was involved in provision of advisory services to multiple Indonesian State-Owned Enterprises within the power generation, oil and gas, as well as transportation. In this role, Priyo was involved in providing business functions improvement recommendations, inter-ministerial coordination, policy reviews, and policy recommendations.

Priyo holds a Master's Degree in International Business from the Hult International Business School, London, and a Bachelor's Degree in Management Studies from St. Mary's University, Twickenham.



NAZHIF YUSOFF

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, MALAYSIA

Nazhif Yusoff is Country Director at Vriens & Partners' Kuala Lumpur office. With the team, he consults for clients from various verticals such as technology, healthcare, transportation and tourism, helping them develop their government relations strategy.

Previously, Nazhif was with the trade and investment team at Malaysia Petroleum Resources Corporation, an agency under the Ministry of Economic Affairs. At MPRC, he developed the agency's database of export opportunities for Malaysian oil and gas services and equipment manufacturing companies. He also connected Malaysian oil and gas companies with opportunities in Southeast Asia, the Americas, and the Middle East through the organization of trade and specialized marketing missions.

Nazhif was also a fellow under the two-year Teach for Malaysia program, which places young leaders as teachers in high-need schools throughout the country. He taught English and Malaysian History at Alor Pongsu, Perak. There, he also initiated partnerships with corporate partners, constituency leaders and NGOs to run specialized academic performance improvement programs.

Nazhif earned a Bachelor of Science degree, magna cum laude, from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Washington D.C., majoring in Regional and Comparative Studies (Middle East and Asia). He was a recipient of the Malaysian Public Service Department's Overseas Degree Program scholarship. He also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (History) from the Northern University of Malaysia (UUM). In his spare time, he indulges in cooking and Arabic calligraphy.



JEREMY MULLINS

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, MYANMAR

Jeremy is Country Director of Vriens & Partners' Yangon office. He leads and manages advisory services for Clients, providing insight on Myanmar political dynamics and developing government affairs strategies. He has worked in Myanmar for six years as a consultant, journalist and market researcher, including as business editor of The Myanmar Times newspaper and managing director of FMR Research. Previous focuses include the energy, real estate and finance sectors, and he has travelled through much of the country on assignment. This varied

experienced in Myanmar has enabled Jeremy to build a strong understanding of local political and business dynamics, while developing a strong network of key contacts.

Outside of Myanmar, Jeremy previously worked as Southeast Asia correspondent based in Bangkok for an international news agency and as a newspaper reporter in Cambodia, beginning in 2009. He has a bachelor's degree in Qualitative Economics from Queen's University in Kingston, Canada.



ELAINE COLLADO

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, PHILIPPINES

Elaine leads Vriens & Partners' Philippines-focused work, providing insights on political dynamics in the Philippines and developing government affairs strategies to advance the market entry, operation, and expansion goals of Vriens & Partners' clients. She has over 16 years of experience in the field, leading high-level consultations with senior government officials, business leaders, foreign business chambers, and NGOs on a broad range of public policy issues, including those related to internet technology and regulation, e-commerce and fast-moving consumer goods, investment liberalization, public-private partnerships, constitutional change, and governance reform.

Prior to working with Vriens & Partners, Elaine served as Executive Director for the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on Absentee Voting, Director for Legislative Affairs to a Senator of the Philippines, and Chief of Staff to a Member of the House of Representatives. She helmed the development of landmark legislation that established an automated voting system in the Philippine elections and has advised principals during Congressional sessions and Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC) meetings at the Office of the President.

Elaine was also Senior Competition Policy Specialist and Team Leader for trade- and infrastructure-related development projects under the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Before joining the public sector, Elaine practiced corporate law, specializing on mergers and acquisitions, project finance, and civil litigation in the law offices of SyCip Salazar Hernandez & Gatmaitan.

She earned her undergraduate degree from Ateneo de Manila University and her law degree from the University of the Philippines. Her research on constitutional law has been published in the Philippine Law Journal, and she has been a member of the Philippine Bar since 2002.



LEONARD LIM

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, SINGAPORE

Leonard is Vriens & Partners' Country Director, Singapore. Leading the firm's Singapore government affairs practice, Leonard develops government affairs strategies to facilitate client market entry and expansion goals, and provides insights on political dynamics in Singapore.

Before joining the firm, Leonard worked at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Singapore's premier public policy think-tank, where he worked on race, religion and inequality in

Singapore. An autonomous research centre under the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, IPS examines issues of critical national interest and studies the attitudes of Singaporeans.

Prior to IPS Leonard was an assistant political editor at *The Straits Times*, Singapore's national English daily. He spent eight years at the broadsheet writing and editing news articles and commentaries on a range of issues including elections in Singapore and Malaysia, as well as APEC and ASEAN regional political summits. He has also written on Singapore social policy, media policy, sports, and high-profile court cases.

Leonard holds a Masters in Economics (by Research) and Bachelor of Social Sciences (First Class Honours) in Economics from NUS.



ISRA SUNTHORNVUT

COUNTRY DIRECTOR, THAILAND

Isra Sunthornvut is the Country Director for Thailand starting in April 2020. He recently completed his term as Secretary-General of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) located in Jakarta, Indonesia in September 2019.

Isra was first elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) for Bangkok under the Democrat Party in 2001 and has been involved in Thai politics in various capacities since, such as; Spokesman and Advisor to the Bangkok Governor, Secretary to the Opposition Leader of the House of Representatives (2 terms), Deputy Secretary General to the Prime Minister (Abhisit Vejjajiva), Vice Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office (attached to the Prime Minister), and Party List MP.

From 2001 to present, he has been a columnist for Thai Post and has contributed numerous articles for numerous publications; he has also produced, and hosted, numerous television programs since 1997. He holds a Master of Arts in European Studies from Chulalongkorn University and has been bestowed the Most Exalted Order of the White Elephant Royal Decoration since 2013. He is married with two children.



SAMUEL PURSCH

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, VIETNAM

Samuel Pursch is Associate Director in Vriens & Partners' Hanoi office where he advises international blue-chip firms on Vietnam's regulatory and commercial context.

Prior to joining Vriens' & Partners in 2018, Samuel was co-founder and director of Andaman Research & Advisory, a socio-economic research and political risk advisory firm based in Yangon, Myanmar. From Andaman's founding in 2015, Samuel managed projects for clients including international hydropower and mobile finance investors, The World Bank, and a range of international NGOs. Andaman's work ranged from detailed stakeholder assessments to field research activities, including large-scale surveys, to policy recommendations for international actors working to address Myanmar's myriad development challenges.

While in Myanmar, Samuel co-authored for several World Bank reports, including a Policy Research Paper on Myanmar's Social Transformation. He was also a contributing author to several subscription-

based analysis services. Earlier, Samuel was based in London where he worked in political risk for boutique consultancies focused on West Africa and Southeast Asia.

Samuel holds a master's degree in War Studies: Conflict, Security and Development from King's College London, and a BA in International Politics from The George Washington University. He was a visiting student at Pembroke College, Oxford University.



HANS VRIENS

MANAGING PARTNER, SINGAPORE

Hans is the founder and Managing Partner of Vriens & Partners, the leading government affairs, public policy and political risk analysis firm around Southeast Asia. It is headquartered in Singapore and has more than 90 staff and 30 senior counselors around the region. The firm has offices in Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, The Philippines, and Cambodia.

Hans has lived and worked in Asia since 1990. He is a regular commentator on regional issues.

Prior to establishing V&P, Hans was Vice Chairman, Asia at APCO Worldwide. He set up and served as Managing Director of the Indonesia practice for six years. Prior to this he worked as a political economist at the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy in Hong Kong. Earlier he practiced law in the M&A practice at Clifford Chance and was the Asia correspondent for a leading Dutch financial and economic daily. In 1995, he was elected president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club Hong Kong, then the largest in the world.

Hans serves on the Board of Trustees of the Foundation of UWCSEA. He was a founding member of the Europe ASEAN Business Alliance, Chairman of the Foundation Dutch Education at UWCSEA, board member of Eurocham, and founding chairman of DutchCham in SG.

Hans graduated from law school in civil and public law at Groningen University in the Netherlands. During his studies, he was a research assistant in European parliamentary history and public law. In 1982 he took a year off from his studies when he was elected Senatus Rector of the Student Union (VAP).

Hans studied at the Bologna Center of the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University. He also did stints at the Universities of Grenoble in France, and Krakow in Poland.

His family lived in Batavia, Semarang and on Biak off Papua in the Dutch East Indies for several generations until the handover of Papua in 1962. He is married to Katy le Blanc. They have two sons.

Specialties: Government Affairs, Political and Economic Analysis around Asia Pacific.