



## SEMINAR

### CIVIL SOCIETY ACTION AND GOVERNANCE IN VIET NAM

Date: Friday, 3 September 2010  
Time: 2.30 pm – 4.00 pm  
Venue: Seminar Room II, ISEAS

#### About the Speaker

Dr Joerg Wischermann is a senior research fellow at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGAS), Institute of Asian Studies, Hamburg. His research focuses on the development of civil society action in Southeast Asia and on Authoritarian Regimes from a comparative perspective. His most recent publications include "Civil Society Action and Governance in Vietnam: Selected Findings from an Empirical Survey", in *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 2/2010: 3-40. (see: <http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa>).

#### About the Seminar

GIGA Institute of Asian Studies has been engaged in the research project "Civil Society Action and Governance in Viet Nam" for a period of more than two years (1 April 2008 to 30 June 2010). The overall objective of the project is to investigate the accomplishments of civil society action in respect to governance in Viet Nam.

The project was divided into two parts.

The goal of the first part was to understand the meaning of civil society action in Viet Nam. To this end, an empirical exploration of civil society action was carried out. The results of this part were just recently published: Wischermann, Joerg: "Civil Society Action and Governance in Vietnam: Selected Findings from an Empirical Survey", in *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 2/2010: 3-40.

Part two of the project addressed potential changes of governance precipitated by civil society action in the state apparatus. To this end, an institutional analysis was conducted based upon three specific case studies, explicitly focusing on the three functional governance areas – legitimate rule, security and welfare. In those three case studies it was analysed whether and to what extent civil society action is to be found *within* the Party/State apparatus; what makes such kind of action different from civil society action outside the Party/State; and to what extent changes in governance, i.e., "rules of the political game", were achieved and which effects such changes had been brought about by civil society action from *within* the Party/State. The results of this part of the project show not only that there is civil society action *within* the Vietnamese state apparatus but also delineate similarities and differences between civil society action *within* and *outside* the state apparatus. Furthermore, it becomes clear that civil society action from *within* the state apparatus effectuates the change of "rules of the political game". However, which dimensions of which rules in which area of governance are changed varies. Changes in "rules of the political game" have varying effects. Finally, to be effective civil society action *within* the state apparatus needs support from *outside*. That changes of "rules of the political game" precipitated by civil society action from within the "Party/State" happen is all the more remarkable since this takes place in a polity under one-party rule.

This seminar serves as an introduction to the project and as presentation of findings of part two of the project.

*ISEAS is pleased to invite you to the Seminar.*