

Security Salon on

“AUKUS AND QUAD; RAMIFICATIONS FOR SRI LANKA”

Press release

Recent developments on the Australia, UK and US (AUKUS) agreement for cooperation on Australian acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs) has created a controversy in the Indian Ocean Region. In this regard, Institute of National Security Studies (INSS) organized the Security Salon titled, “AUKUS and QUAD; Ramifications for Sri Lanka” to examine the fallout resulting from the AUKUS and determine how Sri Lanka along with other nations in the Indian Ocean Region could safeguard sovereignty, protect economic and maritime interests, promote balanced diplomatic relations, and counter emerging threats to national security. The event was held on Thursday, 18th August 2022 from 1400hrs – 1530hrs via Zoom. Major General K. R. P. Rowel (Retd.) RWP VSV USP ndu psc USACGSC, Director General, Centre for Defence Research and Development (CDRD) graced the event as the Chair, representing General Kamal Gunaratna (Retd) WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhil Secretary, Ministry of Defence. The guest speaker of the event was Admiral (Prof) Jayanath Colombage, RSP, VSV, USP, FNI, rcds, psc, Former Secretary, Foreign Ministry. This timely discussion was moderated by Rear Admiral Dimuthu Gunawardena RWP**, RSP, VSV, USP, nswc, psc, hdmc Director (Communications and Publications) & Actg. Director General, Institute of National Security Studies. The audience comprised of academics, representatives from Sri Lankan armed forces, Police, intelligence agencies, Coast Guard and think tanks.

The guest speaker approached the topic by discussing the current power dynamics in the Indian Ocean. Expressing thoughts on AUKUS and its implications on the regional security, he elaborated due to the greater threat posed by China, a sudden eruption of such a security alliance had taken place. He further mentioned that the nuclear submarines are for power projections, not solely for patrolling purposes. Moreover, these power projections will happen through enhancing hypersonic missile capabilities, cyber tech, artificial intelligence. In this power game Sri Lanka needs to strengthen its economic stability to stand as a non-aligned or a neutral state to protect its national security. To face a high militarization by AUKUS, QUAD, China and other state presence in Indian Ocean Sri Lanka needs to shape her foreign policy, while stabilizing the

economy. The event was successfully concluded subsequent to a productive Q and A session and a discussion.