Significant Events

This year, the Jefferson Fellowships journalists’ exchange program visited Burma for the first time in the program’s 46-year history. Illustrating how rapidly the previously closed country has transformed in recent years, the fellowship brought 16 distinguished journalists from 10 Asia Pacific nations on a study tour to meet with officials, business and community leaders, scholars, and fellow journalists like U Win Tin (above right), a well-known democracy advocate who spent many years as a political prisoner. (EastWestCenter.org/jefferson)

In another notable first, EWC also coordinated a study tour of the U.S. for North-Korean-born journalists who now work in South Korea. (EastWestCenter.org/350)

In the Field

Since 1988, the New Generation Seminar has brought together young elected officials, administrators, NGO leaders, journalists and other rising regional leaders for dialogues and study tours to help internationalize their perspectives. This year’s group of 14 participants from 11 countries explored social and economic transformation in Asia Pacific, with visits to EWC, Beijing and Seoul, where they visited the South Korean National Assembly (above left). (EastWestCenter.org/ngs)

Two former U.S. ambassadors and noted China experts, Stapleton Roy (above) and Chas Freeman, spoke at EWC on challenges facing the U.S.-China relationship. “No task is going to be more important than trying to arrest the current drift in U.S.-China relations toward strategic rivalry,” Roy said. “If leaders in both countries fail to deal with this issue, there is a strong possibility that tensions will rise and undermine the benign climate that has been so important over the past 30 years.” (EastWestCenter.org/3Xu, EastWestCenter.org/3XJ)

During an address at EWC in January, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Burmese parliamentarian Aung San Suu Kyi said that, to her, democracy means “a system that will give us both freedom and security in the right balance. In the name of security, many authoritarian governments have deprived their people of freedom, but then in the name of freedom, the security of peoples has also been destroyed. What we are looking for in Burma is a society where there is a harmonious balance.” (EastWestCenter.org/iiy)