Research Seminar

‘Burma and North Korea: Smoke or Fire’.

By: Dr Andrew Selth, Research Fellow, The Griffith Asia Institute

There has always been a lot of smoke surrounding Burma’s relationship with North Korea, and the Naypyidaw Government’s nuclear ambitions. Over the past three months the amount of smoke has increased, but still no-one seems to know whether or not it hides a real fire. The latest spate of reports in the news media and on activist web sites, most of which accuse Burma of having a clandestine nuclear weapons program, has in some ways raised more questions than it has answered. One intriguing question is why no government or international organisation has made any official statement on these issues, despite all the publicity they have attracted since 2002, when Burma first announced that it planned to acquire a nuclear reactor. Should it be determined that Burma does in fact have a secret WMD program, then another key question would be whether the military government is likely to be any more receptive to international concerns than it has been in the past, to representations about the denial of human rights in Burma.

Dr Andrew Selth is an ARC Research Fellow at the Griffith Asia Institute. As a member of the Department of Foreign Affairs he served for six years in the Australian embassies in Rangoon and Seoul. He is the author of Burma’s North Korean Gambit: A Challenge to Regional Security? (Canberra, 2004) and Burma and Nuclear Proliferation: Policies and Perceptions (Brisbane, 2007).

Thursday 10 September 2009
N72, Meeting Room -1.18
Nathan campus
12.30 -1.50pm

To RSVP, please contact Natasha Vary on (07) 3735 5322 or n.vary@griffith.edu.au no later than 5.00pm Tuesday 8 September 2009.