

Jason G Tower



Jason Tower joined the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) as Myanmar Country Director in 2019, and also serves as the director of USIP's program on transnational crime and security in Southeast Asia. Jason has over 20 years of experience working on conflict and security issues in Asia, including directing programs for international peace organizations in Northeast and Southeast Asia. This includes over a decade of experience managing research initiatives focused on China's influence on peace and security across Southeast Asia and Africa, and several years of experience managing projects for INGOs on conflict and security issues across Myanmar. At USIP, Jason's work focuses on a range of issues at the nexus of transnational crime, security and violent conflict in Southeast Asia. He has published dozens of reports and articles exploring the illicit economy and conflict dynamics in Southeast Asia, on Chinese influence in Myanmar, and on conflict in Myanmar. Since 2020, he has also conducted extensive research and publish widely on the rising influence of Chinese origin crime groups across Southeast Asia, particularly in Myanmar. In early 2022, he was one of the first experts to begin documenting the sudden rise of forced labor scamming in mainland Southeast Asia, and has since played a key role in shining transparency on this growing threat to global security. Jason's work has been featured in over 100 international, regional and local media outlets. Jason recently co-chaired a USIP senior study group on transnational crime and security in Southeast Asia and is one of the leading authors of a major USIP report released in May of 2024 titled *Transnational Crime in Southeast Asia: A Growing Threat to Global Peace and Security*. Jason is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, speaks Thai, has been named a Fulbright-Hays scholar and a Harvard-Yenching fellow, and completed his graduate studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.