Smaller states are often militarily and economically weaker actors in the anarchic international system, but some are capable of punching above their weight, typically by pursuing some activism to translate their aspirations into realities in certain domains. This talk focuses on the case of Malaysia as an activist Lilliputian.

The speaker analyzes how and why, despite its inherent limitations, the successive leaders of the Southeast Asian state actively worked with like-minded players to shape its immediate external environment, promoting and institutionalizing East Asian cooperation during the 1990-2005 period.

The talk highlights the factors contributing to these variations, and sums up what they mean for weaker-state diplomacies.