## Former solicitor-general shares insights on the rise of China

n November, former Hong Kong Solicitor-General Daniel R. Fung addressed a diverse audience of more than 150 UGA students, faculty and other guests as the distinguished speaker for the inaugural Willson Center – Dean Rusk Center Annual Lecture.

Fung is the first person of Chinese extraction to have served as solicitor-general, as well as the youngest member ever of the Hong Kong bar to have been appointed as Queen's Counsel. Additionally, he served on the Basic Law Consultative Committee, leading to the promulgation of Hong Kong's Constitution, and has been a visiting professor at both Harvard and Yale law schools.

Drawing on past experience and the insights he gained as a national delegate to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the principal advisory body to the People's Republic of China (PRC), Fung provided his view of the political and economic challenges surrounding China's new global role.

His lecture, "The Rise of China: Political and Economic Implications," focused on deciphering current projections related to the growth of China in order to compose the most illuminating and least speculative of forecasts.

After discussing many of the "straight-line" projections – which have China on the path to overtaking the German economy in four years, the Japanese economy in 15 years and the U.S. economy by the year 2040 – what Fung submitted as most relevant were adverse projections related to demographics, energy resources, environmental issues and unemployment. All of these are growing concerns for the PRC and, as the lecture went on to emphasize, should be for the rest of the world.

Fung explained that in this age of increasing globalization and economic interdependence it is important to maintain an interest in China in order to continue "to learn how the other half lives," and that whatever

one ultimately thinks of the current rise of China, what happens in China has consequences for us all.

To illustrate this point, Fung closed with a quote from Minxin Pei of the Carnegie Institute: "If the Chinese experiment in modernization were to succeed, it would change the face of the Earth. If the Chinese experiment in modernization were to fail, it would unleash the greatest humanitarian disaster the world has ever known. So either way, China matters."

Fung's lecture was made possible through the cooperation of UGA's Willson Center for Arts and Humanities and the Dean Rusk Center – International, Comparative and Graduate Legal Studies, and it will be published as part of the Rusk Center's Occasional Papers Series. For information on ordering a copy of the published lecture, please contact April Macakova at macakova@uga.edu or (706) 542-7875.

- Rusk Center Assistant Director André Barbic (J.D.'05)