

**Co-Chairs' Summary Report of the Seminar on
“International Security Implications of Climate Change”
Brussels, 18-19 November 2010**

Introduction

1. The ASEAN Regional Forum Seminar on “International Security Implications of Climate Change” was held on 18-19 November in Brussels, Belgium as a follow up to the ARF Seminar on the CCIS held in March 2009 in Phnom Penh and to the decision of the 16th ARF Ministerial meeting in Phuket, Thailand in July 2009. The seminar was organized by the European Union and the Philippines. It was co-chaired by Mr. Seamus Gillespie, Head of South East Asia Unit, External Relations Directorate-General of the European Commission, representing the European Union (EU) and His Excellency Ambassador Enrique Manalo, Head of Mission of the Republic of the Philippines.
2. The Seminar was attended by delegates of Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, Canada, People’s Republic of China, the EU, India, Republic of Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Union of Myanmar, New Zealand, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Kingdom of Thailand, Timor Leste, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, as well as several experts. The list of delegates is attached as **Annex 1**. The Seminar programme and agenda are attached as **Annex 2** and **Annex 3**, respectively.

Opening Session

3. At the Opening Session, the EU and the Philippines Co-Chairs delivered their Opening Addresses (attached as **Annex 4**). Subsequently, the agenda was adopted.
4. The opening session was concluded by a keynote address delivered by EU, which is attached as **Annex 5**.

Session 1: Climate Change as a Security Concern

Update on the current international debate on CCIS

5. Mr. Maxx Dilley, the Chief of the Disaster Reduction and Recovery Team of the UNDP presented the UN approach to the international security challenges of climate change. He gave an overview of various UN Agencies' actions on climate change and spoke about various climate impacts on security, including positive impacts such as accelerating the Aceh peace agreement in Indonesia. The presentation is attached as **Annex 6**.
6. The EU reported on the state of the climate change debate in the EU. There was emphasis on the need to continue to strengthen international and regional cooperation on climate change. In this regard the EU wants to maintain its leading role on climate change and continues improving research, early warning and coordination in order to create better links between the different EU institutions.
7. Assoc. Prof Mely Caballero-Anthony of the Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore focused on ASEAN and individual ASEAN countries’ perspectives on climate change. She saw CCIS as very urgent security challenge in South East Asia and spoke about the region's various vulnerabilities such as food, health, energy and water security. She listed a range of ASEAN statements and declarations on climate change, but noted that these are still

rudimentary in form and lacking implementation. She concluded the presentation by outlining a possible way forward for ASEAN. The presentation is attached as **Annex 7**.

8. MajGen A.N.M. Muniruzzaman, ret., of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security offered a perspective on the possible role of the military in responding to the security implications of climate change (CCIS). He emphasized that while the military is perhaps the only institution with sufficient readiness and resources to respond to these security challenges, the military's perspective must be shifted from traditional security to non traditional security when dealing with the challenges of climate security. The presentation is attached as **Annex 8**.
9. Following the presentations by the speakers, the floor was opened for discussion. Some delegations pointed out that there was a need to clarify how climate change would impact on human security as there is a temptation to dramatize this issue. The UNDP representative also noted that while the heat-trapping properties of greenhouse gases is scientifically proven, climate change scenarios are estimates at best. Discussion also focused on the use of the term "climate-induced migrants" as opposed to "climate refugees", and it was agreed that terms like "climate refugees" were problematic since refugees refer to political causes and this term has serious repercussions in international law. A plea for the use of more neutral terms such as migrants was suggested.
10. Examples of national and local analysis and approaches were presented by India, Vietnam, Japan and the EU. India presented its National Action Plan on climate change. It focused particularly on energy security and informed about plans to invest in reducing the emissions intensity of India's GDP. Vietnam presented the current situation and debate on climate change in the country with a focus on its National Target Programme which brings a multi-sectoral approach with participation of all relevant governmental and social organisations. The presentation is attached as **Annex 9**. Japan spoke about possible impacts of climate change on Asia and saw South Asia as one of the most vulnerable areas. It was argued that climate change can also weaken the governments and therefore can produce conflicts. Japan concluded by giving suggestions to the ARF in addressing this challenge such as strengthening regional cooperation in relevant areas, information sharing, awareness raising, and capacity building. The EU spoke about climate change as a threat multiplier and the need to focus on responses to the human beings and individuals affected by climate change. It presented "The Africa, Climate Change, Environment and Security Dialogue Process" (ACCES) assisted by the EU and launched in Addis Ababa last October to address the security threats of climate change in the most vulnerable states in Africa through establishment of multilateral platforms among international stakeholders and concerned regional, national and local authorities with a view to elaborate "bankable" and "doable" projects aimed at meeting the needs of local communities. The Concept of the initiative is attached as **Annex 10**.

Session 2: Challenges, threats, risks related to Climate Change

11. Prof. Hans Günter Brauch of the Free University of Berlin and the Peace and Research and Europe Security Studies spoke about the potential societal impacts of the physical effects of climate change. He noted that little is known about specific and possible societal impacts of climate change in the South East Asia region, and so far the debate on this issue has been mainly policy driven. He stressed, however, that policies have to be based on scientific research. He identified sea level rise as a security threat particularly in Vietnam, but also in countries like Indonesia and Malaysia besides the projected linear increases of temperature, changes on precipitation and the increase in the number and intensity of natural hazards (cyclones/typhoons, floods, landslides, drought) and the impacts of chaotic tipping points of the climatic system

(change in the Indian Monsoon, rapid melting of the glaciers in the Himalaya). The presentation is attached as **Annex 11**.

12. Prof. Chad Briggs of US Air Force and senior associate of Adelphi focused on legal issues of climate change, as it pertains to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). He spoke about the challenges of ascertaining maritime borders when sea level rises. He noted that while the Arctic border disputes are already discussed by security organisations such as the Arctic Council, NATO, and the OSCE, this is not the case of South East Asia. He posited, however, that the ARF can play an important role in addressing this lack by setting up lines of communication and visualizing possible scenarios and responses. He stressed that, as a result of climate change, basic conditions will change rapidly and that our existing institutions may not be able to cope with these changes. The presentation is attached as **Annex 12**.
13. Mr. Philippe Boncour, the Head of International Dialogue on Migration of the International Organisation for Migration spoke about environmentally induced migration. He noted that climate change needs to be addressed not only in terms of human and economic security or environmental protection, but also in terms of human rights. He stressed that most movement due to climate change will be internal, rather than between countries and that there is little empirical evidence to support that migration as a cause of climate change leads to conflict. There is also a need to focus efforts on hotspots, or areas with a complex mix of environmental, social and political issues.
14. Atty Ralph A. Sarmiento, the Dean of College of Law at the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City, the Philippines, addressed climate change and its threat to human rights and human security. He gave illustrative examples of how climate change might affect human rights such as right to life, to a balanced and healthful ecology, to health, to food, to clean water, to health, of indigenous people, to shelter, to property and right to personal security. Problems with human rights enforcement were also identified and a call for a system of accountability for human rights violations was registered. The presentation is attached as **Annex 13**.
15. Following the expert presentations Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Timor Leste and Bangladesh spoke as key discussants. Indonesia underlined that climate change should be addressed both at the highest and the local level and reported on the Indonesia Climate Change Trust Fund. Malaysia recognised the need to intervene and to adopt a policy on climate change. The Asian countries, however, recognized the need for capacity building support, primarily through knowledge and technology transfer. Cambodia fully supported climate change resolution measures, frameworks and conventions and noted that the impacts of climate change are more severe for LDCs like Cambodia as many sectors (agriculture, water resources, fisheries, and health) will be seriously affected. Therefore it requires assistance from the industrialized countries to address these challenges. Timor Leste briefly presented organisational structures to address the challenges of climate change in the country. Bangladesh saw melting glaciers, and rise of sea levels as problems of climate change. Bangladesh expected an effective response on climate change from the international community.
16. Mr. Achim Maas of Adelphi Consult presented a regional scenario study on South East Asia contracted by the European Commission in 2009. The study is attached as **Annex 14**. Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that research, as well as investment in education and closer regional and international cooperation is required to effectively address the security challenges of climate change. The presentation is attached as **Annex 15**.
17. Following the presentation of the study Thailand, the Philippines and Myanmar spoke as key discussants. Observing the Adelphi paper and presentation, Thailand noted that there were other

contributing factors, including population and economic structure, than climate change alone that could potentially infringe security. Therefore, the direct link from climate change to its impact on security seemed weak. It further added that recent food and water crisis as well as natural disasters in its region did not bring about greater conflict but cooperation. The existence of regional (ASEAN), sub-regional (MRC and GMS) cooperation and coordination to tackle climate change and its adverse impacts was underlined. The Philippine presentation also focused on the new ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA), which could provide an excellent basis for launching closer regional cooperation in addressing the security threats posed by climate change. Myanmar called for more cooperation in the region and with the international community on the climate change. It referred to cyclone Nargis and expressed gratitude for support and assistance of international community.

Session 3: Regional Perspectives; Governance Structures and cooperation

18. Mr. Dan Smith, the Secretary General of International Alert presented the South Asia Network on Security and Climate Change (SANSaC) initiative which was formed in March 2010 and focused on concerns about climate change and the policy and security questions which arise. The role of the SANSaC is to create a civil society network of organisations and institutions to come together and share their knowledge. He stressed that the science of climate change is very clear and well established in the broad sense but contains many uncertainties when it comes to details. It should be however recognized that policy approaches have to be found to address this.
19. Following the presentation China, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos spoke as key discussants. China presented its effort to address impacts of climate change and particularly focused on energy issues. It saw differences between climate change challenges and classical security challenges and noted that climate change might be a particular problem in the context of economic transition. Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos focused on the Mekong River Area cooperation. Thailand presented ASEAN regional and MRC sub-regional approaches to address climate change, including disaster management, food security and water use, through the establishment of various sectoral bodies. It reiterated that efforts had been made to enhance awareness and actions of the public at all levels, including private sector and civil society. In addition, it noted that a programme to develop an integrated and systematic capacity building program in Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific is needed. It also offered itself to play role as regional/ sub-regional hub for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Cambodia welcomed the Republic of Korea's initiative to establish the East Asia Climate Partnership Fund to tackle climate change in the East Asia. Cambodia also thanked the EU for selecting it as a pilot country to implement the EU Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA). Laos underlined that climate change should not be studied in isolations, as there are several factors which affect it.
20. The panel discussion of civil society participants (MajGen A.N.M. Muniruzzaman, A. Maas, D. Smith, Dr. A. Mishra, Prof. M. Caballero-Anthony and Prof. H. G. Brauch) raised additional points on regional perspectives and possible way forward. It was pointed out that there is a need to continue discussing the challenges of climate change, to raise the level of public awareness, as well as to foster regional information sharing. They agreed that security and legal implications of climate change are very complicated. They urged the ARF participants not to wait for all the scientific data before addressing this serious issue. They recognized that trust and confidence needs to be enhanced, that none of these challenges can be solved by military means, and that civilian control is necessary as the military cannot act completely independent. They also emphasized that there is a need to create political consensus, networks and linkages with other global forums. The experts recommended that focus could be given to climate change-related disaster relief as a starting point and to enhance regional exchange between EU and ASEAN in this respect. There was also a general agreement that the international

community has to stabilise emissions by the end of this century if the severe impacts of climate change are to be mitigated.

Conclusions

21. The Co-Chairs briefly summed up the discussions, noting that the security implications of climate change are multi-sectoral, multi-factoral, and multi-dimensional. The discussions yielded the following conclusions:
 - a An update on the current international debate confirmed the relevance of continuing a regional political dialogue on promoting understanding of complex inter-linkages between climate and security implications in addition to efforts undertaken at national level to promote `whole of government` approaches in this respect. The regional initiatives taken by ASEAN and other stake holders were highlighted and appreciated. There was common understanding that their implementation needs to be accelerated, with support of international community.
 - b The studies and scenarios presented on CCIS showed the potential complex and trans-boundary impacts of climate change on agriculture productivity, resource pressures and national and human security, including migration. Special attention should be devoted to strengthening national and regional capacities particularly on disaster risk reduction and management, early warning and rapid response capabilities, disaster prevention through development assistance, information exchange and technology and knowledge transfer. Climate change impact scenarios have to be fully taken into account in the disaster relief activities within the ARF. They should also be viewed in the context of promoting sustainable development.
 - c A concerted international and regional approach was needed to further explore appropriate responses to the security risks associated with climate variability and change, particularly with regard to protecting vulnerable areas. In this context it was important to recognize the specificity of regions, taking into account current work and collaboration by international and regional organisations since there is no `one size fits all` approach.
 - d It was suggested to look into the possibilities of setting up effective collaborative platforms where the representatives of the international organisations together with the concerned regional, national and local authorities and civil society bodies engage on promoting the understanding of the inter-linkages between climate change and security. In this regard, it would be useful to continue to build up confidence and identify climate-related security risks and local requirements with a view to strengthening governance in addressing this issue, local and institutional capacities and build up local resilience capabilities in an integrated and preventive manner.
 - e It was also suggested to enhance the knowledge base on the climate-security impacts for instance by setting up a collaborative research project involving universities and scientific research centres from ASEAN and EU countries. Further enhancement of policy-oriented research including scientific studies in order to provide governments with reliable and compatible primary data on issues linked to climate change effects on human security was also raised.
 - f Regional initiatives such as the new ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance, the Mekong river development projects and the South Asia Network could be utilized as possible approaches in addressing this issue.