

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT
ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM DEFENCE OFFICIALS' DIALOGUE
OTTAWA, CANADA, 2 APRIL 2008

1. The ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue of the second ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence-Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy for the inter-sessional year 2007-2008 was held at the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, Canada, on 2 April 2008. The Dialogue was co-chaired by Major-General Christopher Davis, Director General International Security Policy, National Defence Headquarters, Canada, and Dr. Haji Emran Haji Bahar, Deputy Permanent Secretary 1, Ministry of Defence, Brunei Darussalam. The meeting was attended by ARF participants and the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat. All but four ARF members were represented at the Dialogue. The list of participants appears at **ANNEX A**.

2. Mr. Vincent Rigby, Assistant Deputy Minister (Policy), Department of National Defence, Canada, officially welcomed the delegates to Canada and opened the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 1: WELCOMING REMARKS

3. The Canadian Co-Chair observed that this was the first ARF meeting held in Canada. He stated that the aim of today's meeting was to share views on current challenges being faced by ARF defence establishments and to discuss how they can add further value to the ARF process in the future. He also stressed the importance of personal contacts in the development of security and defence cooperation.

4. In his remarks, the Brunei Co-Chair noted that the region was undergoing numerous strategic changes and that security was a collective responsibility. He stated that the signing of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Joint Declaration by the ASEAN Defence Ministers in Nov 07 was a significant milestone in the history of ASEAN, establishing an institutionalized framework for ASEAN defence and security cooperation, and a further step towards the realization of an ASEAN Security Community by 2015.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

5. The Dialogue adopted the Agenda which appears at **ANNEX B**.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ("21st Century Challenges to Defence")

6. Overview. The question posed by the first topic was "What are some of the most important challenges facing ARF defence ministries and armed forces today and how are they responding and adapting to these challenges?"

7. The following delegations spoke to this theme: Australia, Brunei, Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States.

8. The following were identified as some of the key challenges for ARF defence ministries and militaries:

a. Institutional Challenges. Several countries commented on institutional challenges within their military. Essentially, this can be summarized as having to “do more with less”. Some armed forces are undertaking an expanding list of security challenges (e.g. peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, etc.), with limited government resources, and while competing with the private sector for personnel. The operational tempo is increasing domestically and abroad, with implications for staffing, training and procurement. Personnel issues include the need for diversity in recruitment (e.g. attracting people with different skills, ethnicity, gender), difficulty in recruitment and retention, and long-term care of personnel (e.g. morale, health, pension, training issues). Modernization for some armed forces also posed a challenge in terms of procurement and the development of a knowledge-based force.

b. Whole of Government Approach. Many delegations reported the need for greater coordination between their armed forces and other government agencies and departments to achieve a “whole of government approach” in dealing with non-traditional threats internally (e.g. terrorism, natural disasters, health epidemics, etc.) and complex interventions internationally (e.g. humanitarian, disaster relief, peace building operations). Some of the motivations for a whole of government approach include: generating greater government capacity, increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the interventions, relieving the burden of escalating operational tempo on military forces, and lack of capacity of the civilian agencies to react alone. In an integrated approach, the armed forces work jointly with other government actors, such as foreign ministries, customs and border officials, intelligence agencies, police, development agencies, and sector specific departments/ministries (e.g. health, immigration, education).

c. Increasingly Broad Threat Spectrum. Many delegations addressed the growing challenges of non-traditional threats. These included terrorism and cyber-terrorism, piracy, transnational crime networks (e.g. drugs, human trafficking, etc), climate change (as a security threat multiplier), fragile states, consequence management, and natural disasters. New capabilities to address these non-traditional threats have financial implications and require greater international cooperation, intelligence sharing, and cultural awareness. Some delegations commented on the difficulty of focusing on both conventional and asymmetric warfare. Others noted that counter-insurgency strategies could not depend on military means alone. Besides safeguarding national sovereignty, other non-traditional security threats mentioned involved maritime security (e.g. protecting sea lines of communication) and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (on the Korean Peninsula and potentially amongst terrorists). It was noted that continued economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region would require adjusting to the demands of the new security environment.

9. The various papers submitted by delegations under this Agenda Item are at ANNEX C.

AGENDA ITEM 4: (*“Strengthening the ARF: How Can Defence Help in the Future?”*)

10. Overview. The question posed by the second topic was “How can member defence ministries, armed forces, and their representatives further contribute to supporting and strengthening the ARF?”

11. The following delegations spoke to this theme: Brunei, Canada, European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, United States, and Vietnam.

12. Both Co-Chairs noted that the purpose of the session was to discuss how to build on the ARF’s current success. The following were identified as some of the possible ways defence ministries and officials could contribute to strengthening the ARF in the future:

a. Enhancing defence dialogues and exchanges. Some of the discussion focused on enhancing dialogue within the ARF and what would be the best modalities to achieve this (e.g. seminars, workshops, meetings, adjunct to or independent of other ARF events). Thoughts included enhancing the ARF Security Policy Conference, strengthening the defence component of the Annual Security Outlook, encouraging more transparency measures related to defence, building on the momentum of the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting, developing standard operating procedures, terms of reference and points of contact, and encouraging more educational exchanges, military diplomacy and CBMs (e.g. staff talks, port visits, etc.).

b. More emphasis on practical activities. Many of the delegates expressed the view that increased emphasis should be given to advancing beyond dialogue to more concrete, practical activities. Other suggestions included coordinating individual national military responses to crises more effectively, developing joint security strategies for future scenarios, supporting internal policy development, improving information gathering and exchange, instituting desk top and, eventually, appropriate field exercises, and supporting the capacity building of all participants (mindful of the commitments of individual countries).

c. Continue to focus on traditional areas of ARF interest. There was general agreement that the focus should remain on the main areas of interest for the ARF, such as maritime security, disaster assistance, non-proliferation, counter-terrorism and transnational crime, and peace building/peace support operations.

13. The meeting recognized that any new measures put forward to strengthen the role of defence officials in the ARF process should reflect consensus, be as inclusive as possible, and proceed at a pace comfortable for all.

14. The various papers and presentations submitted by delegations under this item are at **ANNEX D.**

AGENDA ITEM 5: BRIEFING ON THE CANADIAN FORCES

15. Rear-Admiral Bruce Donaldson, Director, Strategic Joint Staff, National Defence Headquarters, briefed the meeting on the challenges facing the Canadian Forces and key aspects of its operations and equipment programmes. A copy of his remarks is at **ANNEX E**.

AGENDA ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS

16. The following items were tabled by the countries indicated:

- a. Brunei briefed the meeting on Civil-Military Cooperation in Disaster Assistance, stating that information sharing and coordination in pre-disaster and pre-deployment preparations would be useful for regional cooperation, such as developing a regional assets and capabilities database, as well as lessons learned from other countries.
- b. New Zealand briefed the meeting on the 2nd ARF Peacekeeping Experts Workshop, held in Singapore, 4-6 Mar 08, (sponsored by Singapore/New Zealand).
- c. Japan briefed the meeting on the 7th Sub-Committee of the Tokyo Defence Forum, 27-28 Feb 08 and on a best practices reference paper for peace building from the meeting.
- d. Malaysia briefed the meeting on an upcoming ARF Seminar on Anti-Personnel Mines, Penang, Malaysia, 8-10 Apr 08.
- e. Singapore briefed the meeting on the next ARF Security Policy Conference, which will be held in Singapore, 8 May, the day before the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting (9 May). The associated ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue will take place on 7 May.

17. Other ARF events highlighted by delegations during the meeting included:

- a. The ARF Desk Top Exercise on Disaster Relief, Jakarta, 1-2 May 2008 (Indonesia/Australia).
- b. Forthcoming proposals for ARF Seminars on Climate Change and Security and on Maritime Security, which would be held during the second half of 2008 (European Union).

18. The various papers and presentations which were submitted or fall under "Other Matters" are at **ANNEX F**.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CLOSING REMARKS

19. The Co-Chairs thanked the delegates for their active participation, noting that the ideas generated could form the foundation for future defence cooperation in the region in the future.

20. The Dialogue expressed appreciation to the Canadian and Brunei Co-Chairs for effective co-chairing and to the Government of Canada for the hospitality and arrangements for this meeting of the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue.
