

**REPORT
OF THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM
SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETING**

**Manila, the Philippines
25 May 2007**

Introduction

1. The ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials' Meeting was held in Manila, the Philippines on 25 May 2007.
2. The Meeting was attended by representatives of all ARF participating countries. The Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN was also present. The List of Delegates appears as **ANNEX 1**.
3. The Meeting adopted the Agenda and Programme of Activities, which appear as **ANNEX 2**.

Report of the ARF Defense Officials' Dialogue, 23 May 2007 and the Chairman's Summary of the ARF Security Policy Conference, 24 May 2007

4. The Meeting noted the highlights of the Report of the ARF Defense Officials' Dialogue and the Chairman's Summary of the ARF Security Policy Conference, held in Manila on 23 and 24 May 2007 respectively. The reports appear as **ANNEX 3 and 4**. The Meeting welcomed the increased interactions among ARF Defense Officials as opportunities to promote greater trust, confidence, and inter-operability.

Exchange of Views on Regional and International Issues

5. The Meeting exchanged views on recent regional and international issues and was of the view that the Asia Pacific region has remained largely peaceful and stable. The economic growth in the region continues to contribute to global economic development and prosperity.
6. The Meeting underlined the importance of the ARF as the primary forum for political and security matters in the region and reaffirmed ASEAN's role as the Forum's driving force.
7. The Meeting noted that security challenges have become more complex and diverse, and that regional and global commitment was required in order to address security challenges, including non-traditional security issues, including terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking, trafficking in women and children, pandemics, natural disasters, environmental degradation, maritime security, and other transnational issues and challenges. The Meeting noted that the ARF could undertake further

cooperative, practical, and concrete actions to address these emergent non-traditional and transnational security threats. The Meeting agreed that the transition of ARF from confidence-building to preventive diplomacy can be enhanced through further exchange of information, expertise, capacity-building, and other concrete forms of cooperation. It also acknowledged the utility of desk-top exercises and agreed to work towards the conduct of actual exercises in the near future, as these would help build familiarity and interoperability among the agencies in ARF participating countries.

5. The Meeting reiterated its strong condemnation against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Some participants underlined the need to address the root causes and the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The Meeting commended the signing of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism at the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu, highlighting the commitment of ASEAN to eradicate terrorism.

6. The Meeting noted the ongoing international efforts to promote respect, understanding, and tolerance among people of all religions, beliefs, and cultures. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed practical steps made in the international community, including interfaith and intercultural dialogues, and dialogue among civilizations, to promote mutual understanding as an important factor in maintaining peace and stability.

7. The Meeting reaffirmed support for the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapons-free zones (NWFZs) on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among states in the regions concerned and emphasized the contribution of such zones in enhancing regional peace and security and strengthening the non-proliferation regime. The Meeting also welcomed the convening of the Commission for the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) at the sidelines of the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting at Manila in July 2007.

11. The Meeting stressed the importance of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the implementation of obligations under the relevant UNSC resolutions to the peace and stability of the region.

12. The Meeting reiterated support for the Six Party Talks and welcomed the progress made following the agreements reached on 13 February 2007 which marks the first phase of the implementation of the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement. The Meeting called on all the Parties to implement fully, effectively, and without delay their commitments under these agreements, including the normalization of bilateral relations among Parties concerned. The Meeting likewise welcomed the recent efforts of North and South Korea to improve inter-Korean relations in the spirit of the Joint Declaration of North and South adopted on 15 June 2000.

13. The Meeting welcomed the peaceful and successful conduct of the presidential elections in Timor Leste and expressed hope that the upcoming parliamentary elections will also be peaceful. Timor Leste expressed

appreciation for the international support it has received, including in the monitoring of its elections.

14. The Meeting welcomed the briefing provided by Thailand on the political developments in Thailand including the lifting of martial law in major parts of Thailand and the drafting of its constitution which is going well according to the set timeline. The Meeting expressed encouragement for the upcoming national referendum on the constitution in September 2007 and the holding of elections by the end of 2007.

15. A number of participants expressed concern over the humanitarian situation in Myanmar, the lack of genuine political reform, and the delays in the transition to democracy. Some participants further held the view that the situation posed a threat to regional peace and security. The Meeting called for the release of those placed under detention and for effective dialogue with all the parties concerned. Some participants noted the announcement of the development of a nuclear research reactor and associated technical training in Myanmar along with the attendant nonproliferation, nuclear safety, and environment risks. The Meeting also urged Myanmar to fulfill its commitments—including those made at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting at Kuala Lumpur in July 2006. Myanmar expressed that its situation does not affect peace and stability in the region, and informed the Meeting on developments in the implementation of the Seven-Step Roadmap and reiterated Myanmar's commitment to national reconciliation and democratization under the Roadmap. Myanmar said that every state has the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in conformity with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) regulations and other safeguards and briefed the meeting on Myanmar's efforts to contribute to energy security through the development of its onshore and off-shore energy resources.

16. The Meeting recognized the security challenges facing the Pacific Island countries and the need for the international community to play a constructive role in ensuring political stability and socio-economic development, through better aid coordination, among other means.

17. Some participants underlined their continued support for peace and development in Afghanistan, the stability of which was crucial for the broader region and encouraged ARF participating countries to consider ways to engage with Afghanistan.

18. Some participants expressed concern over the situation in the Middle East and called on all Parties to follow the Roadmap and urged the international community to remain engaged and even handed.

19. A number of participants expressed concern over Iran's non-compliance with the relevant UNSC resolutions and alarm with the IAEA's report noting Iran's ongoing nuclear enrichment program activities. The Meeting urged for a diplomatic solution to the issue in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions.

20. The Meeting noted that ensuring energy security is critical, underlining the need to develop renewable and alternative sources of energy such as clean fuel and coal technologies.

Consideration of Track 1 Activities

Reports of the Co-Chairs of the ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISGs on CBMs and PD)

21. The Meeting noted the Reports of the Co-Chairs of the ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs and PD), on 1-3 November 2006 and 28-30 March 2007 held in Batam, Indonesia and Helsinki, Finland respectively. The Co-Chairs' Reports appear as **ANNEX 5 and 6**. The Meeting also noted that at the sidelines of the meetings of the ISG on CBMs and PD in Batam and Helsinki, informal meetings of the lead shepherds on disaster relief were held.

22. The Meeting welcomed the offers made by Brunei Darussalam and Canada to co-chair the next ISG on CBMs and PD. The Meeting noted the first meeting of the ISG on CBMs and PD for the inter-sessional year 2007-2008 will tentatively be held in Bandar Seri Begawan on 1-2 November 2007 and the second meeting in Canada in early April 2008.

Report of the Co-Chairs of the ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR)

23. The Meeting noted the Summary Report of the Co-Chairs of the Sixth ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM-DR) held in Qingdao, China on 18-20 September 2006. The Co-Chairs Report appears as **ANNEX 7**.

24. The Meeting welcomed the offer of Indonesia and the EU to co-host the next ISM on DR in Helsinki in October 2007.

Report of the Co-Chairs of the ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC)

25. The Meeting noted the Summary Report of the Co-Chairs of the Fifth ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC), held in Singapore on 2-4 May 2007. The Co-Chairs Report appears as **ANNEX 8**.

26. The Meeting welcomed the offer of Indonesia and India to co-chair the next ISM on CTTC.

Consideration of Future Activities for the Inter-sessional Year 2007-2008

27. The Meeting endorsed the following proposed activities of the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD in the next inter-sessional year (2007-2008).

- ARF Round Table Discussion on Stocktaking of Maritime Security Issues, Jakarta, Indonesia, 23-24 August 2007
- ARF Desk Top Exercise on the Disaster Relief Planning Conference, Darwin, Australia, 4-7 September 2007 (**Annex 9**)
- ARF Seminar on Narcotics Control, Xian City, China, 19-21 September 2007
- 11th ARF Heads of Defense Universities/Colleges/Institutions, Australia, 9-11 October 2007
- 7th ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR), Finland, 11-12 October 2007
- ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs and PD), Bandar Seri Begawan, October/November 2007
- 4th ARF Seminar on Cyber Terrorism, ROK, 16-19 October 2007
- ARF Workshop on “Management and Security of Stockpiles of Small Arms and Light Weapons including their ammunition”, Cambodia, November/December 2007 (**Annex 10**)
- ARF Workshop on Anti-Money Laundering, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, fourth quarter 2007
- ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs and PD), Canada, March/April 2008
- ARF ISM-CTTC, Indonesia, April/May 2008
- ARF Desk Top Exercise on Disaster Relief, Indonesia, 2008
- ARF Workshop on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy in Asia and Europe, Berlin, 2008 (**Annex 11**)
- ARF Seminar on Energy Security, Singapore, 2008
- ARF Seminar on Anti-Personal Landmines, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2008
- 1st ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Nonproliferation, 2008 (**Annex 12**)
- 2nd ARF Peacekeeping Experts’ Meeting, Singapore, March 2008

28. The Philippines announced that it will host the ARF Seminar on the Law of the Sea Convention on 5-7 December 2007.

29. The United States informed the Meeting that the concept paper for the ARF Live Exercise on Voluntary Demonstration of Response on Disaster Relief utilizing ARF Standard Operating Procedures to be held in the Philippines in 2009 is being developed and the U.S. and the Philippines will brief the ARF on its development during the next inter-sessional year. The Meeting was informed that this activity is a follow-on event to the ARF Desk-Top Exercise on Disaster Relief to be co-chaired by Indonesia and Australia in the coming inter-sessional year.

Preparations for the 14th ASEAN Regional Forum

Draft Agenda and Tentative Programme of Activities of the 14th ASEAN Regional Forum

30. The Meeting agreed to endorse the Provisional Agenda and Tentative Programme of the 14th ARF which is attached as **ANNEX 13**.

Draft ARF Statement Supporting National Implementation on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)

31. The Meeting welcomed the draft ARF Statement Supporting National Implementation on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) circulated by the U.S., attached as **ANNEX 14**. As proposed in the paper, ARF participants will submit their comments by **15 June 2007**.

Draft ARF Statement on Promotion of Inter-civilizational Dialogue

32. The Meeting noted the revised draft ARF Statement on Promotion of Inter-civilizational Dialogue which is attached as **ANNEX 15**. Participants were requested to submit additional comments, if any, to the Russian Federation.

Draft ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief Cooperation

33. The Meeting noted the third draft of the ARF General Guidelines for Disaster Relief Cooperation attached as **ANNEX 16**. The Meeting was informed that the Peoples' Republic of China will circulate a revised draft of the guidelines shortly. China also requested participating countries to also submit their completed survey forms of domestic and overseas disaster relief resources and capacities.

Preliminary Concept Paper on ARF Standby Arrangements for Immediate Humanitarian Assistance

34. The Meeting noted the revised Preliminary Concept Paper for the establishment of an ARF standby arrangement for immediate humanitarian assistance which will be fully considered in the coming inter-sessional year. The Meeting agreed to submit comments to Indonesia. The preliminary concept paper is attached as **ANNEX 17**.

35. Some participants proposed the use of uniform terms in both draft guidelines and the preliminary concept paper, as well as to look into the possible role that NGOs can play in the proposed stand-by arrangements.

Future Direction of the ASEAN Regional Forum

Experts/Eminent Persons

36. The Meeting considered the Discussion Paper on the Practicability of the EEP Recommendations attached as **ANNEX 18**. The Meeting agreed to submit comments to the ARF Chair not later than **15 June 2007** to enable the SOM assessment of EEP recommendations to be discussed at the 14th ARF. The Meeting also noted that the 2nd Meeting of ARF Experts/Eminent Persons in Manila on 5-6 February 2007 yielded some recommendations which ARF could explore further in the next inter-sessional year.

37. Some participants pointed out that the value of the EEPs is in their ability to provide independent opinion which does not necessarily represent the official position of their governments. The Meeting supported Thailand's proposal for the ARF to consider assigning the EEPs specific areas for study, such as confidence building and preventive diplomacy and took note of Thailand's suggestion to examine how the ARF could be further institutionalized to help address security challenges.

Proposed Study on Preventive Diplomacy

38. The Meeting approved the undertaking of a study on Preventive Diplomacy and requested ARF participants to make voluntary contribution to the ARF Fund for this purpose. The ARF Fund Project Brief is attached as **ANNEX 19**.

ARF Chair

39. The Meeting expressed support for the revised Terms of Reference of the Friends of the ARF Chair (TOR-FOC) attached as **ANNEX 20**. The Meeting agreed to endorse the Terms of Reference for adoption by the Ministers at the 14th ARF.

Working Methods

40. The Meeting considered the revised Draft Terms of Reference for ISM Shepherds Groups attached as **ANNEX 21**. The Meeting agreed to submit comments to the U.S. by **15 June 2007**.

41. The Meeting also took note of the Concept Paper proposed by the European Union attached as **ANNEX 22** on ARF working methods, and agreed to provide comments to the European Union.

Enhancing Linkages with other organizations

42. The Meeting expressed support for strengthening ties between ARF Track I and Track II, as well as other regional and international security

organizations, including OSCE, UN, and SCO. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the interaction between ARF and representatives from CSCAP, ASEAN-ISIS, and OSCE that took place at the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD at Helsinki. The Meeting also noted that the Philippine Ambassador to Vienna was invited to participate and give a briefing on ARF at the OSCE Asian Contact Group Meeting in Vienna in April 2007. The Meeting agreed to explore ways to further engage these organizations in accordance with the adopted “Concept Paper on Enhancing Ties Between Track I and Track II in the ARF and other Regional and International Security Organizations.”

Future Participation in the ARF

43. The Meeting recalled the decision of the Ministers at the 13th ARF to impose a flexible moratorium on future participation in the ARF as well as the agreed criteria for membership, including that “a new participant shall be admitted only if it can be demonstrated that it has an impact on the peace and security of the geographical footprint of ARF activities, i.e. Northeast and Southeast Asia as well as Oceania”, as formulated at the Third ARF in Jakarta in 1996 and as reiterated at the ARF SOM in Karambunai in May 2006. The Meeting agreed to revisit Kazakhstan’s application at a later date.