

**CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY**  
**ARF DEFENSE OFFICIALS' MEETING**  
**Manila, Philippines**  
**May 23, 2007**

1. The ARF Defense Officials' Meeting was held in Manila, Philippines on May 23, 2007. Honorable Antonio C. Santos, Jr., Undersecretary for Defense Affairs, Department of National Defense, Philippines, chaired the Meeting. Representatives from the Ministry of Defense of all ARF participating countries except Bangladesh, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea attended the Meeting. The list of participants appears as ANNEX A.

**AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS**

2. In his opening statement, Undersecretary Santos highlighted how meetings of defense officials have evolved from small informal gatherings in the late 1990s to becoming an important component of the ARF process at present, signifying the increased role that defense plays in the regional exchange of views on security.

**AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

3. The Meeting adopted the Agenda which appears as ANNEX B.

**AGENDA ITEM 3: INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND SHARING ON  
MARITIME SECURITY: CHALLENGES AND ISSUES**

4. The Meeting recognized the complex and transnational nature of regional maritime security issues such as piracy, illegal trafficking and smuggling of drugs and persons, maritime terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at sea, maritime disasters, and other transnational crimes and concerns.
5. The Meeting acknowledged that individual states have limited capability to deal with these numerous maritime challenges and emphasized the importance of regional maritime cooperation not only in ensuring the peace, stability and economic development of individual countries but also in promoting trust and confidence among ARF member countries.
6. The Meeting discussed the various types of maritime security cooperation being undertaken in the region which include coordinated patrols, joint maritime exercises, and information sharing at the bilateral, trilateral and multilateral levels. Participants noted the success of the Malacca Straits Sea Patrols and "Eyes in the Sky" program which have significantly reduced the occurrence of illegal activities in the area.
7. The Meeting commended Singapore for hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> ARF Maritime Security Shore Exercise in January 2007, the first ARF operational activity which aimed to enhance inter-operability among participating countries in the region.

8. The Meeting reiterated the value of timely information sharing among ARF member states in dealing with maritime security issues and the need for greater allocation of resources on training, education and research.
9. The Meeting emphasized the need to strengthen maritime security cooperation in the region on the following areas:
  - 9.1. Enhance information sharing, with emphasis on the establishment of focal points of contact, defined and accepted protocols for interoperability between and among participating states, and in accordance with international and domestic laws.
  - 9.2. Explore opportunities provided through institutional linkages and the ARF.
  - 9.3. Undertake cooperative activities on international environmental cooperation, to include techno-scientific research, education and training.
  - 9.4. Focus on multi-faceted, multi-layered, and multi-pronged responses that are consensus-based and which proceed at a pace comfortable to all.
10. Copies of papers distributed by India, Indonesia, Laos, Republic of Korea and Singapore are attached as ANNEXES C, D, E, F and G.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: VOLUNTARY BRIEFINGS**

11. Japan briefed the Meeting on the transition from being "Defense Agency" to "Ministry of Defense", and the stipulation of international peace cooperation activities and international disaster relief operations as primary missions. Even after Japan reiterated that its fundamental defense policies on civilian control, not becoming a military power posing a threat to other countries, adherence to the three non-nuclear principles, an exclusively defense-oriented policy, and a moderate defense build-up still remain.
12. The Meeting welcomed the draft concept paper and update on preparations for the Indonesia-Australia Disaster Relief Desk-top Exercise to be held at the Indonesian Navy Command and Staff College, Jakarta in the first half of 2008. Australia and Indonesia invited nominations for the Initial Planning Conference in Darwin on September 4-7, 2007, and encouraged the submission of inputs for the draft ARF Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for disaster relief prior to the conference.
13. New Zealand discussed the two key concepts that underlie its defense capability development, namely, organizational transformation which requires joint and "all of government" approaches, and modernization. New Zealand expressed full support for the ARF's long-term task of bringing security to troubled spots in the region.

14. Copies of the papers distributed by Australia, Japan and New Zealand are attached as ANNEXES H, I and J.

**AGENDA ITEM 5: PREPARATIONS FOR THE 4<sup>TH</sup> ARF SECURITY POLICY CONFERENCE (ASPC)**

15. The Philippines discussed the preparations for the 4<sup>th</sup> ARF Security Policy Conference to be held on May 24, 2007.

**AGENDA ITEM 6: ARF DEFENSE OFFICIALS' MEETING ON AUGUST 1, 2007**

16. The Philippines briefed the Meeting on the preparations for the ARF Defense Officials' Meeting to be held on August 1, 2007 at the Philippine International Convention Center, Manila. Participants were informed that the invitations and provisional agenda shall be circulated towards the end of June 2007.

**AGENDA ITEM 7: OTHER MATTERS**

17. Timor Leste extended their appreciation for the international support it received in resolving the crisis in Dili and expressed optimism that the situation will normalize following the successful conduct of elections.
18. Australia informed the Meeting of the upcoming ARF Heads of Defense Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting on October 9-11, 2007 in Canberra, Australia. Invitations shall immediately be sent to ARF member countries.
19. Malaysia invited participants to the Anti-Personnel Landmine Seminar to be co-hosted by EU and Malaysia in the first half of 2008.
20. Singapore informed the Meeting that the 2<sup>nd</sup> ARF Peacekeeping Experts Meeting to be co-hosted by New Zealand and Singapore will be held in March 2008 in Singapore.
21. Thailand informed the Meeting of its current and future maritime security enhancement and development, namely the revision of the National Maritime Security Policy, the feasibility study on the establishment of National Coast Guard units and the National Maritime Affairs Institute, and the enhancement of the roles of the navy in response to transnational and non-traditional challenges.

**AGENDA ITEM 8: CLOSING REMARKS**

22. The Chairman thanked all the participants for sharing their views on the importance of maritime security cooperation in the region and exchanging information on joint activities being undertaken with other ARF member countries.