



**43<sup>rd</sup> AMM/PMC/17<sup>th</sup> ARF  
VIETNAM 2010  
Chairman's Statement  
17<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum  
23 July 2010,  
Ha Noi, Viet Nam**

1. The Seventeenth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was convened in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, on 23 July 2010. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Pham Gia Khiem, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.
2. The Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers and Representatives of all ARF Participants. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The List of Delegates appears as **ANNEX 1**.
3. An ARF Defense Dialogue among defense and military officials attending the 17th ARF was also held in Ha Noi on 22 July 2010.
4. The Ministers reaffirmed that the ARF remains the primary forum to discuss political and security issues in the region and supported ASEAN's role as the driving force in the ARF process. The Ministers underscored the importance of the ARF as a central pillar in the evolving regional security architecture. To this end, the Ministers emphasized the need for the ARF to maintain its relevance and become more action-oriented in addressing multi-dimensional challenges, including the non-traditional security threats that have a direct impact on peace and security in the region. To this end, the Ministers considered and adopted the Ha Noi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement, which, inter alia, contains policy guidance for the ARF to develop and implement concrete and practical actions toward the year 2020. The Hanoi Plan of Action appears as **ANNEX 2**.

## **Highlights of discussion on regional and international issues**

5. The Ministers noted the outcomes of the 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit held in Ha Noi and reiterated their support for ASEAN's efforts in community building, the ASEAN Charter implementation, and the broadening and deepening of ASEAN's relations with its Dialogue Partners. In this regard, the Ministers also noted that the successful implementation of the ASEAN Political and Security Community Blueprint will be a great contribution to regional peace and security.

6. The Ministers reiterated support for the purposes and principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and its contribution to promoting peace and stability in the region. The Ministers welcomed the accession of Canada and of Turkey, respectively, to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Ha Noi on 23 July 2010 and the signing of the Third Protocol amending the TAC which would allow regional organisations whose members are only sovereign states, like the EU, to accede to the TAC. In this regard, the Ministers noted that this brings the ARF closer to meeting the objective of having all its Participants become High Contracting Parties to the TAC. The Ministers welcomed the EU's confirmed commitment to accede to the TAC and agreed to work for the early entry into force of the Third Protocol amending the TAC.

7. The Ministers, in regard to on-going discussions on regional architecture in East Asia and the Asia-Pacific, reiterated support for ASEAN's central role in the existing regional mechanisms as well as in an evolving regional architecture. In this context, they noted that the ASEAN Foreign Ministers welcomed the expressed interest of the Russian Federation and the United States to join the East Asia Summit (EAS) and recommended to ASEAN Leaders at the 17th ASEAN Summit in Ha Noi in October 2010 to formally make the decision on inviting the Russian Federation and the United States to join the EAS with appropriate arrangements and timing. In this regard, they noted the announcement by the United States to begin the process of joining the East Asia Summit and to host the next ASEAN-U.S. Leaders' Meeting in 2010. They also welcomed the convening of the 1<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) to be held in October 2010 in Vietnam and underscored the importance of the envisaged ADMM Plus to complement the work of the ARF.

8. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the sinking of the Republic of Korea's naval ship, the Cheonan, resulted from the attack on 26 March 2010. They extended condolences to the Government of the Republic of Korea for the loss of lives in the incident. They stressed the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, and called on the

concerned parties to resolve all disputes by peaceful means. In this connection, they expressed support for the 9 July 2010 UN Security Council Presidential Statement.

**9.** The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the complete and verifiable denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and encouraged the parties to return to the Six Party Talks. They also underscored the importance of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

**10.** The Ministers also emphasised the importance of addressing the issue of humanitarian concerns of the international community.

**11.** The Ministers noted the briefing by Myanmar on recent political developments in the country, including progress made in the implementation of the Roadmap for democracy and in preparations for the general election to be held in 2010. They reiterated the importance of holding the general election in a free, fair, and inclusive manner which would lay the foundation for the long term stability and prosperity of Myanmar. The Ministers also emphasised the need for Myanmar to continue to work with ASEAN and the United Nations in the process of national reconciliation as well as the economic and social development of Myanmar. They welcomed ASEAN's readiness to extend their support to Myanmar and reaffirmed their commitment to remain constructively engaged with Myanmar.

**12.** The Ministers stressed the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea. The Ministers reaffirmed the continuing importance of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) of 2002 as a milestone document between ASEAN Member States and China, embodying their collective commitment to ensuring the peaceful resolution of disputes in the area. They stressed that the Declaration has been effective in building mutual trust and confidence that will help maintain peace and stability in the region. The Ministers encouraged efforts towards the full implementation of the Declaration and the eventual conclusion of a Regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). They encouraged the continued exercise of self-restraint by all the parties concerned and the promotion of confidence-building measures in this area and welcomed their commitment to resolving disputes in the South China Sea by peaceful means in conformity with the spirit of the DOC and recognised principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS 1982). In this regard, they welcomed the reconvening of the ASEAN - China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC

in Viet Nam in April 2010 and the schedule to hold the next Joint Working Group Meeting in China before the end of 2010.

**13.** The Ministers discussed the issue of reconstruction and capacity building projects in Afghanistan. They took note of the positive outcomes of the London and Kabul Conferences in January and July 2010 respectively and called upon ARF participants to continue their commitments to support the development of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

**14.** The Ministers exchanged views on the recent developments relating to Iran's nuclear programme and reiterated their support for the IAEA to play a vital role in this regard. They reiterated the call for Iran to take all necessary steps to comply with and abide by all relevant international obligations. They called upon all parties involved to resume dialogues and negotiations in solving the Iran's nuclear issue by peaceful means.

**15.** The Ministers discussed the situation in the Middle East and emphasized the need to ensure long-term peace, security and stability in the region. They called for a final, just and comprehensive settlement with the realization of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace within secured and recognized borders, based on the Quartet Roadmap, the relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions as well as the Arab Peace Initiatives. The Ministers were encouraged by the ongoing efforts to create the conditions for the prompt resumption and early conclusion of negotiations on issues relating to the Middle East Peace Process.

**16.** The Ministers condemned the military attack by Israel on a convoy of ships carrying aid to the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the loss of lives and aggravated tension in the region. In this regard, in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions, they reiterated the call for the lifting of the blockade to ensure unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance, including commercial goods and persons, to the Palestinian people in Gaza in order to help alleviate their plight.

**17.** The Ministers called on the interim government of Fiji to take credible steps to return Fiji to democracy and the rule of law, including through inclusive national dialogue.

**18.** The Ministers noted Timor Leste's aspiration to join ASEAN and its efforts to seek support from ARF participants for this intent.

**19.** The Ministers recognized that natural disasters continue to pose serious threats to peoples of the Asia Pacific regions and encouraged the early implementation of actions stipulated in the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement relating to disaster relief and the Disaster Relief Work Plan, including working toward the goal of harmonizing regional cooperation in Disaster Relief/Management and strengthening on a voluntary basis the coordination of civilian and military relief operations with a view to having effective, region-wide disaster management arrangements.

**20.** The Ministers welcomed the entry into force of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and supported the interim operationalisation of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) and its linkages and cooperation with other humanitarian facilities in the region, including the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot in Subang, Malaysia, and regional training centers such as the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in Bangkok, Thailand. They also underscored the importance of close interaction between ASEAN's disaster management arrangements and the ARF's arrangements, with a view to developing synergies between the two in order to strengthen regional response.

**21.** The Ministers welcomed Indonesia and Japan as co-chairs of the ARF civilian-led Disaster Relief Exercise to be organised in Manado, Indonesia in March 2011, which can build on the ARF Voluntary Demonstration of Response (VDR) on Disaster Relief in May 2009 in the Philippines to further promote concrete and actual field operations in the ARF. They considered that both the field and table-top exercise are important to identify a suitable coordination mechanism, an effective civil-military coordination on disaster relief and to test relevant ARF documents in the area of disaster relief. In this regard, the Ministers further encouraged the participation and contribution of ARF Participants for the success of the Exercise as well as the supporting role of non-governmental organisations, and international organisations including UNOCHA in supporting disaster relief operations in the Asia Pacific region.

**22.** The Ministers recognized that terrorism remained a serious and immediate threat to regional and global security. They condemned the recent terrorist attacks in several participating countries, and reiterated their commitments to work together to eradicate this threat. They recognised the perseverance of terrorist groups in the region and called for greater efforts to be exerted in a more comprehensive, multifaceted and coordinated manner. The Ministers underlined the importance to address root causes of terrorism. The Ministers supported the

implementation of the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy (UNGCTS). The Ministers highlighted the importance of nuclear security and non-proliferation in preventing the acquisition of nuclear materials by terrorist groups. They further agreed that countries should remain vigilant of the ever changing modus operandi and movement of terrorists in the region.

**23.** The Ministers underlined the need for effective implementation of the ARF Work Plan on CTTC and welcomed the Philippines and the United States as the lead countries for bio-terrorism and bio-security and Russia as a lead country for cyber-crime and cyber-terrorism in the next inter-sessional year.

**24.** The Ministers noted ASEAN's intensified efforts in responding to terrorism and transnational crimes through the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan of Action on Counter-Terrorism. The Ministers were also encouraged on progress made by ASEAN toward the early entry into force of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism.

**25.** The Ministers discussed non-traditional security issues such as food and energy security, climate change, illegal migration, drug and human trafficking, and piracy, and agreed on the need for concrete actions and enhanced cooperation to address these challenges. The Ministers noted the increasing role played by ASEAN defence establishments to help address nontraditional security challenges in Southeast Asia, especially those related to disaster management.

**26.** The Ministers supported the continued regional and global efforts to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons, including through the Bali Process. They reiterated that cooperation between source, transit and destination countries with the support of the UNHCR, IOM and INTERPOL are crucial to control the irregular movement of people. The Ministers were encouraged by the ASEAN's initiative to explore the feasibility of developing an ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons.

**27.** The Ministers stressed the need to build common perceptions on threats and challenges in maritime security. The Ministers appreciated the work of the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM-MS) in promoting awareness and concrete cooperation on maritime security. In this regard, the Ministers tasked the ISM-MS to develop an ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security for consideration during the next inter-sessional year.

**28.** The Ministers commended the recent Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April 2010 and noted with appreciation the outcomes of the NPT

Review Conference in May 2010. The Ministers of the Parties to the NPT reiterated their support for the three pillars of the NPT, namely non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Ministers appreciated the continued efforts of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Nonproliferation and Disarmament (ISM-NPD) on these issues.

**29.** The Ministers welcomed the adoption of the second resolution of the UNGA on the SEANWFZ Treaty by the 64th Session in October 2009 and ASEAN's submission of the Memorandum on Activities Related to the SEANWFZ Treaty to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They noted ASEAN's commitment to implement the SEANWFZ Treaty and its Plan of Action, and the ongoing consultations between ASEAN and nuclear weapon states in relation to the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty.

#### **Review of Activities of the Current Inter-Sessional Year (August 2009 – July 2010)**

**30.** The Ministers noted with satisfaction the contribution made by the ARF in enhancing and promoting dialogue and cooperation in the Asia Pacific region through the successful implementation of ARF activities during the inter-sessional year 2009-2010. They commended the work of the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) in Quang Nam on 20 May 2010 and ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs & PD), co-chaired by Viet Nam and India, which met in New Delhi from 10-11 November 2009 and in Nha Trang, Viet Nam from 19-20 March 2010. The Ministers noted the Reports and endorsed their recommendations contained therein. The Report of the SOM is at ANNEX 3 and the Co-Chairs' Summary Reports of the ISG on CBMs & PD appear as ANNEX 4.

**31.** The Ministers expressed appreciation of the role played by the defense officials and emphasized the importance of greater integration of the defense track in the ARF process. The Ministers encouraged the review and re-alignment of defense meetings with ARF activities to ensure practical and effective defense participation in the ARF process. The Ministers noted the high-level interaction among the ARF defense officials in ARF and recognized the fruitful discussions and concrete contributions of the military-defense officials in dealing with non-traditional security challenges, particularly in the field of disaster relief. In this regard, The Ministers noted the Reports of the Defense Officials' Dialogue and

the Report of the Seventh ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference (ASPC) hosted by Viet Nam. These Reports are in ANNEX 5.

**32.** The Ministers welcomed the 9<sup>th</sup> ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) co-chaired by the United States and Thailand, held on 16-18 September 2009 in Honolulu, Hawaii. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as ANNEX 6.

**33.** The Ministers viewed that the ARF Voluntary Model Arrangement for Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defense Assets (MCDA) in Disaster Relief is a reference non-binding model to be utilized for bilateral arrangements between ARF Participants on a voluntary basis. In this regard, the Ministers took note of the Model Arrangement which appears as ANNEX 7.

**34.** The Ministers viewed that the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief would help promote common understanding among ARF Participants of civil-military cooperation and coordination procedures, and would be a non-binding and a living document that can be reviewed and amended, as required, by the future ISM on Disaster Relief. In this regard, the Ministers noted the Strategic Guidance which appears as ANNEX 8.

**35.** The Ministers welcomed the progress made in the development of the joint Australia-Singapore ARF Disaster Relief Mapping Service (DRMS) since its endorsement at the 16<sup>th</sup> ARF. They viewed that the DRMS was a practical contribution to the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief and would provide ARF Participants with critical geo-spatial data, voluntarily contributed by ARF Participants, on key infrastructure to be accessed in the event of an emergency. As the Mapping Service is of voluntary nature and in support of the ARF's capacity in response to disasters, the Ministers encouraged ARF Participants to continue providing contact details of relevant geospatial agencies so that the database could be further enhanced.

**36.** The Ministers welcomed the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inter-sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) co-chaired by New Zealand, Indonesia and Japan, held on 29-30 March, 2010 in Auckland, New Zealand. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as ANNEX 9.

**37.** The Ministers welcomed the 8<sup>th</sup> Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC) co-chaired by Brunei and Russia, held on 28-29 April, 2010 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as ANNEX 10.



**38.** The Ministers were informed of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) co-chaired by Singapore, China and the United States held on 5-7 July 2010 in Singapore and noted that the outcome of the ISM would be reviewed at the ISG/SOM in the next inter-sessional year. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 11**.

**39.** The Ministers noted other ARF activities which were completed in the inter-sessional year 2009-2010:

- a. 13<sup>th</sup> ARF Heads of Defense/Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM), Bangkok, Thailand, 3-6 November 2009
- b. ARF Seminar on Measures to Enhance Maritime Security, Brussels, Belgium, 19-20 November 2009
- c. 4<sup>th</sup> ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (ARF EEP) Meeting, Bali, Indonesia, 14-15 December 2009
- d. 4<sup>th</sup> ARF Peacekeeping Experts' Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 11-12 March 2010
- e. ARF Cybercrime Capacity-Building Conference, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, 27-28 April 2010

### **Programme of Work for the Next Inter-sessional Year**

**40.** The Ministers agreed that the ISG on CBMs & PD would continue to promote confidence building while progressing toward preventive diplomacy, and welcomed the offer by Indonesia and Australia to co-chair the ISG on CBMs & PD in the next inter-sessional year.

**41.** The Ministers agreed that the ISM on DR, CTTC, NPD and MS should continue their work. In this connection, the Ministers welcomed the offers of Thailand and the United States to co-chair the 10<sup>th</sup> ISM on DR in Thailand on 2-3 September 2010, of Japan, New Zealand and Indonesia to co-chair the 3<sup>rd</sup> ISM on MS in Japan in February 2011, of the United States, Singapore and China to co-chair the 3<sup>rd</sup> ISM on NPD in the United States, and of Japan and Malaysia to co-chair the 9<sup>th</sup> ISM on CTTC in the next inter-sessional year.

**42.** The Ministers reaffirmed the procedure that all proposed ARF activities should first be discussed at the ISG/ISM level and agreed to by the ARF SOM unless participants undertake procedures in line with the Working Methods Paper. In this regard, the Ministers approved the List of ARF Track I Activities

for the next inter-sessional year (August 2010 - July 2011) which appears as **ANNEX 12**.

### **Future Direction of ARF**

**43.** The Ministers welcomed Indonesia as the Chair of the 18th ARF whose term begins on 1 January 2011 and Cambodia as the next ASEAN Vice-Chair of the ARF.

**44.** The Ministers underlined that the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement represents an evolution in ARF, aimed at making the forum more action-oriented and stressed the need to provide adequate resources to ensure the effective implementation of the Plan of Action. They reiterated that the POA be reviewed and evaluated annually and tasked the ARF Unit to prepare an annual progress report of the POA and make it available before the annual ARF Ministers' Meeting for their consideration.

**45.** The Ministers agreed to task the senior officials to develop an ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy based on the long-standing principles of the ARF as contained in ARF documents since 1994 and the relevant recommendations of ARF Track I and II, taking into account the diversity of views within the ARF, as a means to move towards Stage 2 of the ARF. The Ministers expressed appreciation to Singapore for its offer to prepare a draft ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy for consideration during the next inter-sessional year. The Ministers agreed that while progressing toward preventive diplomacy, confidence building measures should remain an important foundation and thrust of the whole ARF process.

**46.** The Ministers commended the ARF Unit in assisting the ARF Chair during the inter-sessional year and acting as its Secretariat, including through regularly updating the Matrix of ARF Decisions and their Status (**ANNEX 13**) as well as making available ARF documents on the ARF Net. Taking into account the increased volume of the ARF activities and future work of the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action, the Ministers reiterated support for strengthening the capacity and resources of the ARF Unit as part of the ASEAN Secretariat by the ARF participants. The Ministers took note of the suggestion by the European Union on the possibility of providing financial assistance to the ARF Unit through the European Commission-ASEAN Cooperation and the offer by the United States to support the ARF Unit. In this regard, the Ministers tasked the ASEAN Secretariat to work on possible ways to strengthen the ARF Unit as part of the ASEAN Secretariat.

**47.** The Ministers underlined the need to further utilize the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons as Track 1.5 and welcomed Timor Leste's offer to host the 5<sup>th</sup> ARF EEPs Meeting co-chaired with Thailand at the end of 2010. The Ministers noted the 4<sup>th</sup> EEPs Co-chairs Summary Report and a Draft Element of a Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy.

**48.** The Ministers welcomed the 2010 ARF Annual Security Outlook presented by Vietnam. Appreciating the contributions to the 11<sup>th</sup> ARF ASO, the Ministers stressed the need to further promote transparency among ARF participants through the publication of the ARF ASO and to this end, encouraged all participants to make submissions to the ASO. In this regard, the Ministers adopted the Simplified Standardized Format of the ARF Annual Security Outlook which appears as **ANNEX 14** as a reference for future publication of the ARF ASO. The Ministers expressed confidence that the standardized ARF ASO would become an essential tool for the promotion of confidence building and mutual understanding through greater transparency. While reiterating that the submission should be voluntary, the Ministers stressed the necessity to involve defence officials in the preparation for the national submission of the ARF Annual Security Outlook.

**49.** The Ministers reiterated the importance of enhancing linkages between Track I and Track II, and between ARF and other regional and international organizations/fora, such as the Organization for Security Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC), ASEAN Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN ISIS), and Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP). The Ministers stressed the need to involve Track II in every ISM and ISG meeting, and the involvement should be carried out as appropriate. They also emphasized the need to further utilise the EEPs as a source of ideas and acknowledged the OSCE Secretariat's readiness to assist Timor Leste in the preparation for the 5<sup>th</sup> ARF EEPs Meeting at the end of 2010.

**50.** The Ministers noted that proper information of ARF activities should be further disseminated with a view to increasing public awareness of the ARF.

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