

**Co-Chairs Summary Report of the
9th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster
Relief (ISM-DR
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA
16-18 September 2009**

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 16th ARF Ministerial Meeting, the meeting of the 9th ARF ISM-DR was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, USA on 16-18 September 2009. The meeting was co-chaired by the United States and Thailand. Participants met to discuss and advance regional cooperation on emerging areas of disaster relief cooperation, civil-military coordination issues, and ongoing ARF disaster relief initiatives. ARF participants and guest speakers shared views through both plenary sessions and informal Discussion Groups focused on five areas (previous versions of these initiatives are found in **Annexes 6-11**):

- Improving Regional Coordination of Capacity-Building Efforts,
- Developing a Voluntary “Model Arrangement” for the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defense Assets in Disaster Relief,
- Sharing Initial Views on a Second ARF Disaster Relief Exercise,
- Advancing the ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan, and
- Further Refining the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

2. The meeting included delegates from Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Mongolia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, the United States, Vietnam, and the ASEAN Secretariat both from the ARF Unit and the Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division. The UN Office of the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of the Red Cross, and the Pacific Disaster Center also joined the ISM-DR. The List of Participants appears as **Annex 1**. The ISM-DR was held back-to-back with the annual Asia-Pacific Conference on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations (APC-MADRO). The official meeting documents are found in **Annexes 2-5**.

PLENARY SESSIONS

3. The Meeting opened with remarks by the two co-chairs, Mr. Henry Jardine, Director of Regional and Security Policy of the U.S. Department of State Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and Mr. Manasvi Srisodapol, Deputy Director-General, Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. In his presentation, Lt. Gen. (Ret) John Goodman, Director of the Center of Excellence for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs stressed the need for continued regional and national coordination of civilian and military agencies throughout all phases of disaster relief (**Annex 19**).

4. Following the Discussion Group meetings held on September 17th, the plenary reconvened to discuss the challenges, needs, and successes of coordination between civilian and military agencies for disaster relief operations. Case studies included major, multinational relief operations where foreign military assets are utilized by the affected country and the response by national governments.

5. Scott Weidie, U.S. Pacific Command J72 Program Branch Manager, on behalf of the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) Secretariat, discussed the history, purposes, and activities of MPAT. MPAT is a program of interested Asia-Pacific nations who develop operational-level interoperability for military operations and training for disaster relief and peacekeeping operations (**Annex 20**).
6. Col. Gregorio Catapang from the Department of National Defense of the Philippines shared the Philippine experience in facilitating international disaster relief assistance in the Philippines. He cited the importance of international civil-military coordination for disaster in the 2006 Guinsaugun Landslide. He discussed the needs, challenges, and successes of civil-military coordination during the incident (**Annex 16**).
7. Mr. Hideaki Tanooka, Ministry of Defense of Japan, shared the Japanese Self Defense Forces' efforts towards disaster relief operations, including earthquakes. In 1992, Japanese National Disaster Relief Law was amended to allow SDF's participation in international relief operations. He underlined the importance of SDF's roles in coordination, information sharing and readiness (**Annex 15**).
8. Major General Srisaran Dhiradhamrong, Ministry of Defence of Thailand, briefed ARF on the outcomes of the 3rd ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), the Workshop on ASEAN Defence Establishments, and Civil Society Organizations' Cooperation on Non-Traditional Security held in June 8-9, 2009. She stressed the importance of the establishment of a point of contact for information-sharing in order to maximize the communication and cooperation between CSOs and military agencies (**Annex 18**).
9. Mr. Zokey Ahad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh pointed out the many types of disasters facing Bangladesh. Reflecting the paradigm shift from relief and response to comprehensive disaster management, the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation was renamed as the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. Bangladesh developed a series of inter-related institutions to ensure that planning and coordination of disasters are performed in accordance with its national Standing Order on Disasters. Major M.M. Motiur Rahman from the Fire Service and Civil Defense Directorate of Bangladesh, shared the experience and lessons learned from Cyclone SIDR. He described the structure and operations of Bangladesh responsible for natural disaster management (**Annex 13**).
10. Mr. Bobby Ray Gordon from the Center of Excellence for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs, as co-chair and host of the APC-MADRO Conference with UNOCHA, briefed the result of the Asia-Pacific Conference on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations (APC-MADRO). APC-MADRO, held back-to-back to the 9th ISM on DR made progress on drafting the APC-MADRO guidelines. The APC-MADRO guidelines are voluntary and designed for the use of military assets in natural disaster response operations for military planners and commanders during natural disasters. APC-MADRO would seek endorsement at the national government level by the next APC-MADRO Conference in mid-2010. The Meeting took note of some overlapping areas of work, particularly with the ARF Strategic Guidance on Disaster Relief, and shared their aim to improve civil-military coordination (**Annex 21**).
11. Lt. Col. Deep Singh from the Singapore Armed Forces and Mr. Guenther Ebenwaldner from the Australian Ministry of Defence presented the ARF Disaster Relief Mapping Service

Initiative which was endorsed by the Ministers at the 16th ARF. The Initiative was a voluntary geospatial data-sharing and data mapping service which seeks to bring together available geospatial data required to expedite planning and delivery of aid. The Initiative will rely on information provided voluntarily by the line agencies involved such as Mapping Units. Australia informed the Meeting that the website for the Initiative will be set up with links to the ARF website. Australia circulated a contact details form in order to obtain geospatial contacts from ARF participants to facilitate their input (**Annex 12**).

12. The Meeting exchanged views on and underscored the importance of civil-military coordination issues, which can be better understood in the context of exercises. ROK suggested the Meeting to extend invitations to UN humanitarian agencies and NGOs as well as promoting coordination with UNOCHA for the next ARF disaster relief exercise. ROK informed the Meeting of ROK's intention to increase its participation in that exercise. Russia distributed a presentation found in **Annex 17**.

DISCUSSION GROUPS

13. The ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan Discussion Group, co-facilitated by Ms. Adelina Kamal of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management and Mr. Arun Pintha of the Thailand Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, met to advance, further refine, and develop project ideas. The Discussion Group recommended the following (**Annex 22a**):

- Encourage ARF members to submit project ideas and serve as Lead Countries. In this regard, Australia agreed to the non-ASEAN lead country role in Priority Area One and the United States expressed its interest in finding a non-ASEAN lead country for the remaining Priority Areas. ASEAN lead countries for the ARF DR Work Plan are to be determined in October 2009.
- Develop a format to monitor the progress of the Work Plan's implementation,
- Provide clearer definition of what constitutes an ARF project or activity,
- Projects that are not under the direct purview of ARF should be placed under the category of Relevant Work in Other Regional Organizations, and
- Non-ASEAN ARF members be invited to participate as observers in ARDEX (ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise) 2009 and 2010.

The Meeting endorsed the recommendations and encouraged interested non-ASEAN ARF participants to send observers to ARDEX exercises.

14. The Exercise Planning Discussion Group, co-facilitated by Mr. Ibnu Hadi of the Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs and Kazutoshi Hayashi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met to discuss ideas regarding the basic structure, roles, and responsibilities of the next ARF disaster relief exercise hosted by Indonesia and co-chaired by Japan. Indonesia and Japan also distributed a concept paper for comments (**Annex 23**). The Discussion Group recommended (**Annex 22e**):

- Receive further feedback from ARF members,
- SOM Leaders of the Co-Organizers of the VDR (Indonesia and Japan) to notify ARF participants and hold further planning discussions on the margins of the ARDEX 2009.
- Further planning discussions possibly held back-to-back with November 2009 ISG and continue inter-sessional communication via e-mail, and
- Ensure site surveys occur and remain an important part of the planning process.

The Meeting expressed appreciation to the Indonesian and Japanese co-chairs in preparing for the 2011 ARF disaster relief exercise. The exercise co-chairs noted that their SOM leaders would notify ARF counterparts soon regarding initial arrangements.

15. The Model Arrangement Discussion Group, facilitated by Kurt Amend of the U.S. Department of State, met to review the overall objectives and conduct an extensive review of the ARF Voluntary Model Arrangement on the Use of Foreign Military and Civil Defense Assets (MCDA) in Disaster Relief (Draft revised Model text found in **Annex 22b**). Mindful of the voluntary and non-binding nature of the model text as well as the divergence of views among ARF participants on specific provisions, the Discussion Group recommended (**Annex 22b**):

- The ISM-DR Co-Chairs consolidate input, consider minor formatting changes to reflect diverse viewpoints, and distribute those revisions to ARF participants,
- ARF participants consult with their governments and send in revised comments to the ISM-DR co-chairs by January 15,
- ARF continue discussions, inter-sessionally and through regular ARF meetings (ISGs, SOM, and Ministerial), on the model text during the 2009-2010 ARF inter-sessional year. If needed, ARF should consider another review session among ARF civil-military disaster relief legal and policy officials, and
- ARF testing the Model Arrangement during the next ARF disaster relief exercise co-chaired by Indonesia and Japan and other regional exercises and complement it with existing international and UN initiatives.

The Meeting noted that further discussions on the Model Arrangement are needed for 2009-2010 in order to finalize the text by the 17th ARF. The ISM-DR Co-Chairs requested the ISG co-chairs (Vietnam and India), through the ARF Unit, to bring this matter up for further discussion at the next ISG in New Delhi, November 2009.

16. The Regional Coordination Discussion Group, facilitated by Garry Dunbar of Australia AUSAID, met to share views among ARF participants, representatives from other regional organizations, and participating non-governmental organizations on their core activities and strategies. The Discussion group recognized the growing need to ensure complementarity of their disaster relief capacity-building efforts. The Discussion Group recommended (**Annex 22d**):

- The Discussion Group meet annually at the ARF ISM-DR meeting
- A review be conducted of various regional mechanisms to determine consistencies and inconsistencies, with the possibility of EU support
- ASEAN present annually to ISM-DRs on relevant ASEAN mechanisms for disaster relief cooperation.
- Work with other regional organizations to fill in the draft matrix

The Meeting expressed appreciation to the facilitators of the Discussion and noted that a study, possibly funded by the EU, could identify areas where ARF and other regional institutions can further complement each other.

17. The Strategic Guidance Discussion, facilitated by Wing Commander Antony Martin of the Australia Department of Defence, met to review the recent version of the ARF Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and discuss further feedback to the text. The Discussion Group recommended (**Annex 22c**):

- The text be circulated for further comments and a revised version tabled at the next Inter-Sessional Support Group meeting, Comments on the Strategic Guidance were sought by October 19 in order to facilitate consideration by the ISG meeting in November,
- Seek ARF endorsement at the 2010 Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) and approval by the 2010 Ministerial, and
- Review annually at the ISM-Disaster Relief meetings.

The Meeting noted that the draft ARF Strategic Guidance represents a useful, non-binding guidance for ARF participants to have in hand in cases of disaster. The Meeting also noted the proposed timeline for assisting ARF participants' response categories subject to the requests of the Affected States, which would be considered as a possible separate project under the ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan:

- Search and Rescue: 0-48 hrs
- Emergency Relief: 0-5 days
- Relief assistance: 0-4 weeks

CONCLUSION

18. The Meeting welcomed the recommendations of the various Discussion Groups and encouraged further engagement and discussion by ARF participants in these disaster relief initiatives. The meeting welcomed ARF's continued engagement on civil-military coordination issues for disaster relief operations. They thanked the co-chairs for the arrangements of the meeting and welcomed Thailand's intent to host the 2010 ISM-DR during the next ARF inter-sessional year.