

CO-CHAIR'S SUMMARY REPORT
ARF WORKSHOP ON STABILIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION:
“Preparing Civil-Military Response Capabilities for Peacekeeping, Emergency
Operations, Stabilization and Reconstruction”
Bangkok, Thailand
10-12 September 2008

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 15th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting in Singapore in July 24, 2008, Thailand and the United States co-chaired the ARF Workshop on Stabilization and Reconstruction Issues. Civilian and military delegates from Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union representatives, India, Indonesia, Japan, DPRK, ROK, Laos, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, the United States, Vietnam, and the ASEAN Secretariat. Invited guests included UNOCHA/UNMIT, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC). The List of Delegates appears as **Annex 1**. Participants thanked Thailand for their excellent arrangements and hospitality in hosting the event.

Opening Remarks

2. Mr. Norachit Sinhaseni, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs of Thailand delivered opening remarks (**Annex 2**). Mr. Vitavas Srivihok, Director-General of ASEAN of Thailand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Blair Hall, U.S. Department of State Director of Regional and Security Policy for East Asia and the Pacific, delivered welcoming remarks (**Annexes 3 and 4, respectively**). The co-chairs discussed the evolution of ARF from confidence-building measures to include preventive diplomacy. They noted that ARF members have diverse and vast expertise and experience dealing with post-conflict and post-disaster stabilization and reconstruction scenarios. No state or organization can deal with these types of crises alone. They require all the available tools of government and cooperation from many actors. States at risk can provide serious security challenges for neighbors and all in the international community. The difficult challenges associated with stability operations should not deter the international community from considering appropriate steps to undertake those operations.

Session One – Overview on Stabilization and Reconstruction Issues

3. Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, New Zealand, the European Union, and Canada delivered presentations on their experiences, either as an assisting or affected state, in responding to post-conflict or post-disaster situations in need of stabilization and/or reconstruction (**Annexes 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, respectively**). As Cambodia noted, special challenges include eliminating the legacies of war such as land mines and small arms and light weapons. The historical and political context of the affected country should always be taken into account.

4. The integration of a recovering state with neighbors in the region has greatly assisted recovery processes. Utilizing their experience in Afghanistan, New Zealand noted that assisting countries must deal with the logistical and operational difficulties in underdeveloped states including poor infrastructure, agricultural capacity, environment and climate difficulties, criminality, and geographic isolation. Positive relationships between affected and assisting parties, at both the local and government level, can greatly enhance the success of operations. Robust education and communication programs can help build these relationships.
5. Complex interagency coordination and consensus-building is necessary for assisting countries, as shown in the European Union's experiences. Canada noted that governments should avoid "stovepipes" and "silos" to help share information, develop priorities, and provide flexible funding mechanisms across interagency lines. Governments must have a clear, strategic vision and commitment before and during all phases of operations.
6. As in Sri Lanka following the 2004 Tsunami, natural or post-conflict situations can produce unexpected challenges for the affected country. The development of national and local emergency response plans, effective bureaucratic coordination, and strong political will can help countries prepare for these challenges. The development of new legislative, bureaucratic, and constitutional institutions in recovering countries can also produce special challenges for both the host country and assisting parties.

Session Two – Lessons Learned in Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations: Post-Natural Disaster (2004 Tsunami) and Post-Conflict (The Timor-Leste Experience) Situations.

7. Indonesia, Thailand, the ASEAN Secretariat, Timor-Leste, the UNOCHA/UNMIT Humanitarian Coordination mission in Timor-Leste, and Australia delivered presentations on the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from these two cases (**Annexes 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, respectively**). Thailand observed that the sharing of knowledge, information, and cooperation across agencies and the region was important in addressing stabilization and reconstruction challenges. Disaster-prone areas pose special challenges for countries in the region, as Indonesia noted. A coordinating agency, whether for affected or assisting countries, can prove valuable during all phases of operations.
8. Strong political commitment from leaders and regional partners, the need for positive engagement, cooperation, and consent of the host government, national ownership of the situation by the affected country, and inclusive coordination among donors and recipients proved key lessons learned. As the ASEAN Secretariat highlighted, operations should consider, at all phases, both the short- and long-term reconstruction and development needs. Reconstruction operations should strive to "build back better" and implement mitigation techniques in order to lessen the damage caused by future conflict or natural disasters.

9. The roles of assisting entities, as the UNOCHA within the UN Mission In Timor-Leste (UNMIT) noted, can change throughout the phases of operations. As in the Timor-Leste case, the identification of stabilization and reconstruction priorities by the host government and assessment teams can help assisting parties adjust their activities accordingly. Close coordination between civilian, military, and police agencies remained key factors in ensuring the stability on the ground that allowed reconstruction efforts to prosper. Long-term and grassroots police readiness remains key together with a clear definition of the military role and assistance. Police readiness is often ignored in favor of military assistance for security sector reform operations.

Session Three – Approaches, Assets, and Skills for Peacekeeping, Emergency Operations, and Reconstruction in the Asia-Pacific Region

10. Bangladesh, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand delivered presentations on their national capacities in disaster relief, peacekeeping, peace-building, and emergency response that were applicable to stabilization and reconstruction operations (**Annexes 15, 16, 17, and 18, respectively**). Both the needs assessments and mission identification should be time-phased and balance both the short, medium, and long-term requirements of the operation. As Bangladesh and Thailand noted, both the police and military should be incorporated into the training and personnel of both assisting forces and host government forces. As Japan and Malaysia noted, assisting security forces should include specialized units and training fit for specialized missions.
11. Participants discussed how UN-mandated peacekeeping operations differ from other missions requiring more comprehensive stabilization and reconstruction tools and mandate. Some participants noted the need to be sensitive to the principles of non-interference, voluntary contributions to operations, and moving at a pace comfortable to all.

Session Four – Cross-Cutting Issues, Organizational Challenges, and the Role of Other Actors

12. China, Japan, and the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) delivered presentations on the domestic and international legal issues associated with peace-building, disaster relief, and stabilization and reconstruction operations (**Annexes 19, 20, and 21, respectively**). China and Japan both noted that constitutional, legal, and other civil authorities should guide the supplementary role of the military in stabilization and reconstruction operations. A strong degree of trust between national citizens and the military can facilitate a positive and appropriate role of the military. The IFRC spoke about the difficulty of coordination in natural disasters due to the increasing frequency, scale, and complexity of natural disasters. The IFRC has developed guidelines to help facilitate the entry and distribution of high-standard relief assets and personnel.

14. The United States, Australia, Singapore, and India delivered presentations regarding their interagency and whole-of-government approach to stabilization and reconstruction operations (**Annex 22, 23, 24 and 25 respectively**). As the United States and others noted, developing a civilian capacity to respond to stabilization and reconstruction is a critical, but often underestimated need for modern stabilization and reconstruction operations. Military resources are not sufficient for comprehensive operations and joint planning, training, and implementation of operations remains essential.
15. Interagency processes should seek to value humanity, foster imaginative processes, and respect the attitudes of all domestic and foreign operational participants as Australia noted in their efforts to enhance multi-agency capability for future stabilization and reconstruction operations. Singapore's experience in reconstruction efforts show that private sector assets, personnel, and NGOs can play important roles in national contributions to foreign operations and should be considered in all operation phases. Assisting government should hold operations accountable given the amount of funding utilized for operations. India noted the need for senior leadership to help coordinate and give momentum to interagency processes.

Notional Best Practices and Common Themes

16. In their interventions, delegations focused on a variety of best practices and common themes on conducting stabilization and reconstruction operations. These broad issues include:

17. Multi-Stakeholder Coordination Between the Affected Country and Assisting Parties

- Assisting operations must be conducted with the consent of, in coordination with, and in accordance with the priorities of the host government.
- Positive engagement and cooperation by host country can facilitate more rapid and coordination assistance to affected areas and populations.
- The affected country and assisting parties should intentionally seek a positive and engaging relationship at both the national and local levels. Education of the assisting forces, effective national and local communication, and cultural sensitivity contribute to healthy relationships between the various parties.
- The integration of the affected country with the region provide important political, social, and economic links during operations and recovery.
- Coordination among donors, including the growing role of regional organizations, can facilitate the effective use of donor experience and expertise.
- Both the affected country and assisting parties should understand the entry and exit strategy of operations.

18. Interagency Coordination Within the Affected Country and Assisting Parties

- Stabilization and reconstruction operations are a comprehensive, whole-of-government, and long-term endeavor.
- Strong national, political commitment by senior leadership is necessary.

- Operations should utilize all the tools of government, as appropriate, such as diplomacy, development, and defence as well as national NGOs and private donations and volunteers.
- Military resources should be called upon at the request of civilian authorities and in accordance with the considerations of the host government.
- A single coordinating agency or arrangement, both within affected and assisting countries for stabilization and reconstruction operations, can be a useful method for interagency coordination to ensure the resources, expertise, and priorities are utilized.
- Development agencies should balance both the programmatic and policy guidance needs of assisting operations.
- Interagency processes should seek to foster innovation, provide holistic approaches, and understand the attitudes and priorities of all assisting government agencies.
- Multiple funding streams from interagency donors can bring appropriate and tailored funds to operations and provide flexible mechanisms for assistance.

19. Operational Requirements for Assisting Parties

Assisting parties should consider the following requirements during all phases of stabilization and reconstruction operations, especially during the planning, execution, and conclusion stages:

- Formulate a clear and long-term strategic objective for operations that accurately reflects the political commitment of assisting parties while bearing in mind the importance of having an appropriate exit strategy.
- Maintain security as a priority that facilitates reconstruction efforts. Police readiness plays a crucial, and often underestimated, role in security.
- Take into consideration the military, psychological, and historical legacies and tools of previous conflict.
- Clarify the timelines for the mission, assistance, and withdrawal, and match those timelines with the initial and ongoing time-phased assessments.
- Consider and appropriately balance the short and long-term stabilization and reconstruction needs during all phases of operations.
- Consider the historical and political context of the affected country and people, both at the national and local levels.
- Remain cognizant of the logistical, governance, and development impediments to operations.
- Quickly acquire an assessment of the needs of the host country.

20. Common Capacities for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations

- Many ARF countries already possess similar capabilities (peacekeeping, disaster relief) for required for response to post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction operations. These complex operations “occupy the space” between disaster management and conflict situations and civil and military actors.
- Despite the differences among international and ARF countries in capacity, funding and legal constraints, and political perspectives, all have unique expertise

- and experience to assist in stabilization and reconstruction operations both domestically and internationally.
- Some differences between stabilization and reconstruction operations, such as in states at risk, and traditional disaster relief and peacekeeping operations exist. These can include:
 - legal authorities,
 - provision for security and other governance functions
 - the lack of permissive environments,
 - and coordination challenges within assisting governments.
21. The Meeting agreed to adopt the Co-Chairs Summary Report of the workshop and asked the co-chairs to brief the next ARF Inter-sessional Support Group (ISG) on Confidence-Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (CBMs and PD) in Singapore during October 8-10, 2008.