

**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT
OF THE
ARF DEFENCE DIALOGUE**

**8 OCTOBER 2008
SINGAPORE**

Introduction

1. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Defence Dialogue was held in Singapore on 8 October 2008, in conjunction with the ARF Intersessional Support Group meeting on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ARF ISG on CBMs and PD) that was co-hosted by Singapore and the Republic of Korea during 9-10 October 2008. The Meeting was co-chaired by Brigadier-General Gary Ang, Deputy Secretary (Policy) of the Singapore Ministry of Defence and Brigadier-General Choi Ik-Bong, Deputy Director General for International Policy Bureau of the ROK Ministry of National Defense.

2. The Meeting was attended by ARF members from Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, the US and Vietnam as well as the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat. The list of delegates is at [Annex A](#).

Item 1: Welcome Remarks

3. In his opening remarks, the Singapore Co-Chair BG Ang welcomed the participants to the ARF Defence Dialogue and expressed Singapore's pleasure in co-hosting the Meeting with the ROK. He noted that the ARF Defence Dialogue had provided a good opportunity for the defence officials to discuss security issues of mutual concern. BG Ang also expressed support for greater defence involvement within the ARF, and highlighted the importance of the open and inclusive membership of the ARF in facilitating constructive dialogue and practical cooperation on current and emerging security issues. The ROK Co-Chair BG Choi Ik-Bong also expressed support for the ARF and the ARF Defence Dialogue in particular, as providing a useful platform for discussing security issues affecting the region. BG Choi noted that the ARF Defence Dialogue had

laid the foundation for building mutual trust and cooperation amongst ARF militaries which would contribute positively to regional peace and stability.

Item 2: Adoption of Agenda

4. The meeting considered and adopted the Agenda, which is at **Annex B**.

Item 3: Regional Efforts in Countering Terrorism

5. The Meeting agreed that terrorism continues to be a priority concern for most countries despite the international community's best efforts in countering the scourge of terrorism. The Meeting noted the recent bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, Pakistan as a sobering reminder of the continued threat posed by terrorism to the safety and security of our countries and citizens. In this regard, the Meeting reaffirmed the importance of the ARF as a platform for raising awareness in terrorism and transnational crimes and generating new ideas for security cooperation. In addition, the Meeting recognised the usefulness of having a session on counter-terrorism as this provided an opportunity to share insights on new developments.

6. The Meeting exchanged views and experiences in their efforts in countering terrorism in their own countries. The Meeting reaffirmed the importance of building upon existing security structures and developing "seamless linkages" between government agencies, partner countries and international organisations to enhance information and intelligence exchange, and to collaborate in developing both domestic and international counter-terrorism capabilities. The Meeting also recognized the importance of a strong international regime in complementing national and regional counter-terror efforts and capacity- building for partner countries and governments.

7. The Meeting also highlighted the importance of putting in place consequence management plans in the event of a major terrorist attack. The Meeting recognised that high profile events like the recent Beijing Olympic Games were potential targets of the terrorists and additional security measures were necessary to prevent any terrorist attacks. The Meeting noted that effective and rapid coordination and mobilisation of national capabilities, and even international assistance, were critical in the event of a large scale attack. The Meeting reaffirmed the need for regional and international cooperation on consequence management.

8. The Meeting noted the linkages between terrorism and transnational organised crime, such as money laundering, arms smuggling, human and drug trafficking, as well as the illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other deadly materials. The Meeting recognized the significant progress made by ARF countries in addressing these concerns and urged ARF governments to further enhance their efforts and commitment in securing the flow of goods and people, reinforcing border security measures and customs infrastructures, and strengthening the capabilities of law enforcement and intelligence /information sharing networks.

9. The Meeting noted that the militaries would continue to play an important and direct role in counter-terrorism efforts. However, the militaries alone would not have the capacity to provide a long-term solution to the problem. The rise of asymmetrical, multi-dimensional security challenges necessitated the engagement of civilian agencies, non-governmental organisations and academia in an integrated approach to address the problem of terrorism and to promote better governance. The Meeting noted the adoption of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Workplan by the 15th ARF in July 2008, and looked forward to the participation of defence officials in contributing towards the implementation of the workplan.

10. The Meeting also acknowledged the need to strengthen and periodically review legislative and constitutional frameworks to deal with the transnational threat of terrorism. The Meeting noted that some countries had enacted specific laws to deal with the terrorists while others had expanded the mandate of law enforcement and security agencies to strengthen the national effort. The Meeting reaffirmed the delinking of terrorism from ethnicity, religion and nationality. The Meeting further highlighted the necessity to adopt a holistic approach to address the underlying socio-economic drivers for terrorism, including the implementation of religious rehabilitation programmes to weaken the influence of extremist ideologues, and financial aid for impoverished families. The Meeting also stressed that counter-terror efforts should be underpinned by a “people-centric” approach, with a focus on dialogue and adherence to international laws and human rights.

11. The presentation submitted by China is at [Annex C](#).

Item 4: Challenges of Modern Day Peacekeeping and Peace Support Operations

12. The Meeting noted the surge in the demand for peacekeeping and peace support operations in recent years. The Meeting also acknowledged the increasing scale and complexity of peacekeeping and peace support operations, with large-scale multidimensional operations now often the norm. The Meeting noted that the expanded scope of peacekeeping and peace support operations today required a whole of government approach and common framework for enhanced interoperability between agencies.

13. The Meeting noted that the key challenge for peacekeeping and peace support operations was the need to ensure that the forces were trained and were capable of carrying out their duties effectively. The Meeting reiterated the importance of specialized vocational training and securing sufficient resources to prepare the military forces for their duties. The Meeting affirmed the role of the ARF in complementing the efforts of the United Nations in improving our capacities for training of peacekeepers. The Meeting further acknowledged that international cooperation was important. It was suggested that member countries could build on existing frameworks to conduct multilateral exercises which would enhance inter-operability amongst the militaries in-theatre.

14. The Meeting recognised the need to involve NGOs, the media and humanitarian agencies, due to the complex and multi-dimensional aspects of modern day peacekeeping and peace support operations. The Meeting reaffirmed that overall success and effectiveness of a mission also depended on the effective engagement and involvement of these actors in the planning and implementation process.

15. The Meeting further noted the large numbers of countries that returned to a state of conflict after 5 to 10 years of the peacekeeping effort. Beyond the provision of relief aid and restoration of law and order in the immediate term, there was also a need for an integrated approach for the agencies involved to contribute to economic recovery, rebuild the government machinery and infrastructure and improve transparency and accountability mechanisms.

16. In this regard, it was important for the troops in the theatre of operation to develop an understanding and good working relationship with local communities, government agencies and local implementation partners. The Meeting also reiterated the importance of civil-military cooperation and partnership in building trust between peacekeeping troops and empowering local communities with a personal sense of

ownership in the peacekeeping process. It was further acknowledged that long-term nation building strategies were crucial for enduring peace.

17. The presentations submitted by Australia, Canada, Indonesia, New Zealand, Russia and Thailand are at **Annexes D, E, F, G, H and I.**

Item 5: Any Other Matters

18. No other issues were discussed.

Item 6: Closing Remarks

19. BG Choi thanked the defence officials for their active participation, which had contributed towards a productive meeting. He reiterated that transnational issues such as terrorism and peacekeeping would continue to remain important issues which would require international cooperation. The ARF Defence Dialogue could develop into an important forum for building trust and confidence through frank and candid discussions. The Meeting further acknowledged that the international cooperation was important. It was suggested that member countries could build on existing frameworks to conduct multilateral exercises which would enhance inter-operability amongst the militaries in-theatre. The Meeting was also informed by the ROK that it would be hosting the second ARF ISG on CBMs and PD for the intersessional year 2008/2009 in the ROK, tentatively scheduled for March/April 2009. The agenda would be circulated in due course.

20. In his closing remarks, BG Ang expressed his appreciation to the defence officials for their active participation and valuable insights which had contributed to a fruitful and meaningful meeting. BG Ang highlighted the need to take a broader perspective on security cooperation as the region continued to be confronted by an array of non-traditional and transnational security challenges.

21. The Meeting thanked the Government of Singapore for the generous hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the ARF Defence Dialogue.

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