

**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT OF THE FOURTH ASEAN REGIONAL
FORUM INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING ON COUNTER-TERRORISM AND
TRANSNATIONAL CRIME**

Beijing, China
26-28 April 2006

INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 12th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Vientiane, Laos on July 29, 2005, the Fourth ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC) was held in Beijing, the People's Republic of China on 26-28 April 2006. The Meeting was organized by China and Brunei Darussalam, and co-chaired by H.E. Cui Tiankai, Assistant Foreign Minister of China and H.E. Hjh Maimunah Dato Elias, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Brunei Darussalam.

2. The meeting was attended by representatives from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, the People's Republic of China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, the Philippines, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Papua New Guinea, the Kingdom of Thailand, the United States, Viet Nam and Timor Leste. The ASEAN Secretariat and representatives from the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) also participated in the meeting. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex 1**.

3. The Opening Remarks by H.E. Meng Hongwei, Vice Minister of the Chinese Ministry of Public Security is attached as **Annex 2**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

4. The Agenda for the ISM on CTTC is attached as **Annex 3**, and the Program of Activities as **Annex 4**.

**AGENDA ITEM 2: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM**

2.1: Recent Regional Developments of Terrorism

5. Participants exchanged views on recent developments of terrorist activities in the region. Brunei, China, DPRK, India and Laos were the lead speakers under this agenda item. Their presentations and those of the other representatives are

attached as **Annex 5 to 10.**

6. Participants pointed out that despite the international counter-terrorism efforts over the last few years, terrorism still poses a serious threat to regional and global peace and stability. The fight on terror should be a long-term, sustained and comprehensive effort and requires the commitment of all countries in the world.

7. In discussing new developments on regional and international terrorist activities, participants noted that terrorist organizations and its members had changed their strategies and tactics. Their activities have been extending from country to country. Terrorist organizations have reconfigured into smaller cells which made them more difficult to detect. Members belonging to different terrorist groups were working together through unstructured networks of personal relationships to plan terrorist attacks. Local recruits have been trained to undertake terrorist activities.

8. Participants pointed out that the terrorist forces have increasingly taken advantage of high-tech tools such as the computer networks and the internet to develop networks, propagate extremist ideas and coordinate with other groups. These have added new and complicated factors to the fight against terror. Some participants emphasized the overlap between terrorism and transnational crime. Terrorism and transnational crime are usually conducted in connection, and must be dealt with as such.

2.2 Possible Root Causes of Terrorism

9. Indonesia, Pakistan, Russia and the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter Terrorism (SEARCCT) led the discussion under this agenda item and their papers and the presentations of the other delegates were attached as **Annex 11 to 16.**

10. Many Participants were of the view that the root causes of terrorism are both varied and multifaceted. A range of conditions in society may create an environment for terrorism to thrive. Political factors such as unresolved disputes, inequality, isolation and mistrust, economic factors such as poverty, hunger, steep development gap, and social factors such as illiteracy, injustice and lack of communication were pointed out as some of the issues that need to be addressed.

11. Many participants stressed that it was essential to address both the symptoms and the root causes of terrorism. Successfully eliminating terrorism requires a balanced and comprehensive approach that includes employing political, economic, legal and other means, including measures aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the people.

12. Other participants emphasized that whatever the root causes of terrorism may be, terrorism is a common enemy of all peoples, of all beliefs and all religions and should be condemned universally. The discussion on root causes should in no way provide any justification and excuses for terrorism.

AGENDA ITEM 3: COUNTER-TERRORISM: STRATEGIES AND MEASURES

3.1: Review of the Strategies and the Implementation of Measures to Combat Regional Terrorism

13. The lead speakers under this agenda item, i.e. the EU, Japan, New Zealand, ROK, the United States and Vietnam updated the meeting on the strategies adopted and measures undertaken by their respective countries to counter terrorism. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) briefed the meeting on its cooperative measures against terrorism. These presentations are attached respectively as **Annex 17 to 25**.

14. Participants emphasized the leading role of the United Nations (UN) in the fight against international terrorism and that any measures undertaken should be consistent with the principles of the UN Charter, international law, in particular humanitarian and human rights law, United Nations Security Council Resolutions and UN Conventions and Protocols related to counter-terrorism. Participants also emphasized that in the fight against terrorism, conditions of individual countries should be taken into consideration and national sovereignty and territorial integrity should be respected.

15. Participants stressed that terrorism should not be associated with any race, religion or ethnic groups and that it is important to promote and expand inter-religious, inter-cultural and inter-civilization understanding. The meeting noted Japan's proposal to focus the discussion on inter-faith dialogue during the next ISM on CTTC.

16. The meeting noted that terrorists and their networks are developing and building up their ideology and propaganda capacity. To counter terrorist propaganda efficiently, it is vital to increase the general public's awareness of the danger of terrorism by means of education.

17. Participants were of the view that no country could succeed in the fight against terrorism alone and recognized the importance of strengthening the capabilities of ARF members by, amongst others, developing best practices and sharing knowledge and experiences. Participants thus agreed to devote more efforts to further broadening and deepening international and regional cooperation. Some participants suggested the setting up of hot lines between Law Enforcement Agencies in different countries for timely contact and

encouraged further interaction between the ARF and other regional and international organizations.

3.2: Capacity Building

3.2.1: Emergency Response Plan (System)

18. As the lead speakers under this agenda item, Australia, Canada, Japan, Philippines and Singapore shared their experiences and best practices on counter-terrorism emergency plan of their respective countries by making presentations attached as **Annex 26 to 30**.

19. The meeting highlighted the importance of crisis management in response to emergent terrorist incidents. Prompt reaction to crisis situation is essential to lessen its adverse effects. It also gives people the confidence to deal with a crisis in a resilient manner.

20. Participants emphasized that efforts should be made to strengthen the emergency preparedness against terrorist attacks. The meeting encouraged the regional countries to establish a complete set of crisis management plans or manuals providing detailed and comprehensive procedures and guidelines for all relevant agencies in the case of emergency terrorist incidents. Governments at various levels should constantly enhance their counter-terrorism capacities in terms of expertise and logistics, and organize training or exercises to improve their emergency response capabilities.

21. Many participants stressed that emergency response is a multi-agency undertaking and that a unified command and cooperative, coordinated and consultative inter-agency relations are essential to harmonize its operation.

22. Participants also recognized that efforts should be undertaken to raise the public awareness to make them mentally prepared for terrorist attacks. Such efforts may include, among others, involving grassroots and civil societies in the counter-terrorism campaign.

3.2.2: Information Sharing

23. The meeting continued the discussion on information sharing as suggested by the 3rd ISM on CTTC and discussed the follow-up actions on the suggestions and recommendations made. Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Papua New Guinea were the lead speakers under this agenda item. Their presentations are attached as **Annex 31 to 36**.

24. Participants agreed that timely, effective and accurate information and intelligence is of vital importance in preventing terrorist attacks. Information sharing therefore should be an essential element of any form of cooperation

against terrorism.

25. Some participants pointed out that information sharing needs to be done on a reciprocal basis within the limits of the domestic legislation and regulation of a particular country. In this regard, legal mechanisms for information sharing through conventions, treaties, or bilateral agreements may be required.

26. Participants noted that there is a big gap between developed and developing countries in terms of capabilities and capacities. The meeting encouraged enhanced cooperation in capacity building through material assistance, training, and where feasible, technology transfer.

27. Some participants suggested that designating contact points for intelligence cooperation in each country would greatly promote information sharing process. The meeting called upon the ARF participants to continue regularly updating their contact points for counter-terrorism on information sharing, document security and law enforcement through the ARF Unit.

28. Participants called for further implementation of the previous ISM recommendations. The point was made that there are still some challenges ahead, including the political will for closer information sharing, standardization of travel documents and immigration control, coordination across regional framework and centers, harmonization of legal framework to facilitate mutual legal assistance and extradition, and high cost of new counter terrorism technology.

AGENDA ITEM 4: FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE ISM ON CTTC

29. Participants agreed that after four annual ISMs being convened and in view of the new features that regional terrorism manifest, it is appropriate to consider the future direction of this ISM and the practical ways and means to be taken to further materialize cooperation in counter-terrorism. The remarks of the Chinese delegation is attached as **Annex 37**.

30. Participants made the following recommendations for the future development of the ISM on CTTC:

- To implement the cooperation suggestions already agreed upon, including developing some action plans for various recommendations made in the ARF counter-terrorism statements. The ARF unit may be tasked to coordinate the implementation of the suggestions.
- To pay more attention to long-term strategies for addressing terrorism, while recognizing the importance of addressing root causes of terrorism.
- Efforts could be made to explore, among others, on how to promote inter-faith and inter-culture dialogues, to increase public awareness and preparedness, and to alleviate socio-economic disparity with a view to

- elevating the standard of living of underprivileged groups and people.
- To strengthen the role of ISM on CTTC in coordinating regional counter-terrorism efforts. This may include holding counter-terrorism-related CBMs of every inter-sessional year according to the established theme of the ISM, and reviewing the reports of these CBMs at each ISM.
 - To strengthen linkage with other regional organizations and security cooperation frameworks. It is suggested that as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) are particularly dealing with counter-terrorism issues, further interaction with SCO should be promoted, *iter alia*, by holding joint expert meetings on counter-terrorism.
 - To focus more on the overlapping areas between terrorism and transnational crime, including issues closely connected with financing of terrorism as money laundering and drug trafficking.

31. Participants welcomed the offer by Singapore and Japan to co-host the Fifth Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime in Tokyo in spring, 2007.

AGENDA ITEM 5: ADOPTION OF CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT

32. Brunei Darussalam, on behalf of the Co-Chairs, presented the draft ARF Chairman's Statement on Promoting a People-centered Approach to Counter Terrorism, highlighting the necessity to look at the "soft measures" in the fight against terrorism, which entails, among others, looking at ways in which greater tolerance and understanding could be further promoted and encouraging public participation in the efforts to counter terrorism. The Co-Chairs' draft ARF Statement is attached as Annex 38. The participants are requested to submit their comments to Brunei Darussalam and China before 5 May 2006 to allow for the consideration of comments in time for the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting in Karambunai, Sabah, Malaysia on 19 May 2006.

33. China and Brunei Darussalam jointly presented the Co-chairs' Summary Report of the Fourth ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime.

AGENDA ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS

34. The participants expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the Brunei and Chinese Government for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and for the warm hospitality accorded to the delegates.

(End)