

**FIRST PLENARY MEETING OF
THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM
EXPERTS AND EMINENT
PERSONS**

**29-30 JUNE 2006
JEJU ISLAND
REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING
OF THE EXPERTS AND EMINENT PERSONS,
THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM**

Jeju Island, June 29-30, 2006

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 8th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in 2001, the Inaugural Meeting of Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) of the ARF was held in Jeju Island, the Republic of Korea from June 29-30, 2006 in order to explore recommendations on future activities of the EEPs. The meeting was co-chaired by elected EEPs, Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, from Malaysia, ARF Chair country and Chung-In Moon, from the ROK, host country. The meeting was attended by 34 EEPs and 22 observers from 21 countries, and the Chairman of the ARF.
2. H.E. Kyu-hyung Lee, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, ROK delivered a welcoming speech, stressing an active role of the EEPs in promoting peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region through their collective wisdom.
3. The keynote address to the meeting was delivered by The Honourable Dato' Seri Syed Hamid Albar, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia and Chairman of the 13th ARF. He began his address by briefly sketching the successes of the ARF process to-date. He then outlined his views on some of the areas for the ARF to focus on in the future, including a shift in ARF activities towards responses to non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, maritime security and disaster management; the convening of an ARF Defense Ministers Meeting; and the establishment of an ARF Secretariat.
4. The meeting was organized into three sessions: the security environment in the Asia Pacific region; the ARF's past, present and future; and the role of the EEPs in the ARF process.

Security Environment in the Asia Pacific Region

5. The Asia Pacific Region has undergone significant changes. Competition among regional powers has increased, and non-traditional security issues have risen in importance and urgency. This situation presents opportunities for cooperation as well as potentials for dispute. When it comes to issues of human security, terrorism and maritime issues, states incline more towards comprehensive and common security mechanisms. With issues concerning nationalism, territorial disputes, and vital economic resources such as energy, states are prone to

competition and confrontation. Faced with new challenges and uncertainties, the participants reemphasized the need to forge a common perception to prevent conflict and promote peace in the region. Being the major multilateral security dialogue in the Asia Pacific, the ARF should play a leading role in confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy.

ARF's Past, Present and Future

6. Since its founding in 1994, the ARF has developed and implemented confidence building measures, expanded its membership, and taken steps towards preventive diplomacy. Despite its progress, the ARF lacks some of the institutional structure and cohesion among members to respond effectively to regional security concerns and challenges. Many participants agreed that it is time for the ARF to shift from a forum for discussion to more of an institution of implementation. Participants discussed two categories of changes: institutional and substantive. Institutional issues include enhancing the role of the ARF Chair, reexamining the leadership structure, creating a Secretariat, and strengthening relations with other multilateral and regional organizations, specifically the United Nations. Substantive issues include moving towards preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, emphasizing so-called "soft security" issues encompassing natural disaster management and energy security, and cooperating in areas of mutual concern such as early warning systems and humanitarian responses. Each of these areas require significant research and exploration in which the EEPs may provide valuable assistance.

The Role of the EEPs in the ARF Process

7. According to *The Guidelines for the Operation of the ARF EEPs*, adopted at the 11th ARF meeting in Jakarta, in July 2004, the role of the EEPs is to "provide non-binding and professional views or policy recommendations to the ARF through the ARF Chair, or to serve as resource persons to the ARF on issues of relevance to their expertise." An updated register of the EEPs exists. It consists of some 110 leading experts in their fields from 22 ARF countries. Although procedural groundwork has been laid out, no operational or specific substantive role has been allocated to the EEPs thus far. As a professional resource, practical roles and outcomes for the EEPs were suggested and discussed. Participants agreed on the need to set a path for more effective and efficient use of EEPs that is distinguished from existing Track II support by identifying specific roles for

EEPs.

Recommendations

8. The following ideas were proposed regarding the future role of the ARF and EEPs:
- 1) Commission the EEPs as a vision group for the ARF to propose innovative ideas on the future development of the ARF, including proposals for institutional innovation and capacity-building
 - 2) Integrate the EEPs into the ARF mechanism, and have them play an advisory role at the ARF meetings such as ISGs, as well as utilize selected EEPs individually, as envisaged in the EEP Guidelines, more actively in fact-finding missions, as special envoys, etc.
 - 3) Mobilize the EEP resources to deliberate on salient regional security issues such as the Northeast Asia security dilemma and disarmament
 - 4) Conduct desk top and scenario-based planning exercises for the ARF on subjects such as international terrorism, maritime security, disaster management, pandemics, and peace-keeping operations
 - 5) Distinguish the role and functions of the EEPs from those of Track I (e.g., ISG) and Track II (e.g., CSCAP and ASEAN-ISIS)
 - 6) Hold EEP meetings at regular intervals, annually or biennially, to discuss recommendations concerning pragmatic measures in ARF areas of focus in confidence building and preventive diplomacy
 - 7) Appoint a liaison officer or secretary to maintain contact among the EEPs
 - 8) Establish a section in the ARF website to publicize the works of the EEPs and exchange information