

**ARF CBM ON
REGIONAL COOPERATION IN MARITIME SECURITY
2 – 4 MARCH 2005
SINGAPORE**

CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 11th ASEAN Regional Forum on 2 July 2004 in Jakarta, Singapore and the United States co-hosted an ARF CBM on "Regional Cooperation in Maritime Security" in Singapore from 2-4 March 2005.
2. The Meeting was attended by representatives from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, the People's Republic of China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, the United States, Vietnam, the ASEAN Secretariat, and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Ambassadors and Defence Attaches of ARF countries were also invited to attend the Opening Ceremony and Keynote Plenary of the event. The programme and list of participants are attached at Annexes A and B respectively.
3. The Meeting was opened by Mr Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Defence of Singapore. The Secretary-General of the IMO, Mr Efthimios Mitropoulos spoke at the Keynote Plenary Session on "Regional Cooperation in Maritime Security". In addition, the ASEAN Navy Chiefs, who were in Singapore for the ASEAN Navy Interaction participated in the Meeting and shared their experiences in handling maritime security threats.
4. The Meeting built on the positive dynamics that have developed within the ARF since the adoption of the 2003 ARF Statement on Cooperation Against Piracy and Other Threats to Maritime Security, as well as the consensus on the importance of maritime challenges and the need to manage threats to maritime security through comprehensive national strategies and multinational cooperation that was forged at the ARF Workshop on Maritime Security co-chaired by Indonesia, Malaysia, and the US in September 2004. The Meeting sought to take the next step, by identifying concrete "solution sets" through focused discussion in four key areas: multilateral cooperation, operational solutions to maritime security, shipping and port security and applicable technology for maritime security.

5. In addition to plenary discussions, ARF delegates observed an operational demonstration of the inter-agency maritime security measures that Singapore had put in place in its ports and waters. Delegates visited the Singapore Maritime and Port Authority's Port Operations Control Centre and viewed a display of container screening operations, before proceeding out to sea on a Republic of Singapore Navy Landing Ship Tank to witness a demonstration of inter-agency counter-measures against small boat threats as well as against larger rogue vessels that could be used as "floating bombs".

Multilateral Cooperation in Enhancing Maritime Security

6. IMO Secretary-General Mr Efthimios Mitropoulos delivered the keynote address on "Multilateral Cooperation in Maritime Security". Ambassador Barry Desker, Director of the Institute for Defence and Strategic Studies in Singapore, served as the discussant for this session.

7. The Meeting noted that the maritime security agenda had moved beyond its traditional concern of maritime piracy and armed robbery to include the threat of maritime terrorism and other transnational maritime crimes. The Meeting also noted the transnational nature of these maritime threats as well as the strategic importance of key shipping lanes, and agreed that these both necessitated cooperation on the part of the littoral states and the user states.

8. The Meeting recognised the positive role that the IMO could play in catalysing multilateral cooperation in maritime security, in particular because of its experience in balancing the interests of the littoral states and user states and in upholding the fundamental principle of freedom of navigation. The Meeting welcomed the recent initiative that the IMO had launched to secure vital sea lanes, and it expressed strong support for the forthcoming IMO-sponsored meeting on the Malacca Strait which would be held in Jakarta in September 2005 as part of a continuing series of meetings on the security of regional waters that brought together both littoral states and the user states. The Meeting also agreed that some possible areas in which the IMO could help in building regional cooperation included the promotion of situational awareness, information sharing, personnel training, capacity building, and technical cooperation. The Meeting reiterated the importance of ARF participants becoming parties to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Maritime Navigation and its Protocol, as committed to in the 2003 ARF Statement on Cooperation against Piracy and Other Threats to Maritime Security.

Operational Solutions to Maritime Security Threats

9. The Navy Chiefs of Malaysia and Singapore, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Indonesian Navy and the Commander of US Coast Guard Pacific Area shared their perspectives and experiences in dealing with maritime security threats. China, Australia and India also shared their national experiences and highlighted national best practices in this session.

10. The Meeting noted the efforts of many ARF countries to strengthen measures in their countries, including the establishment of the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA), the setting up of additional navy control command centres in Indonesia, the strengthening of legal system and structure in China to safeguard the security of its waters, ports and ships, and the US' identification of a performance model that would provide a framework for collaboration on all the critical elements of maritime security. The importance of inter-agency cooperation was highlighted. Some participants noted the need to address safety of navigation as well as environmental protection in an effective maritime security regime. Some participants also referenced recent coordinated efforts on disaster relief in the wake of the 26 December 2004 earthquake and tsunami as an example of effective cooperation.

11. The Meeting noted that a significant number of forms of operational cooperation already existed both bilaterally and multilaterally. The Meeting commended the numerous coordinated patrol arrangements that had been set up in the region, and agreed that it would be useful to further explore how the modalities of such patrols could be further improved. The recently launched Trilateral Coordinated Patrols of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, involving the navies of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, were cited as a positive example of such evolving modalities.

12. Some participants commented on the operational benefits of pursuit arrangements and joint patrols. Some also noted that such arrangements could touch on potentially sensitive issues. Some participants suggested that these issues could be addressed through consultation and mutual confidence building, as well as through the involvement of international organisations like the UN or the IMO. Some participants expressed the hope that pursuit and joint patrol arrangements could come about in the region in the future given the pressing nature of maritime threats.

13. The Meeting acknowledged the professional benefits of multilateral naval interactions, and commended the expansion in the

breadth and depth of the maritime security-related activities in groupings such as the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) and the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS). It was noted that such joint maritime security exercises were useful not only for building confidence and mutual understanding, but also for developing the standard operational procedures and inter-operability that would be necessary for any future operational responses.

Port and Shipping Security

14. Singapore, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and the EL) made presentations. A representative from the shipping industry also shared the commercial perspective on how the shipping industry coped with the enhanced maritime security measures.

15. The Meeting noted that a key challenge facing participants was how to sustain unimpeded economic growth while ensuring higher levels of maritime security demanded by the new threat environment. Given the immensity of the task of securing ships, ports and containers, there was a broad recognition that countries should adopt a holistic approach.

16. The Meeting noted the significant achievements of the ISPS Code, and agreed that vigilance needed to be sustained with regard to continued compliance through regular audits of security plans and the conduct of security. Some participants suggested that there was a need to explore security measures that went beyond the ISPS code, including the monitoring of small vessels, and giving emphasis to security of the entire supply chain.

Technological Solutions to Maritime Security Threats

17. Singapore and the United States made presentations. The Meeting noted that while technology was a critical enabler in maritime security, it was not a silver bullet. It was agreed that countries needed to adopt a holistic approach by integrating technological solutions with policy and operational measures. The Meeting also noted the various uses of advanced technology to enhance maritime situational awareness and to support the decision-making processes of security agencies. The Meeting noted that bilateral and multilateral collaboration on the use of technology should be encouraged.

Voluntary Briefing on ReCAAP

18. Singapore delivered a voluntary briefing on the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Anti-Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and the associated Information Sharing Centre (ISC) that Singapore would host. The Meeting noted that the depositary for the Agreement had already been established, and that a number of countries had already begun their processes of ratification. The Meeting welcomed the imminent coming into force of ReCAAP and noted Singapore's plans for the prompt establishment of the ISC. The Meeting acknowledged that the proposed ISC will take into account concerns regarding the definitions of piracy applied by the International Maritime Bureau that has distorted the actual situation in the region.

Proposals for Future ARF Cooperation

19. The Meeting also commended the recent growth in maritime security arrangements. Some participants suggested formulating regional maritime security cooperation around three broad principles: First, that the primary responsibility for the safety and security of key waterways like the Malacca and Singapore Straits lay with the littoral states. Second, that due to the multiplicity of stakeholders, and the complexity of the task at hand, there was a role for all stakeholders - interested countries, international organisations like the IMO, the shipping community, and even multinational corporations. And third, that as the region charted out how best to move forward in this new area of cooperation, we should proceed on the basis of consultation and in accordance with international law. Some participants suggested that these three principles would be a useful basis for future maritime security dialogue.

20. The Meeting agreed that the ARF should play an important role in forging regional cooperation in maritime security given its wide membership that encompassed the key stakeholders in regional maritime security. The Meeting therefore commended the ARF's sustained focus on maritime security to date and welcomed the development of future regional maritime security activities.

21. The Meeting also recognised the important role that the IMO could play in regional maritime security and, particularly with regard to enhancing the security of vital regional sea lanes while ensuring continued freedom of trade and navigation through them. The Meeting therefore supported the continued involvement of the IMO in future ARF maritime security initiatives.

22. The Meeting agreed that the exchange of information among maritime agencies in ARF countries was an important first step in developing wider cooperative arrangements, with some participants highlighting that information should be shared for mutual benefit and that issues of confidentiality should be addressed. It was suggested that these information exchanges could take place, perhaps through seminars, operations room linkages, or through formal regional cooperative arrangements such as the Regional Agreement on Cooperation in Anti-Piracy in Asia (or ReCAAP).

23. The Meeting noted that Maritime Domain Awareness at the national and regional levels could be a important precursor to effective operational responses. The Meeting therefore noted the usefulness of developing cooperative modalities and protocols for exchanging and integrating information to build a comprehensive maritime operating picture.

24. The Meeting also took note of the proposal of Singapore to consider the initiation of an ARF maritime security exercise in conjunction with the other littoral states as an operational Confidence Building Measure for 2006. Such a CBM would be in line with the call made in the 2003 ARF Ministerial Statement on Cooperation Against Piracy and Other Threats to Maritime Security for multilateral cooperation through increased personnel contact, information exchanges, and anti-piracy exercises.

25. The Meeting also agreed that in addition to working on preventive measures, the ARF could also work to build up regional resilience by cooperating in consequence management in the event of a major maritime incident.

26. The Meeting called for sustained capacity building initiatives at the regional and sub-regional levels. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed India's proposal to host a CBM on Training in Maritime Security and Japan's proposal to host an ARF Workshop on Capacity Building in Maritime Security which will be held in Tokyo in the fall of 2005. Participants also noted the US' informal efforts to assist the littoral states in capacity building in maritime security.

27. The Meeting noted the need for constant communication and coordination between governments and the shipping industry in implementing measures to enhance maritime security.

28. The Co-Chairs' Report and the recommendations contained within will be submitted to the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting to be held in Vientiane in May 2005 for information. The papers and briefing slides for this CBM are attached to this report.

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