

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT
ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM DEFENSE OFFICIALS' DIALOGUE
SHANGHAI, CHINA, 11 APRIL 2013

1. The ARF Defense Officials' Dialogue (ARF DOD) of the ARF Inter-Sessional Group Meeting on Confidence-Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs and PD) for the inter-sessional year 2012-2013 was held in Shanghai, China, on 11 April 2013. The Dialogue was co-chaired by RADM Li Ji, Deputy Chief, Foreign Affairs Office, Ministry of National Defence of People's Republic of China and Haji Adi Ithram Dato Paduka Haji Mahmud, Director of Defence Policy, Directorate of Defence Policy, Ministry of Defence of Brunei Darussalam. Representatives of the Ministry of Defence of all ARF participants except Bangladesh and New Zealand attended the Dialogue. Representative of the ASEAN Secretariat was also present. The List of Participants appears as **ANNEX A**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS BY CO-CHAIRS

China Co-Chair – RADM Li Ji, Deputy Chief, Foreign Affairs Office, Ministry of National Defence, People's Republic of China

2. At the outset, RADM Li Ji, welcomed all delegates to Shanghai and expressed his gratitude for the Ministry of Defence of Brunei Darussalam for the close cooperation in the ARF DOD co-chairmanship for the inter-sessional year 2012-2013. He recognised that since the establishment of the ARF in 1994, the situation in the region has been stable and peaceful. While the impacts of global financial crisis are prominent and the global economic recovery sluggish, the Asia Pacific region continued its rapid development and continues to be the driving force for the global economic recovery. At the same time, the region also faces challenges from serious non-traditional security issues, disputes over territorial claims, internal conflicts which arise from ethnic and religious tensions, and the lingering Cold War mentality. Furthermore, he noted the three stages of the ARF evolution, namely, promotion of confidence-building measures (CBMs), development of preventive diplomacy (PD) mechanisms and development of conflict resolution (CR) mechanisms. He emphasised that the participation of defence officials in realisation of these three stages of evolution is an important feature of the ARF. These three stages of evolution cannot be achieved without a close cooperation among the defence ministries, institutions and the military establishments. He recalled that the Dialogue today would be the first time for the ARF DOD to discuss the issues of CBMs and PD. He looked forward to the exchange of views on these topics and expressed hope that it would contribute to the eventual realisation

of the aforementioned three-stage evolution of the ARF. His opening remarks appear as **ANNEX B**.

Brunei Darussalam Co-Chair – Haji Adi Ihram Dato Paduka Haji Mahmud, Director of Defence Policy, Directorate of Defence Policy, Ministry of Defence, Brunei Darussalam

3. In his remarks, Haji Adi Ihram Dato Paduka Haji Mahmud expressed appreciation for the kind cooperation of the People's Republic of China and, in particular, the Ministry of Defence during the co-chairmanship of the ARF DOD. He noted that the ARF DOD has been serving as a useful platform for the defence officials to exchange views and perspectives on issues of common concerns and to promote interactions among defence institutions. He assessed that the strategic landscape of the Asia-Pacific region has undergone fundamental changes over the last few years and the regional security situation is likely to remain dynamic in the foreseeable future. He viewed that the prevailing challenges to the regional security have presented the opportunities for a broader cooperation to better manage issues, particularly those which could lead to tension and hostilities. With the possibility of conflict arising in the region and the given potential sources of conflict in the area, he underlined that the practice of CBMs and PD are crucial steps in promoting regional peace and stability. Regional institutions, particularly the ARF plays an important role for this purpose. He informed the Dialogue that Brunei Darussalam and China are now working on the Commemorative Publication for 20th Anniversary of the ARF. He recognised the overlap between the CBMs and PD and therefore suggested that it would not be pragmatic for the ARF to wait for the CBMs to be exhausted before it promotes PD mechanisms. He explained that in attaining peace and security in the region, ASEAN has established mechanisms to promote peace and security which complement the defence dialogue in the ARF, namely the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and the ADMM-Plus. He informed the Dialogue that Brunei Darussalam will chair and host the 7th ADMM on 7 May 2013 and subsequently the 2nd ADMM-Plus on 29 August 2013. He also highlighted to the Dialogue that the first ADMM-Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Military Medicine Exercise (HADR/MM) will be conducted in Brunei Darussalam on 17-20 June 2013. The Exercise will contribute to the promotion of the CBMs and PD. His opening remarks appear as **ANNEX C**.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

4. The Dialogue adopted the Provisional Agenda which appears as **ANNEX D**.

AGENDA ITEM 3: DEFENCE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM'S STAGED OBJECTIVES

Topic 1: Defence and Confidence Building Measures: Achievements and Problems

5. The Dialogue recognised that the changes in the regional architecture as an impact of globalisation have given more impetus for defence institutions to work together. The Dialogue recognised that following the first ARF in Bangkok on 25 July 1994, the Forum has been working towards creating an environment to promote peace and security. The Dialogue recalled the ARF Concept Paper which outlines the three stages of the ARF evolutionary approaches, namely: the promotion of CBMs; development of PD mechanisms; and the development of conflict resolution mechanisms. The Dialogue was of the view that the ARF should assess the progress of the CBMs initiatives which have been achieved in the course of twenty years of cooperation.

6. The Dialogue commended the ARF for providing a platform for the twenty-seven participants to work together on various areas of cooperation, in particular non-traditional security issues. The Dialogue also emphasised that the ARF has served as a forum that brings together countries in the region to promote trust and confidence including in the areas of defence and security. The Dialogue reaffirmed its support to the realisation of the ASEAN Political Security Community.

7. The Dialogue recognised the ARF DOD as a platform for defence officials to discuss defence policies and issues of common concerns. The Dialogue shared the view that the participation of defence officials in the ARF is indispensable and of increasing importance. The Dialogue encouraged the participation of defence and military younger generation as they are the one who will continue to guide the Dialogue into a positive future outlook.

8. The Dialogue concurred that the ARF DOD has been complementing the other existing ARF initiatives, such as: the ISG on CBMs and PD; the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR); the ISM on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC); the ISM on Maritime Security (ISM on MS); the ISM on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NP); the ARF Peacekeeping Experts' Meeting; and other ad-hoc activities, such as seminars, workshops and exercises.

9. The Dialogue viewed that confidence-building activities in the defence sector could achieve tangible results. In light of this, the Dialogue reiterated that confidence must be maintained through regular interactions and constructive discussions and not be taken for granted. The Dialogue acknowledged that confidence and trust are the prerequisites to move to the PD stage and in this context, defence institutions needed to play an important

role. The Dialogue recalled the discussion at the ARF DOD in Wellington on 7 May 2012, regarding the transition from CBMs to PD from the perspective of defence officials. The Dialogue noted that adoption of the ARF Work Plan on PD at the 18th ARF in Bali on 23 July 2011 served as an indication that ARF is prepared to embark on PD.

10. While recognising the ARF's achievements in CBMs, the Dialogue also identified challenges to develop CBMs. The Dialogue underscored the importance of ensuring complementarity among existing ASEAN mechanisms in the region such as the ARF and the ADMM-Plus. The Dialogue also pointed out the need for the ARF to sustain the progresses of the CBMs that have been achieved thus far before moving to PD stage. The ARF must not be complacent of its achievements. As an inclusive Forum, the ARF depends entirely on the active contributions of its participants; therefore, active involvement of its participants in generating ideas, developing initiatives and taking up chairmanship in various ARF activities is key to ensuring a robust, substantive and proactive and action-oriented ARF. The issue of lack of coordination among different activities was also highlighted and more concrete steps should be taken to overcome this challenge. Some participants also noted that in the implementation of ARF CBMs, the Forum has not identified specific areas of CBMs to pursue.

11. The Dialogue discussed the significance of the ARF DOD in light of the development in the ADMM-Plus. The Dialogue recognised that defence institutions are well-placed to lead the practical cooperation in the ARF. The Dialogue observed that while the ADMM-Plus is an excellent framework for practical cooperation, it is predominantly participated by military officials. In this context, the ARF with its broader membership should play a key role in promoting civil-military synchronisation particularly in non-traditional security issues, which involves either civil or military or both civil and military.

12. The Dialogue suggested the approach to promote coordination among the ARF and the ADMM-Plus should be further examined. Practical engagement in the ARF through activities such as the ARF DiREx was cited as an example of close interaction among military and other agencies. Information sharing, exchange of views, as well as closer cooperation, between the ADMM-Plus and the ARF DOD were proposed. The Dialogue emphasised that increasing synergies between the ADMM-Plus and the ARF DOD would promote more efficient cooperation in both fora. The numerous existing initiatives undertaken by different ASEAN mechanisms should be rearranged to promote cohesiveness and complementarity. The role of the ASEAN Secretariat in coordinating activities of the ADMM-Plus and the ARF was also suggested. For this purpose, the Dialogue agreed that the ASEAN Secretariat should be provided with sufficient supports and resources.

13. The Dialogue discussed possible approaches to address the challenges in the promotion of the CBMs from the perspective of defence institutions. The Dialogue shared the view that information sharing should continue to be the main feature of the ARF DOD. The Dialogue noted the suggestion that the Chair or Co-Chairs of the ARF and ADMM-Plus activities should meet at the sidelines of their respective activities to coordinate and create a common ground for the future cooperation. The Dialogue also noted the support to the idea of inviting the Co-Chairs of ARF ISMs to attend the relevant ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group (EWG) meetings and vice versa. In order to move effectively to PD stage, the ARF needs to identify specific areas of PD to work on. The Dialogue emphasised that the ARF DOD should play supporting role in the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement.

14. The Dialogue observed that security cooperation among the defence institutions has been conducted through bilateral cooperation, multilateral cooperation, as well as joint/combined exercises. The Dialogue viewed that the ARF DOD and the ARF Security Policy Conference have contributed to the strengthening of bilateral cooperation. The Dialogue underscored that commitments of ARF participants in maintaining peace and stability in the region should be reinforced.

15. Thailand, Australia, Indonesia, USA, Vietnam, Pakistan, China presented their views on this agenda item. Their intervention papers appear as **ANNEXES E, F, G, H and I,**

Topic 2: Defence and Preventive Diplomacy: Regional Experiences and Challenges

16. The Dialogue acknowledged the continued efforts in promoting mutual trust and confidence through practical cooperation in the ARF. The Dialogue underscored the importance of information sharing among the ARF participants, between the ARF and other multilateral arrangements as well as between the existing ASEAN mechanisms in developing PD mechanism. The Dialogue noted that the ARF has contributed in minimising the differences in perceptions and interests among the countries in the region although it has not been directly involved in the resolution of conflicts. The Dialogue underscored that the success of PD application in the ARF would depend on the commitment of the participants to resolve conflicts peacefully. The Dialogue noted that the ARF DOD has offered opportunities to share information on interests, challenges and concerns among the ARF participants.

17. The Dialogue noted the experiences in the practice of PD in the region. In the ASEAN region, the ADMM was recognised as an important platform for promoting PD amongst defence institutions. Some participants envisaged that the effective cooperation under the ADMM might replace the bilateral defence cooperation in the future. The Dialogue also recognised the ADMM-Plus as an effective mechanism which has contributed to the wider partnership between ASEAN and the Plus countries on issues that affect peace and security in the region. In a broader context, the Dialogue also took note of the role of defence institutions in the peace processes in Mindanao and the southern Thailand.

18. The Dialogue was of the view that constructive dialogues and active participation in joint multilateral exercises and joint operations by the ARF participants would contribute to the enhancement of mutual trust which is a critical element of PD. In this context, the Dialogue noted the practical activities and dialogues undertaken in the framework of ADMM-Plus, Jakarta International Defence Dialogue, the Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD) and the newly established SLD Sherpa. The Dialogue reiterated the importance of utilising existing regional security mechanisms to maintain the open channel of communication.

19. The Dialogue identified the challenges faced by the ARF participants in the implementation of PD. In the ASEAN and ARF context, the Dialogue noted that limited resources and capacities, distance, complex environment and multidimensional security challenges, and engagement with regional organisations presented challenges for closer cooperation among countries in the Asia Pacific region.

20. The Dialogue concurred that preventive diplomacy should also be practiced in addressing non-traditional security issues, such as disaster relief, counter-terrorism and transnational crime, maritime security and peacekeeping operations. The Dialogue was of the view that the ARF DOD should continue discussion on the feasible approaches to implement PD in the future. The Dialogue welcomed the establishment of ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, which would complement the ARF's PD initiatives.

21. The Dialogue noted experiences of some ARF participants in implementing the concept of comprehensive security approach. Based on this concept, one security issue is not examined in isolation; rather, it is addressed comprehensively taking into consideration other aspects which contribute to its emergence. Some participants suggested that the elements of comprehensive security approach include the construction of military capability and the strengthening of dialogue between civilian and military agencies. In this context, the Dialogue concurred that the role of national defence institutions is

indispensable in the practice of PD, however, coordination and dialogue with civilian agencies at the national and international level is equally important.

22. The Dialogue noted the adoption of the ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy and the elements of the Work Plan. The Dialogue also examined the progress of implementation of the Work Plan. On the issue of developing an ARF Risk Reduction Centre, the Dialogue noted that it would be premature for the ARF to establish such Centre at this time. The Dialogue underscored that implementation of the Work Plan should be based on the principles of consultation, consensus and respect to sovereignty. The Dialogue acknowledged that the ARF should introduce PD activities gradually to ensure their effective implementation while the CBMs continue to be pursued.

23. The Dialogue took note of the development of the situation in the Korean Peninsula and commented that regardless of the tension, war and military conflict are not in the interests of any country in the region. The Dialogue emphasised the importance of resolving the issue peacefully by addressing the concerns of all parties.

24. Russia, Malaysia, India, Singapore, Canada, ROK, European Union, DPRK, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia and Mongolia presented their views on this agenda item. Their intervention papers appear as **ANNEXES J, K, L and M.**

AGENDA ITEM 4: OTHER MATTERS

25. Brunei Darussalam briefed the Dialogue on the preparation for the ARF DOD and 10th ASPC to be convened in Brunei Darussalam 21 – 24 May 2013. Brunei Darussalam encouraged the ARF participants to send their high level representatives to the 10th ASPC.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CLOSING REMARKS

Brunei Darussalam Co-Chair – Haji Adi Ihram Dato Paduka Haji Mahmud, Director of Defence Policy, Directorate of Defence Policy, Ministry of Defence, Brunei Darussalam

26. Haji Adi Ihram Dato Paduka Haji Mahmud congratulated RADM Li Ji as the Chinese Co-Chair on his effective co-chairmanship of the ARF DOD. He also commended the preparation of the ARF DOD agenda and the excellent organisation of the Dialogue.

China Co-Chair – RADM Li Ji, Deputy Chief, Foreign Affairs Office, Ministry of National Defence, People's Republic of China

27. In his closing remarks, RADM Li Ji, expressed satisfaction for the constructive discussion on CBMs and PD initiatives. He underscored that CBMs and PD are implemented in staged process in the ARF, but they are mutually complementary. The ARF needs to further enhance the CBMs and at the same time develops PD. The ARF should explore CBMs at the policy level while at the same time apply the CBMs concept in addressing existing conflicts in the region. He also expressed appreciation to the ARF participants for the active participation in the Dialogue.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

28. The Dialogue expressed appreciation for the candid and fruitful discussion. The Dialogue commended the effective co-chairmanship by the People's Republic of China and Brunei Darussalam which contributed to the success of the meeting. The Dialogue extended their gratitude for the Government of the People's Republic of China for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the meeting.