

**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT OF THE  
ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM DEFENCE OFFICIALS' DIALOGUE  
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, 27 NOVEMBER 2012**

1. The ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue was held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 27 November 2012. The Dialogue was co-chaired by Mr Mohd Sahrip Othman, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Defence Policy and Development), Ministry of Defence, Brunei Darussalam, and Senior Colonel Zhao Bao, Deputy Director-General, Foreign Affairs Office, Ministry of National Defence, People's Republic of China. Representatives from the Ministry of Defence of all ARF participants, except the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Timor Leste, attended the Dialogue. Representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat were also present. The List of Participants appears as **ANNEX A**.

**AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS**

2. In his opening remarks, Mr Mohd Sahrip Othman welcomed all delegations to the Dialogue. He emphasised the importance of the Dialogue as a venue to exchange views and discuss issues of mutual interest. He underlined that the topics chosen for the Dialogue, reflect the continuous interest among defence officials in the region. He elaborated on the expanding role of peacekeeping operations including rebuilding infrastructure, assisting reforms, undertaking disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR), supervising elections, providing humanitarian assistance, and assisting the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. He also highlighted the challenges in countering an increasingly sophisticated and technologically savvy terrorist threat, and he stressed the need to continue the sharing of knowledge, experiences ideas and strategies on the role of the military in counter-terrorism efforts. He expressed hope that discussion will add value to the knowledge we have on the two topics.
3. In his opening remarks, Senior Colonel Zhao Bao highlighted the spirit of regional cooperation to promote peace, stability and economic prosperity. He recalled that in the past, the region lived under the threat of nuclear holocaust and proxy wars, and only through concerted efforts of all nations in the region and through the various political, economic and security architectures that the region has moved beyond these threats. He expressed appreciation for the ARF as the most inclusive political and security architecture for peaceful dialogue in the region. He stressed the importance for such fora as the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue and the ARF Security Policy Conference to enable defence officials to regularly meet and discuss important issues in a friendly atmosphere.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

## **AGENDA ITEM 3: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN MULTILATERAL PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS**

5. The Dialogue exchanged experiences and lessons learned in participating in various peacekeeping operations, including in UN-led peacekeeping missions and International Monitoring Teams (IMTs) in the implementation of a ceasefire agreement. The Dialogue highlighted several challenges in conducting peacekeeping operations such as efficient use of limited resources, geographical conditions, engagement with regional organisations, the complexity of conflict environments, maintaining law and order, different standards in troop equipment and training, differences in culture, traditions, and unique skills among peacekeeping contingents, interoperability between contributing countries, clarity of mandate, effective command, control and communications, and the neutrality and impartiality of the peacekeeping troops.
6. The Dialogue took note the importance of training of troops prior to deployment in peacekeeping operations since the conduct of such operations differ than normal military operations. Military forces need to be fully prepared to handle particular issues in peacekeeping operations such as civilian policing duties and protection of human rights.
7. The Dialogue discussed several guidelines to participation in peacekeeping operations, such as a clear and enforceable mandate, clear rules of engagement, identifiable and accepted reporting authority, a clear division of responsibility, appropriate size, training and equipment commensurate with the mandate, and adequate financing.
8. The Dialogue recalled the recommendation of the 8<sup>th</sup> ASPC in Surabaya, Indonesia in June 2011 for the Dialogue to act as a conduit between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus. In this regard, the Dialogue was briefed by the Philippines and New Zealand as Co-Chairs of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations (ADMM-Plus EWG on PKO) on its activities since its inception in 2011. This EWG has conducted several meetings which discussed the legal aspects of peacekeeping operations, regional peacekeeping capability profile that includes contributing countries' specialised capabilities and the need to come up with an operational definition of the concept of protecting civilians, which is a core business of peacekeeping. The EWG viewed that force generation is an issue worthy of further discussions, and informed the Dialogue that the issue will be

discussed in the next Meeting, which will be hosted in New Zealand in the second quarter of 2013.

9. The Dialogue participants shared information on national peacekeeping training centres as well as the programmes and training syllabi offered to international participants to enable the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience on conducting and contributing to peacekeeping operations.
10. The Dialogue took note that the “whole-of-government” approach to peacekeeping operations is appropriate with the multidimensional aspect of current peacekeeping operations. The Dialogue also discussed national practices in the decision making process to contribute to UN-led peacekeeping missions.
11. Brunei Darussalam, Bangladesh, Canada, Cambodia, the European Union, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand shared their national experiences. The presentations appear as **ANNEX C**.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: ROLE OF MILITARY IN COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGIES**

12. The Dialogue shared national experiences on the role of military forces in counter-terrorism efforts. Participants were of the view that the events of 9/11 have shifted and expanded the role, function and organisation of the military from defence and war deterrence to pre-emption, among others to the formation of specialised units as the main anti-terror instrument. However, the Dialogue recognised that terrorism cannot be countered through ‘hard’ power alone and that ‘soft’ power is also required.
13. The Dialogue recognised the need to appropriately address the root causes of terrorism such as disaffection among weak or disadvantaged groups or communities and the radicalisation of groups or individuals which empower them to commit terror acts. In this regard, the Dialogue took note of de-radicalization efforts through rehabilitation programmes, reintegration of former terrorists, and counter-radicalization programmes. The aim of de-radicalization is to win the hearts and minds of communities in order for them to assist in this process. In light of this, several recommendations to implement de-radicalisation were suggested, including developing alternatives through partnerships with religious leaders and organisations, emphasising moderate teaching, support and promotion of peace, tolerance and moderation, developing media for social awareness, and developing strategies to neutralise radical media campaigns.
14. The Dialogue was informed of the activities of the ADMM-Plus Experts’ Working Group on Counter-Terrorism (ADMM-Plus EWG on CT) in coordinating multi-lateral cooperation among the ADMM-Plus countries. The

Dialogue viewed that the EWG is a useful platform to enhance interoperability and effectiveness of the military's counter-terrorism strategies.

15. The Dialogue shared perspectives on the current nature of terrorism, namely the transnational aspect of terrorism, the fragmentation and expansion of terrorist networks, the increasing trend of self-radicalisation through the internet and social media, and the availability of resources and material to conduct terrorist acts.
16. The Dialogue discussed the five fundamental areas of concentration by the military, which includes: 1) intelligence gathering information to gain insight; 2) support for counter-radicalization efforts; 3) counter-facilitation of Violent Extremist Organisations (VEOs); 4) disrupt or deny VEO capabilities and safe havens; and 5) capacity building and development in CT and civil-military coordination and cooperation.
17. The Dialogue took note of ASEAN's counter-terrorism strategies, including cooperation with ASEANAPOL and information and intelligence exchange on terrorists and terrorist organisations inter alia on detecting and deterring the use of materials of mass destruction, and on developing means to deter terrorist attacks on electronic and computer infrastructure.
18. Australia, Cambodia, the European Union, Indonesia, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and the United States shared their national views. The presentations appear as **ANNEX D**.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5: OTHER MATTERS**

19. Brunei Darussalam briefed the Dialogue on the calendar of activities for the ARF, ADMM and ADMM-Plus in 2013. The ARF DOD and the 10<sup>th</sup> ARF Security Policy Conference will be tentatively held on 20 and 21 May 2013, respectively.
20. The next ARF DOD will be tentatively held in March or April 2013 in China.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6: CLOSING REMARKS**

21. Senior Colonel Zhao Bao highlighted the friendly atmosphere of the Dialogue which was conducive to the fruitful and frank discussions on such important topics. He expressed hope that the atmosphere will be carried forward in future discussions in the Dialogue.
22. In his closing remarks, Mr Mohd Sahrip Othman summarised the outcomes of the discussion and expressed his appreciation to the ARF participants for their active participation and contribution to the Dialogue.

23. The Dialogue expressed appreciation to Brunei Darussalam for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality extended to all ARF participants.

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