

**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT
ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM DEFENCE OFFICIALS' DIALOGUE
YANGON, MYANMAR, 9 DECEMBER 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 2013-2014 was held in Yangon, Myanmar, on 9 December 2013. The Dialogue was co-chaired by Major General Tin Maung Win, Deputy Chief of the Armed Forces Training, Office of the Chief of Armed Forces Training, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Brigadier General Walter Huhn, European External Action Service (EEAS) of the European Union (EU). Representatives of the Ministry of Defence of all ARF participants except Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Sri Lanka attended the Dialogue. Representative of the ASEAN Secretariat was also present. The List of Participants appears as **ANNEX 1**.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS BY CO-CHAIRS

2. In his opening remarks, Major General Tin Maung Win, welcomed all delegations to Myanmar. He noted that this is the first time for Myanmar to co-chair the ARF DOD. He viewed that the national transformation that is taking place in Myanmar has made possible the cooperation between the Armed Forces of Myanmar with the other ARF participants. He recognised that the emerging new non-traditional security challenges such as trafficking in persons, drug trafficking, natural disaster and climate change could pose potential threats to the regional security. He touched on the two main topics to be discussed by the Dialogue, namely, 1) defence diplomacy and 2) comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and crisis management. He encouraged the ARF to develop defence diplomacy to address potential conflicts in the region. He also emphasised that in taking collective actions, the ARF should utilise existing mechanisms in the region. In this context, he reiterated the importance of coordination between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus and noted that Brunei Darussalam as the Chair of the ADMM-Plus would brief the Dialogue on the cooperation in the ADMM-Plus. He expressed hope that the Dialogue will contribute to the advancement of the ARF preventive diplomacy. His opening remarks appear as **ANNEX 2**.

3. At the outset, Brigadier General Walter Huhn, expressed condolences to the victims Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. As the Co-Chair of the Dialogue, he expressed his gratitude for the opportunity for the EU to co-chair the ARF DOD with Myanmar, which demonstrates the EU's commitment in supporting Myanmar as the ASEAN Chair in 2014. He informed the Dialogue that 2013 is the year of security and defence for the EU and that the EU Council for Security will convene on 19 December 2013. Against this background, he explained the EU's work on three interlinked objectives, namely, operational effectiveness,

enhanced defence capabilities, and strengthened European defence industry. He also stated that the EU has the capabilities to support regional cooperation in crisis management, although he also acknowledged the constraints posed by the current economic crisis. He recalled the close cooperation between the EU and ASEAN. He believed that the EU has an important role to play in the regional security cooperation such as in the area of counter-piracy. He reiterated that the EU firmly supports regional multilateral security mechanisms, in particular the ARF. His opening remarks appear as **ANNEX 3**.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

AGENDA ITEM 3: DEFENCE DIPLOMACY

5. The Dialogue expressed condolences and sympathy to the victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. The Dialogue reaffirmed its support to the Government of the Philippines for an early recovery of the affected population and areas.

6. The Dialogue underlined that the defence diplomacy is an interface between defence cooperation and preventive diplomacy and that it is an effort in building and sustaining the good relationship and partnership with the neighbouring countries. The Dialogue observed that defence diplomacy contributes to maintaining of security environment, attainment of economic interests, prevention of disputes and conflicts and facilitating response to national emergencies that require international assistance. With proper defence resources and advantages, defence diplomacy can complement political diplomacy and balance the soft and hard powers in international diplomacy.

7. The Dialogue discussed activities in defence diplomacy. Ministerial visits, service-to-service dialogues, bilateral meetings and staff talks, regional defence forum, international personnel exchanges, joint exercises, training exchanges, outreach, language trainings were among the activities of defence diplomacy discussed by the Dialogue. Defence and military bilateral cooperation in border management through regular dialogues and joint patrols in some ASEAN Member States were mentioned. The Dialogue emphasised that defence diplomacy does not include military operations.

8. Some ARF participants shared information on the various existing tools and mechanisms for defence diplomacy and conflict management at the national level. The collocation between defence, conflict management and crisis management was mentioned. The Dialogue recognised the need to develop defence diplomacy and to effectively utilise these tools to strengthen the capacity of countries in conflict and crisis management.

9. The Dialogue noted that the signing of peace agreement is one of the success indicators in conflict management. The Dialogue suggested the process of continued dialogue should support the implementation of peace agreement. Some participants were of the view the implementation of peace agreement is equally challenging taking into consideration the efforts towards the conclusion of a peace agreement. The Aceh and Mindanao peace processes were cited as successful examples of mediation.

10. The Dialogue discussed the importance of partnership in response to crisis situation. Regional and bilateral partnerships with individual nations as well as international and regional organisations in capacity-building in this context were mentioned. The Dialogue was of the view that the ARF is the most inclusive forum to promote multilateral partnership. The Dialogue noted the progress of the practical cooperation among the defence and military through the ADMM-Plus.

11. The EU, Australia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Thailand presented their views on this agenda item. Their intervention papers appear as **ANNEXES 5-9**.

AGENDA ITEM 4: COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO CONFLICT PREVENTION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

12. The Dialogue discussed definitions and tools of comprehensive approaches to conflict prevention and crisis management as well as its complexities. Some participants suggested that comprehensive approach is developed on the premise that security and development are interlinked. The link between defence, diplomacy and developments was underscored in this context. Some participants suggested comprehensive approach should be based on the promotion of the culture of sharing and understanding between nations and organisations.

13. The Dialogue exchanged views on civil-military partnership in strengthening comprehensive response to conflict and crisis. The readiness for the civilians and military to be deployed to conflict situations and the strengthening of civilian capabilities for such deployments were highlighted. The comprehensive approach does not intend to change the structure of the civilian institutions in conflict prevention and crisis management.

14. The Dialogue shared experiences in comprehensive crisis management and conflict prevention. Activities such as interfaith dialogues, development of guidelines on response to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, inclusion in the national legal instruments of civil-military collaboration, civilian-military trainings, and civilian strategic planning were among initiatives identified in the comprehensive crisis management. The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) as well as bilateral cooperation between some ARF participant and NATO and the African Union in Afghanistan and Africa respectively, were cited as cases in point of comprehensive approach towards conflict prevention and crisis management.

15. The Dialogue discussed the importance of clear communication, confidence-building, common understanding on the sets of rule, continuing military engagement, high-level engagements at the leaders' level and development of a set of common guidelines in the comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and crisis management. The Dialogue also noted the views from the participants on the importance of commitment of all parties in the dispute to implement agreement concluded in a conflict situation.

16. The Dialogue took note of the partnership between some ARF participants in capacity-building projects on comprehensive crisis management. At the regional level, the Dialogue suggested that multilateral defence dialogues and cooperation also contribute to the comprehensive approach to crisis management. Participants made references to the ARF DOD, ADMM-Plus, the Shangri La Dialogue, the Seoul Security Dialogue and the Northeast Asia Security Dialogue in this respect. The Dialogue noted the invitation by the EU for the Common Security and Defence Policy Orientation Seminar for ASEAN Member States on 11-14 March 2013, to be organised under the ASEAN-EU cooperation framework.

17. Under this agenda item, the Dialogue also welcomed Malaysia and China to co-chair the ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREX) 2015 and encouraged the active support from the defence officials in the preparation and implementation of the Exercise.

18. Myanmar, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, United States, Viet Nam, and China presented their views on this agenda item. Their intervention papers appear as **ANNEXES 10-15**.

AGENDA ITEM 5: BRIEFING ON THE ADMM-PLUS

19. Brunei Darussalam briefed the Dialogue on the outcomes of the 2nd ADMM-Plus that was convened in Bandar Seri Begawan on 29 August 2013. Brunei Darussalam highlighted that the Defence Ministers were pleased with the progress of cooperation in the ADMM-Plus in the five priority areas, which have successfully forged practical cooperation among the defence forces. The Ministers also noted the completed ADMM-Plus Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief/Military Medicine (HADR/MM), the ADMM-Plus Counter-Terrorism Exercise (CTX) and the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Field Training Exercise (FTX). The ADMM-Plus Peacekeeping Operations Table-Top Exercise (TTX) will be held in February 2014. The Ministers reemphasised the strategic importance of the ADMM-Plus and recalled the decision of the 6th ADMM to convene every two years. The Ministers also reaffirmed ASEAN leadership in the ADMM-Plus process. The Ministers agreed to promote capacity-building through greater engagement and interactions and enhanced interoperability through training and joint exercises. The Ministers also agreed to encourage the defence and military

establishments of the ADMM-Plus countries to establish practical measures to avoid misunderstanding and undesirable incidents at sea. The Ministers also agreed to establish the new Experts' Working Group on the Humanitarian Mine Action to be co-chaired by Viet Nam and India. The Ministers also reaffirmed the direction of the ASEAN Leaders during the ASEAN Summit in April 2013 to promote synergy between regional mechanisms, including that of the ADMM-Plus and the ARF. The Ministers also underlined the importance of developing procedures to synchronise efforts between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus, in particular to coordinate activities and exercises. The briefing appears as **ANNEX 16**.

20. The Dialogue welcomed the progress of the ADMM-Plus in promoting practical activities. Some participants congratulated Brunei Darussalam for its leadership in the ADMM-Plus.

AGENDA ITEM 5: OTHER MATTERS

6. 1. Operational Issues

21. Drawing on the views and experiences shared by the ARF participants, the Dialogue viewed that the ARF could identify common elements in the issues of defence diplomacy and comprehensive conflict prevention and conflict management.

22. The Dialogue noted the suggestion to review the effectiveness of the existing ARF frameworks in addressing to security challenges, particularly in the context of responses to HADR.

6. 2. Date and Venue for the Next ARF DOD

23. The Dialogue noted that the next ARF DOD will be held in Brussels on 7-8 April 2014.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CLOSING REMARKS BY CO-CHAIRS

24. Brigadier General Walter Huhn in his closing remarks appreciated the contributions and proposals by the ARF participants with respect to the ARF defence cooperation. He reiterated the EU's invitation for the Common Security and Defence Policy Orientation Seminar for ASEAN Member States on 11-14 March 2013. He also extended invitation to all ARF participants to the next ARF DOD in Brussels on 7-8 April 2014 and informed that the next ARF DOD will discuss, among others, the issue of maritime security. He expressed his appreciation to the Myanmar Co-Chair and to all ARF participants for the fruitful discussion.

25. In his closing remarks, Major General Tin Maung Win, expressed his appreciation to all ARF participants for the active participation and contributions in the discussion. He viewed that the discussion of the Dialogue led the ARF DOD play a more active role in supporting the ARF preventive diplomacy initiative. He also expressed condolences to the victims of the Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. He viewed that the ARF DOD has contributed to peace and security in the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

26. The Dialogue expressed appreciation for the candid and fruitful discussion. The Dialogue commended the effective co-chairmanship by Myanmar and the EU which contributed to the success of the meeting. The Dialogue extended their gratitude for the Government of the Myanmar for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the meeting.

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