

Co-Chairs' Summary Report
ARF Workshop on Multi-Year Strategic Exercise Plan
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 9-10 April 2015

Introduction

1. Approved by the 21st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 10 August 2014, the ARF Workshop on Multi-Year Strategic Exercise Plan was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 9-10 April 2015. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Garry Dunbar, Assistant Director Civil-Military Policy in the Stabilisation and Recovery Branch in DFAT's Humanitarian Division, Mr. Mohd Ariff Baharom, Undersecretary of the Disaster Management Division, National Security Council, and Commodore Ian Middleton, Regional and Multinational Engagement Advisor for Strategic Planning and Policy (J5), U.S. Pacific Command.
2. ARF Participants from Australia, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, the EU, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, the United States, and Vietnam attended the workshop, along with representatives from UNOCHA, the IFRC, and the World Food Programme. The non-paper capturing key discussions from the workshop, the agenda, and the list of participants appear as **ANNEX 1**, **ANNEX 2**, and **ANNEX 3**.

Opening Remarks

3. On behalf of the government of Malaysia, Mr. Mohd Ariff Baharom delivered the opening remarks, where he emphasized the need for streamlining regional exercises and promoting synergy between disaster relief exercises in the region. He stated the intent of the workshop was to identify issues and gaps in regional HADR capacity and form recommendations, but the workshop is not a decision-making forum—any such decisions will be made by the relevant ASEAN bodies. He also referenced the first meeting of ASEAN Technical Working Group on Civil-Military Coordination (TWG on CIMIC) by the ACDM Preparedness and Response Working Group held in the same venue on 7 April 2015, where participants discussed the streamlining of existing exercises and the possibility to combine some of the exercises.
4. Mr. Garry Dunbar, the Australian co-chair, welcomed the workshop and emphasized the needs to assist affected countries hit by disaster. Furthermore, he encouraged the delegates to actively participate and come forward with innovative solutions for how to streamline regional HADR exercises and initiatives.
5. U.S. co-chair Commodore Ian Middleton detailed challenges related to exercises and member participation, including operating in resource-constrained environments. He stressed the need to improve interoperability and the increased ability to support exercises with better long-range planning.

Workshop Structure and Achieving the Desired Outcomes for the Workshop

6. The facilitator, Mr. James Welsh, detailed the purpose and goals for the workshop, which include increasing exercise efficiencies with considerations for limited resources, promoting synergy between ASEAN bodies engaged in disaster management, increasing capacities and capabilities for disaster response, and identifying gaps and priorities in regional exercises.

SESSION 1

7. *Why Are We Exercising? What Are the Gaps?* Supt. Shahrin Ahmad – Malaysia. Supt. Ahmad began by noting that disaster response is about speed and response time, with the need to address how assisting countries can best help affected countries in spite of numerous barriers: language, legal, cultural, security, etc. He mentioned the 2015 Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx), which more closely resembles an actual disaster scenario this year, and Malaysia's annual national level exercise, International Search and Rescue Malaysia. This exercise is a joint exercise between the SMART Team and Singapore and Brunei rescue teams that tests the response efficiency, coordination, equipment, and existing SOPs. He also stated that with more training and exercise opportunities, countries will be better prepared to respond. His presentation is attached as ANNEX 4.

8. *Regional Planning Frameworks – the AADMER*, Ms. Adelina Kamal, ASEC, Head of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division. Ms. Adelina began by welcoming the upcoming ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) Chair, Mr. Ross Sovanth from the NDMO of Cambodia. She then described the AADMER as the regional policy backbone and common platform for disaster management in ASEAN region and the acknowledgment by at least three summit-level ASEAN meetings that it is the common platform for disaster management. Ms. Adelina detailed the 5-year AADMER Work Programme, developed and overseen by the ACDM, and she mentioned the ASEAN Regional Disaster Exercise (ARDEX) as a way to test the SOPs and the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP). She noted the significant developments in improving multi-sectoral coordination and establishment of a Joint Task Force to promote synergy and coordination on HADR in streamlining civ-mil coordination. Finally, in addressing ASEAN centrality, she reiterated how the ACDM needs to be consulted at the earliest stage possible when ARF or ADMM Plus members generate ideas for new initiatives. Her presentation is attached as ANNEX 5.

Lessons learned from recent disasters

9. *Typhoon Haiyan*, Mr. Romeo Fajardo, Office of Civil Defense (Philippines). After providing an overview of this disaster, Mr. Fajardo stated that hazard mapping and risk awareness systems are needed. Additionally, the Multi-National Coordination Center (MNCC) that was established immediately after the typhoon greatly assisted in expediting flow of emergency relief supplies. His presentation is attached as ANNEX 6.

10. *Great East Japan Earthquake/Tsunami*, Kenichi Katagiri, Japan MFA.

Mr. Katagiri gave an overview of the response to the Great Japan Earthquake in 2011 by describing the DR operation in Japan and international relief efforts from overseas. During the response to this disaster, 163 countries and 43 relevant entities offered to provide relief money and supplies, and 24 countries and areas deployed their rescue or medical teams to Japan. The government of Japan and relevant organizations, including the Japan International Cooperation agency (JICA), directed their efforts to the coordination for receiving and allocating international relief. Regarding future challenges, Mr. Katagiri suggested the need to find a more efficient practice in receiving international assistance and collaborating with relevant international bodies. Mr. Katagiri also mentioned that the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) held last month in Sendai (one of the affected cities by the earthquake) concluded successfully by adopting the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.”

Lessons Learned by International Organizations

11. *UNOCHA*, Mr. Oliver Lacey-Hall, Head UNOCHA Asia Pacific.

Mr. Oliver Lacey-Hall provided a thorough and frank discussion highlighting the areas where exercise improvements could be made and also provided an update on the regional consultative group. For regional exercises, clear objectives must first establish the purpose of the exercises, and they must be built on lessons learned from previous exercises. For the planning processes, participants in the exercise need to be involved in the initial, mid, and final planning conferences to provide the best and most realistic training. During the exercises, participants must know that it is okay to fail, as it is better to fail in a training environment than during actual HADR events. He underscored the strain on resources for his small staff to support numerous parallel events in the region, which indicates the need for streamlining exercises between the various regional fora. Regarding the Regional Consultative Group, Mr. Lacey-Hall highlighted the need for effective civ-mil coordination and the use of foreign military assets in DR operations. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 7.

12. *IFRC*, Mr. Martin Fuller, Head of Operations for Asia Pacific.

Mr. Fuller described the challenges in coordinating an increasing number of stakeholders, actors, laws, procedures, and organizations present in DR operations. As a consequence, they can become messy and require simulation exercises to be planned well and to be flexible in their execution. All stakeholders need to be involved throughout all phases of exercises, participants must understand that it is okay to fail, exercises should be exhausting and challenging, they must use existing coordination mechanisms (national and international), they should use real scenarios, and they should occur regularly (although not *too* frequently). The exercises also provide a chance to test command and control, relevance, SOPs, and international responses, and they provide good opportunities to network with the other actors involved in relief operations. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 8.

13. *Break-Out Groups.*

Discussions varied between the three groups, but they focused on the needs of affected countries, assisting countries, and international organizations involved in relief operations. Exercise complexity, objectives (political and technical), regional coordination of exercises, exercise cycles, and scope of exercises were other topics of discussion.

SESSION 2

14. *ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx) 2015,* Mr. Shahril Nizam Abdul Malek, Malaysia.

Mr. Abdul Malek provided an overview of the planning processes for the 2015 ARF DiREx, to be held in Kedah, Malaysia in May and co-chaired with China. The DiREx will consist of a table top exercise (TTX), field training exercises (FTX), and an after action review (AAR). He noted that the co-chairs postponed the date of the DiREx to incorporate the advice of members at the Initial Planning Conference (IPC) and make the DiREx more robust and challenging, with a greater focus on field training exercises (FTX). Mr. Abdul Malek identified other planning challenges, such as the short planning time available of 6 months from the 21st ARF Ministerial in August to the original planned exercise date. He said that approximately 2300 participants from 35 agencies are expected, of which half the participants will be from Malaysia. His remarks are attached as **ANNEX 9**.

15. *ADMM+ AHMX Co-chair,* Mr. Yusuke Ishihara, Japan.

Mr. Ishihara discussed Japan's recent work with Lao PDR, Thailand, and Russia within ADMM Plus and provided an update to the 2014-2017 HADR Work Plan. He discussed the findings of the Expert Working Group (EWG) meeting held in Tokyo, which discussed the response following Typhoon Haiyan. Two of the main points from the meeting included the need to clarify the legal status of assisting military forces and how to streamline custom, immigration and quarantine requirements. He also highlighted the need for the development of an ADMM Plus HADR SOP. The first table top exercise of the current three-year work plan will be held in Lao PDR in August. Mr. Ishihara also highlighted seven issues that Japan has come away with through its work on the ADMM Plus: exercises should not be conducted for their own sake; the main focus should be on military-to-military coordination; exercises should be based on previous experiences (Typhoon Haiyan and the Japan earthquake, for example); they should have early and phased announcements; they should support ASEAN centrality; they should capitalize on previous multilateral efforts; and they need to include a follow up after the exercise is complete. His remarks are attached as **ANNEX 10**.

16. *Mentawai Megathrust,* Mr Medi Herlianto, Indonesia, BNPB.

Mr. Harlianto gave an overview of Indonesia's Mentawai Megathrust Disaster Relief Exercise last year. The exercise included a Command Post Exercise and a Field Training Exercise, with 3700 personnel from 17 countries and various international organizations participating. The goal of the exercise was to strengthen collaboration and partnership in disaster response, and it focused on establishing effective information sharing

mechanisms, enhancing capacities, cooperation and partnership in disaster management, streamlining the receiving of civilian and military foreign aid, and integrating a command system that incorporates different countries. One of the focuses of the field exercise was the community self-evacuation, where early warning systems are put in place so that villages in remote areas can evacuate themselves to higher ground without needing to wait for assistance from authorities. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 11.

17. *East Asia Summit Statement on Rapid Disaster Response*, Mr. Luke Brown, Emergency Management Australia.

Mr. Brown discussed Emergency Management Australia's recent work with the Philippines and Indonesia. He highlighted the statement that Australia and the Philippines produced, which outlined their findings in response to Typhoon Haiyan. He noted that significant credit must be given to the frameworks the statement was built on, such as the KL Declaration, EAS Ca-am Hua Hin Statement and the EAS Indonesia Australia Initiative. The Statement reaffirmed the three principles of sovereignty, mutual agreement before assistance, and cost effectiveness of disaster risk reduction. Mr. Brown also spoke about the need for HADR exercises to be an environment in which mistakes can be made, and a circle of trust needs to be built amongst officials in the ARF so that if mistakes do occur, they won't be covered up and the lessons can be learned. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 12.

DAY 2 SESSION 2

18. *Civil-Military*. Mr. Scott Cooper, Australian Civil Military Centre.

Mr. Cooper discussed recent developments in HADR responses, with more actors and more tasks that are shaping a new paradigm. The plan is not just a civil or a military one, but is both a whole of government approach (unity of purpose) and a comprehensive approach (unity of understanding). He highlighted the importance of relationship development before crises occur and how people need to be invested in proactive, multiagency engagements to employ collaborative, flexible approaches. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 13.

19. *Multinational Coordination Center (MNCC)*. Mr. Romeo F. Fajardo (Philippines), Major Hiroaki Funata (Japan).

Mr. Fajardo emphasized the unique capabilities that militaries bring to HADR operations, but they also noted the requirement to have a robust coordination capacity required to effectively use military assets. He provided an example of C-130 operations during Typhoon Yolanda and how several aircraft would be holding so that several others already on the ground could be unloaded to make the ramp space available. During exercises, MNCCs should be specifically tailored to match the exercise and/or a specific country for the best training.

Maj Funata underscored the challenges of building an effective MNCC, which needs well-developed SOPs in order to operate most effectively.

20. Military-Military: ASEAN Militaries Ready Group (AMRG) on HADR. Mr. Khairil Shah Mat Lazim, Ministry of Defence, Malaysia.

Mr. Lazim underscored the large role that militaries play in disaster response operations and acknowledged the roles and authority of the AADMER, AHA Centre, SASOP, and the Joint Task Force. He then described the new concept behind the AMRG, which would be a rapidly deployable combined military DR task force under a single ASEAN banner. Elements of this concept include pre-identified military personnel with common training for better interoperability, a database with national points of contact, military representatives assigned to the AHA Centre, and strengthened arrangements for logistical support. While the AMRG concept is still very new and needs to be developed further, the need for this capability exists in the region, and there is a high level of interest in the value it could add to DR operations.

21. Coordinating Within and Beyond ASEAN & the AHA Centre. One ASEAN One Response. Mr. Said Faisal, Head of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division.

Mr. Faisal stated that the AHA Centre was established for the purpose of facilitating cooperation and coordination among various parties. The AHA Centre has strict protocols, and its representatives cannot enter a country until their help is requested. Once they arrive, they are then under the command of the affected country's National Disaster Management Office. Mr. Faisal stressed that the AHA Centre is still young (3 years old) and that they still need more time to fully develop their capabilities, yet he is proud of their current achievements. Their mantra is to have any and all information ready before it is requested, and their systems are available to all member states via the internet (DRMS) and to the public (ADInet). They want to see ASEAN respond as one inside the region, and they would eventually like to be able to assist countries outside of ASEAN. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 14.

22. Pre-Positioned HADR Material. Mr. Belkacem Benzaza, Director WFP/UN Humanitarian Relief Depot.

Mr. Benzaza began with an overview of the locations for the six UNHRD in Panama, Italy, Spain, Ghana, UAE and Malaysia. These stockpiles are able to assist in disasters worldwide by diverting stocks from the nearest depot. The depots provide a one-stop shop offering procurement, free storage, transport, handling and Rapid Response Teams, which are able to assist within 24-48 hours of notification. Recently, the UNHRD has been heavily involved with the Ebola crisis in Africa and the floods in Malaysia. Typhoon Haiyan was also a major learning event as three of their depots (Malaysia, UAE and Italy) were involved in aiding the disaster. Mr. Benzaza made several recommendations, including airport preparedness in order to more effectively use smaller airports. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 15.

23. Information Sharing, Mr. Jack Androski PACOM J9.

Mr. Androski introduced PACOM's technological tools that have been developed for disaster management operations and emphasized that information sharing is the key to mapping the human terrain of the all-hazard environment. PACOM's mantra is to connect communities of interest with information, and to connect information with communities and practitioners. They have developed these capabilities through the Pacific Disaster Center's *Disaster Aware* program, which uses Google Earth with information overlays from over 17,000 different sources. Consequently, users receive real-time disaster updates, economic data and local humanitarian resources in a user-friendly manner. These maps can show storm zones and ongoing operations within the areas of tropical storms, creating a shared information awareness picture between the various actors. His remarks are attached as ANNEX 16.

SESSION 3

24. *Discussion Related to Strategic Calendar*, Mr. Jim Welsh, moderator.

While the original workshop goal was to create a recommended exercise calendar, Mr. Welsh noted the significant challenges and the reason why it was not possible in just two days. The challenges involved with identifying capacities and capabilities, terminology, principles, cycles, ownership, endorsement, scope, and timing will all need to be explored, further defined, developed, and endorsed by the relevant ASEAN bodies before such a calendar can become reality. However, the achievements of this workshop will provide a solid basis for such an effort, including clear objectives/purposes, principles for harmonization, and capacities, and it reemphasized using the AHA Centre as the operational engine for AADMER.

25. *Collated Suggestions from Presentations and Plenary Discussions to Formulate Steps and Principles for Harmonization*. Mr. Garry Dunbar, Australian co-chair.

As Mr. Gary Dunbar stated in his opening comments, he wished for a workshop where an open and frank discussion would address both lessons experienced and lesson learned. He was very happy at the level of openness that the participants showed, even in sensitive subjects. Mr. Dunbar also mentioned that further planning into the entire exercise management process, from design to outcomes/lessons learned, is one of the keys to future success.

SESSION 4

26. *Presentation of Recommendations*, Undersecretary Mohd Ariff Baharom, Malaysian co-chair.

Mr. Baharom stated that the next step forward will be to first report the completion of this workshop at the ARF Inter-Sessional Support Group (ARF ISG) in Tokyo next month. The co-chairs also recognize that this workshop is just the first step in synergizing disaster relief exercises in the ARF, ADMM Plus, and other regional fora. As Joint Task Force recommendations are anticipated to be released shortly, the co-chairs will await

further guidance from the relevant ASEAN bodies for what the next appropriate steps after this workshop will be and will allow time for the necessary ASEAN processes to unfold.

27. *Closing Comments*, Commodore Ian Middleton.

Commodore Middleton mentioned this workshop was a good start, yet there is a lot of work yet to be done. He stated that we will be eagerly awaiting the outcomes from relevant ASEAN HADR meetings and offered the co-chairs' assistance for the next steps following this workshop. Because synchronization does not happen on its own, Commodore Middleton remarked that the diligence required to build exercises into a comprehensive plan is already happening and will continue. He concluded by also thanking the Malaysian and Australian co-chairs, key individuals, and participants for their open and fruitful discussions.