

**Co-Chairs' Summary Report of the
14th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief
Tokyo, Japan, 12-13 February 2015**

Introduction

1. Approved by the 21st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar on 10 August 2014, the 14th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) was convened in Tokyo, Japan on 12-13 February 2015. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Katsuro Kitagawa, Director of National Security Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Chum Hre, Director of Relief and Resettlement Department, Ministry of Social Welfare of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Ms. Luo Xin, Director of Multilateral Affairs Division, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

2. All ARF participants except Mongolia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea attended the Meeting. Representatives of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the ASEAN Secretariat were also present. The Agenda and the List of Participants appear as ANNEX 1 and ANNEX 2.

Welcome Remarks

3. On behalf of the Government of Japan, Mr. Shingo Yamagami, Ambassador of Policy Planning and International Security Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, delivered welcome remarks. He extended his deep condolences to those who suffered from the natural and man-made disasters recently occurred in the region. Referring to Japan's experiences with major disasters, including the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, he emphasized that Japan will play a leading role in international efforts for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster relief as a part of its actions of under the "Proactive Contribution to Peace". In addition, he also touched upon the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) to be held in Sendai, Japan in March 2015, where the post-Hyogo Framework for Action is expected to be adopted. He expressed hope that the Meeting will provide the participants with an invaluable opportunity to exchange their experiences and lessons learned and to explore opportunities for further cooperation in the area of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR). The welcome remarks are attached as ANNEX 3.

Opening Remarks by Co-Chairs

4. Mr. Kitagawa emphasized that the ISM on DR has historically played a key role in confidence building in the Asia-Pacific by promoting more robust international and regional cooperation on HA/DR. He expressed his hope that the meeting, as previous ones, will serve as an opportunity for the participants to have fruitful discussions on the future direction of practical international cooperation in policies and projects of HA/DR.

5. Mr. Chum Hre expressed his condolences to the Japanese people on the Great East Japan Earthquake. He explained that disasters have infrastructural and economic effects in addition to the loss of lives. Given the fact that Myanmar is prone to disasters, such as cyclones, he recognized the importance of promoting international cooperation in disaster response as well as in minimizing disaster risk. In this regard, he said that the WCDRR is expected to have fruitful discussions, propelling future projects and initiatives on these issues.

6. Ms. Luo reaffirmed that ARF has become one of the most effective platforms in the region for minimizing risk and damage of natural disasters. She emphasized that given the climate change, which has made natural disasters in the region more frequent and catastrophic, the discussion at the meeting is increasing its importance. She affirmed that, on these issues, China will continue to deepen cooperation and share knowledge with the region and the international community.

1 Contribution to the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR)

1.1 Mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction: Japan's Efforts

7. Mr. Kenichi Suganuma, Ambassador in Charge of the WCDRR, explained Japan's efforts in mainstreaming disaster risk reduction (DRR) in the international community. He reminded the delegates that 90% of victims of natural disasters were citizens of developing countries – the most vulnerable take the brunt of natural disasters, and major disasters could wipe out all the fruits of past development efforts in these countries. He emphasized that DRR has been proven to be effective in ensuring sustainable development and resilient community; One US Dollar investment in these initiatives saves seven US Dollars in recovery efforts. He emphasized that the WCDRR would be a historic opportunity for mainstreaming DRR by establishing an effective Post-Hyogo Framework. The framework is expected to be a significant step in incorporating DRR into the “post-2015 development agenda” as a priority issue. Several key elements, such as investment in long-term perspective and strong partnership between central governments and other stakeholders were introduced. He emphasized, in particular, the concept of “Build Back Better,” which focuses on the recovery and rehabilitation phases, as an important opportunity to build more resilient infrastructure and community to minimize disaster risk. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 4**.

1.2 Japan's and JICA's Efforts for Disaster Risk Reduction: Direction and Accelerating Implementation of Post HFA

8. Mr. Kimio Takeya, Senior Advisor of JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) presented Japan and JICA's efforts for DRR. He explained that, being geographically prone to natural disasters such as typhoons and earthquakes, he explained that Japan has a history of large-scale civil and public projects for DRR to overcome or coexist with disasters, and also of using disaster as an opportunity to "Build Back Better"; Japan has been continually revising building codes, design criteria and government institutional structure in the aftermath of major disasters to make the society more resilient.

9. Mr. Takeya mentioned, as a result of continuous international discussion on DRR, the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) focuses on "creating a more resilient world" – in other words, emphasizing DRR and infrastructure development, one of its efforts is to build better infrastructure in the aftermath of disasters. He pointed out, however, that the HFA puts too much emphasis on early warning as its priority; He suggested that the Post-HFA should take more holistic approach to minimize the risk of disaster. Mr. Takeya emphasized the importance of convincing policy-makers that pre-disaster prevention and resilience spending are very effective and cost-efficient. He introduced JICA's active contribution to the drafting process of Post-HFA to include pre-disaster prevention into the top priorities of it as well as to share lessons learned from Japan's experience in "Build Back Better" after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

10. Moreover, he explained the importance of education on DRR referring to the case of Kamaishi, one of the cities hit by the Earthquake, where middle school students took the initiative to evacuate younger children after the Earthquake and decided to move to higher ground on their own initiative. His presentation is attached as ANNEX 5.

Open Discussion

11. The Meeting welcomed that some participants echoed the importance of DRR for both each state and the international community. The expressions of their intentions to actively contributing to the WCDRR with high level political commitment were also welcomed.

12. The Meeting discussed the importance to enhance the local government's capacity to respond to disasters with more effective HA/DR operation, while it also noted that the empowerment of central government is most important in terms of mainstreaming DRR within government policies. The Meeting also noted some participants' remarks on the importance of special attention for the disaster prone countries, development of countries' resiliencies, traditional and local knowledge and practices, risk literacy and education to improve the capacity of diverse stakeholders including children, the youth and persons with disability.

13. The Meeting welcomed the efforts by some participants to contribute to international coordination as well as to support affected countries and regions by disasters.

2 Regional Frameworks, Activities and Cooperation on HA/DR

2.1 Updates on Upcoming Activities

2.1.1 Briefing on ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx) 2015

14. Mr. Shahril Nizam Abdul Malek, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, gave updates on the preparation for the ARF DiREx 2015 to be co-hosted by Malaysia and China in May 2015 by reporting the outcome of the Final Planning Conference (FPC) held in Malaysia on 3-5 February. He reported, at the FPC, the participants had fruitful discussions and reached a consensus on the detailed arrangement of the exercise. He emphasized, in particular, that AAR (After Action Review) and TTX (Table Top Exercise) will be arranged in a more practical manner. He expressed high expectation that the exercise will be successfully conducted with contribution from the ARF countries including deployment of assets. He encouraged participants to promptly submit their official registrations.

15. Mr. Song Jianming, First Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, emphasized the significance of the ARF DiREx 2015 and encouraged all ARF participants to participate in the exercise in various ways. He introduced the Chinese agencies that will participate in the exercise and urged all participating countries and organizations to submit application to the hosting countries as soon as possible.

2.1.2 Briefing on ARF Workshop on Disaster Relief and Emergency Response/ ARF Workshop on Urban Emergency

16. The delegate from China Earthquake Administration briefed about its organization, including the China International Search and Rescue Team (CISAR), giving participants the detailed history of major earthquakes in China as a background of the institutional development. In this context, he introduced the outcomes of the ARF Workshop on Earthquake Relief and Emergency Rescue conducted on 23-28 November 2014 in Beijing, in which all participants shared the need to strengthen DRR and pledged to further enhance international cooperation. He expressed his hope for the future opportunities for the ARF members to exchange related expertise, technologies, and ideas even more actively.

17. Mr. He Zhao, Staff of the Fire Department of the Ministry of Public Security of China spoke about the emergency rescue system in China, including the organization of the public security

bureaucracy. He made a presentation on, in particular, the Shanghai Fire Training Center, a facility which provides simulation training for many different kinds of situations, including psychological training. Moreover, he touched upon the ARF Workshop on Urban Emergency Rescue, which is expected to be held in the next inter-sessional year. He explained that the aim of the Workshop is to reach a consensus about urban emergency response, and to develop a strong communication system in the future. He encouraged the ARF participants to send a team of four to seven members composed of people from the foreign ministry, academics, and relevant fields. His presentation is attached as ANNEX 6.

2.1.3 Briefing on ARF Workshop on Multi-year Strategic Exercise Plan

18. Mr. Reynold Tagorda, Deputy, Southeast Asia Policy, Headquarters Pacific Command of the United States gave an overview of the ARF Workshop on Multi-Year Strategic Exercise Plan, which is planned to be co-hosted by Malaysia, Australia, and the United States in early April. He emphasized that the Workshop is designed to harmonize ASEAN disaster relief efforts and to conduct exercises calibrated to regional needs and capacity. For comprehensive coordination, he encouraged wide range of stakeholders –ARF members, members of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), co-chairs of the ARF ISM on DR and ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting Plus Expert Working Group on HA/DR (ADMM Plus EWG on HA/DR), and relevant international bodies – to participate in the Workshop. There are three proposed objectives: 1) understanding the needs in regional HA/DR capacity, 2) establishing principles for harmonization of exercise scheduling, and 3) proposing a notional calendar for exercises out to 2020. The presentation is attached as ANNEX 7.

19. Mr. Shahril Nizam Abdul Malek, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia further noted that the workshop shall not be a decision-making forum for the issues and needs identified, as such decisions shall be made by the concerned ASEAN bodies, namely the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and the Joint Task Force on HADR. Any outcomes or recommendations of this workshop shall not be considered as decisions of the workshop participants or the countries/organisations that they represent.

2.2 Developments of Regional Frameworks

2.2.1 ASEAN Cooperation on Disaster Management

20. Ms. Adelina Kamal, Head of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance of ASEAN Secretariat, presented the whole picture of ASEAN cooperation on disaster management. She began by touching on the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and the ACDM, the main sectorial body of AADMER. She stated that these

frameworks have been recognized to be a common platform for disaster management in ASEAN, covering all phases of disaster management and that AADMER has gone from policy discussions to actions on the ground. The ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ERAT) was established to support emergency response and disaster recovery efforts of ASEAN countries. The establishment of the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) was also based on AADMER. She explained that the enhancement of the AHA Centre has been supported by both ASEAN countries and non-ASEAN countries including Australia, China, Japan, the European Union, and the U.S.

21. Moreover, she touched upon seven recent developments of ASEAN disaster management efforts in the region. These are: 1) establishing ASEAN's centrality to disaster management efforts; 2) tasking ACDM with formulating a joint task force on enhancing international cooperation on disaster management; 3) establishing a joint task force to promote coordination on disaster management; 4) deploying AADMER tools and functionalities, particularly the AHA Centre; 5) enhancing civil-military coordination through the establishment of a working group under the Joint Task Force on HA/DR; 6) realizing the "One ASEAN, One Response" initiative, to be launched at the 2015 ASEAN Summit; and finally 7) defining the roles and functions of the ASEAN Secretary-General as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator. Her presentation is attached as **ANNEX 8**.

2.2.2 Briefing on EAS Statement on Rapid Disaster Response

22. Mr. Romeo Fajardo, Director 2, Civil Defense Deputy Administrator, Office of Civil Defense, Department of National Defense, the Philippines, gave background on the EAS Statement on Rapid Disaster Response, mainly initiated by Australia and the Philippines in the wake of international response to Typhoon Haiyan, and adopted at the 9th EAS in November 2014.

23. Mr. Collett, Assistant Secretary of Crisis Coordination Branch, Emergency Management Australia, elaborated by describing it as a high-level political statement centered on improving rapid disaster response within the EAS countries. It includes 15 guidelines to help relevant countries to approach disaster response in a more practical and effective manner. He emphasized that the leader's statement provides a high watermark for responding to disasters and emergencies, and relays best practices for the full spectrum of situations. The presentation is attached as **ANNEX 9**.

2.2.3 Briefing on Cooperation under EAS, ASEAN +1, and other regional frameworks

24. The delegate from National Marine Environmental Forecasting Center (NMEFC), China, introduced China's marine disaster response initiatives. He mentioned that there are notification and pre-warning systems for detecting marine disaster occurrences. In 2014, there was a total

number of 23 typhoons generated in Northwest Pacific and the South China Sea and 5 of them landed on China. From 2013, the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center was established as an aspect of cooperation between NMEFC and ASEAN.

25. The delegate from Ministry of National Defense of China made a short briefing on the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s efforts for regional cooperation. The PLA focuses on disaster relief operations as one of their main task forces, and emphasizes the participation of regional authorities and representatives. Last September, PLA hosted the TTX on DR with delegates from Australia and other countries on issues such as combined search and rescue. He also introduced the recent operation of the PLA including the response to the recent flooding in Malaysia and delivering water to island countries suffering from water shortage. These are examples of many initiatives for international coordination being undertaken with countries in the ASEAN region.

2.2.4 Briefing on ADMM Plus EWG on HA/DR

26. Mr. Yusuke Ishihara, Deputy-Director of International Policy Division, Ministry of Defense of Japan, shared the development on initiatives of the ADMM Plus EWG on HA/DR, currently co-chaired by Lao PDR and Japan. He began by describing the Work Plan of EWG, which is conceptualized as three pillars approach, namely 1) swift response in the immediate aftermath of the disaster occurrence, 2) shared assessment and seamless activities in the intermediary period, and 3) smooth hand-over of responsibility on the phase of operational withdrawal. In the process of the EWG activities so far parties have agreed to work on the four action-items as the concrete objective of the three year EWG cooperation; namely, enhancing discussions about the legal issues of the assisting foreign forces, development of an ADMM Plus HA/DR Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), best practices booklet on the withdrawal phase of the HA/DR operations and more effective ways to store and share the lessons. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 10**.

27. Mr. Anousone Thepphavong, Staff Officer of ASEAN Political-Security Division, Ministry of National Defense, Lao PDR, outlined the TTX to be held on 5-7 August 2015. The scenario for the TTX is for a magnitude eight earthquake and tsunami in the ocean south of an ASEAN member state. UNOCHA and AHA Centre will be invited to send representatives, and each member country is invited to provide two participants – one legal advisor and one operations planner.

2.2.5 Briefing on EAS Rapid Disaster Response Toolkit

28. Mr. Tri Budiarto, Deputy of Emergency Management, National Agency for Disaster Management, Indonesia, outlined the Indonesia-Australia Disaster Management Initiative, which includes the development of a toolkit, an international medical team concept, a central information repository, and EAS Rapid Disaster Response Workshops. He stated that there is an urgent need to develop the toolkit because of the necessity for rapid disaster response within the EAS countries.

29. Mr. Collett, Assistant Secretary of Crisis Coordination Branch, Emergency Management Australia, emphasized the importance of the toolkit, as it improves baseline disaster management information and simplifies the existing arrangements. The current draft toolkit contains three tools: 1) Table for National Focal Point (NFP); 2) Guidance for Rapid Disaster Response; 3) EAS Countries' Disaster Response Arrangements. These will be instrumental in providing important information and outlining plans in the time of disaster or emergency. He reaffirmed that the toolkit is not intended to be a country-specific resource, nor create obligations, but to be a template for socializing response in each region or country. The 2015 Rapid Disaster Response Workshop is scheduled for early June 2015, in Bali, focusing on bringing NFPs together and discussions on the practical application of the toolkit will be conducted. Finally, the toolkit will be available online and be translated into many languages by the end of 2015. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 11**.

Open Discussion

30. The Meeting noted that the process of reconstruction is so complex that it is necessary to plan for it in the same stage as DRR. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the projects being undertaken by New Zealand in conjunction with Indonesia, which are unique in the sense that they involve cooperation with both public and private bodies.

2.3 Efforts and Lessons Learned of ARF countries

2.3.1 RTARF's Role in 2011 Flash Flood Disaster Relief Effort

31. Major General Yuth Promphong, Director, Office of Civil Affairs, Office of Policy and Planning, Ministry of Defense, Thailand, began by showing a video of the Royal Thai Army's response to the flooding in 2011. The military response took on all aspects including prevention of future floods through construction, establishment of evacuation channels in the case of emergency, rehabilitation to be conducted once the situation improves, and water management for the future.

2.3.2. Disaster/Emergency Medicine in Disaster Management in Thailand

32. Ms. Srisaran Dhiradhamrong, Senior Advisor on Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, National Institute of Emergency Medicine (NIEM), Thailand described the mandatory roles and responsibilities of the NIEM. The institution declares standards related to emergency medical service in Thailand, including education, training, certification, research and development. In this regard, the capacity building and standard maintenance is one of the major parts of its responsibilities, in terms of curriculum development and training certification. She explained that the NIEM also plays a central role as the "coordination center" for disaster management services of both public and private agencies, both local and abroad, including the Royal Thai Army, Air

Force and Navy, and collaborates with multinational bodies such as the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and WHO. She proposed that the way forwards is undoubtedly to strengthen international coordination and to leverage already existing communication and aid channels. Her presentation is attached as ANNEX 12.

2.3.3 Lessons Learned in the response to the recent typhoons in the Philippines

33. Mr. Romeo Fajardo, Director 2, Civil Defense deputy Administrator, Department of national Defense, the Philippines, briefed the recent legislation and initiatives to tackle the issues in responding to typhoon covering four thematic areas, which were reconsidered based on the lessons learned from Typhoon Haiyan: disaster preparedness, disaster response, disaster prevention and revitalization & recovery. As a result of these efforts, the number of casualties has been significantly reduced compared to the case of Typhoon Haiyan. He emphasized that this was accomplished through the synergy of the government providing structure and resources and the people leveraging their education. He also stated that it became possible to accomplish hazard mapping and effective early warning by using geographical information and media tools including social media. Preemptive evacuation was also proven important – in the recent typhoon, over 700,000 people, representing about 150,000 families, were effectively evacuated before the onset of the disaster. In addition, he referred to the necessity of developing local DRR experts at the national level.

2.3.4 Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and Cooperation in Indonesia

34. Mr. Chandra W. Yudha, Director for ASEAN Political and Security Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, shared Indonesia's experiences in disaster risk management efforts. He underscored the importance of clear and specific regulations on disaster management, involving all stakeholders in disaster risk reduction efforts, as well as disaster risk analysis and early warning system. Furthermore, he expressed Indonesia's readiness to share best practices and lessons learnt in disaster management with the international community through Indonesia Disaster Relief Training Ground (INA-DRTG), Indonesia's center of excellence for disaster management. In addition, he also gave an update on the ill-fated Air Asia flight QZ 8501 search and rescue (SAR) operation. He stressed that the success of the operation was in part due to the close civil-military coordination at the national level and good cooperation at the regional and international level. He then expressed that further enhancement of cooperation in the field of SAR is desirable in the future.

2.4 Cooperation with International Organizations

2.4.1 Briefing by UNOCHA

35. Mr. Oliver Lacey-Hall, Regional Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UNOCHA, updated participants on its recent initiatives. He explained the relationship between ASEAN and UNOCHA, which includes coordination in the actual operation for responding to the recent flood in Malaysia, cooperation on training and exercise of human resource and deepening ties at the political level, continues to mature rapidly. Additionally, he announced that a liaison office to ASEAN in Jakarta will be established in June 2015. He noted that UNOCHA successfully co-hosted the World Humanitarian Summit for North and South-East Asia with Japan and Indonesia in 2014, resulting in a renewed vision for humanitarian action in the region, emphasizing the importance for local involvement while national governments to take the driving role.

36. He emphasized the importance of leveraging the unique abilities of diverse stakeholders, including military, academic institutions, and public and private bodies. He recommended that the coordination among these stakeholders during the preparedness phase should be more improved, while it is effective during the response phase. The conference on Civil-Military Coordination will be held on 15 April in Singapore to bring together these stakeholders.

37. He expressed the view that the disaster relief exercises need to be conducted to test the disaster preparedness of both human and infrastructural resources. These exercises should be developed through an inclusive process, and it must have an integrated and diverse set of objectives and outcomes. In this regard, he expressed his hope that the DiREx 2015 will be conducted successfully. Given that coherence away all the year to year exercises, effective leveraging of limited resources, and enough time for information sharing are all necessary to ensure effective simulation exercises, he stated that UNOCHA will actively commit to the ARF Workshop on Multi-Year Strategic Exercise Plan. The text of the intervention is attached as **ANNEX 13**.

2.4.2 Briefing on Regional Humanitarian Coordination Center (RHCC)

38. Colonel Kwang Tang Lim, Director Changi RHCC, Ministry of Defense, Singapore, gave an overview of RHCC and its functions. He explained that RHCC is based on the concept that military can play a pivotal role in all phases of HA/DR initiatives. The valued propositions are: provision of comprehensive situational picture, including leveraging international resources; enabling a target and coordinated response within the critical timeframe including having forces on stand-by; and providing in-theatre coordination capabilities with civil organizations and multinational bodies. The day-to-day operations of RHCC include maintaining linkages with partner militaries such as Australian Defense Force, engaging with states which could receive future supports, and discussing issues with the multinational bodies such as UNOCHA and AHA Centre. He introduced a web-based portal, OPERA, which can be accessed by the members for contingency planning and, communication channels, and which provides inventories of essential

services and potential points of entry for international aid. His presentation is attached as **ANNEX 14**.

Open Discussion

39. The Meeting confirmed that there are issues to be further discussed in both policy-making and operational sides to utilize the diverse expertise and experience of the region in a most effective manner, and further enhance international communication, which includes new mechanisms such as RHCC.

40. The Meeting noted that the Timor-Leste has formed an inter-ministerial body for coordinating humanitarian response to domestic disasters. The Meeting also welcomed the invitation for the participants to participate in an operation exercise to be hosted in Timor-Leste in March 2015.

41. The Meeting expressed its hope that the WCDRR will serve as a good opportunity to deepen international coordination in HA/DR efforts. In this context, the Meeting noted that Russia is planning to organize an international event in Russia on HA/DR coordination within 2015.

42. The Meeting reaffirmed the involvement of international bodies in HA/DR coordination such as UNOCHA, ASEAN Secretariat and ACDM, and enrichment of synergy among relevant parties should be further discussed in policy-making venues and practiced in actual operations. In this regard, the Meeting welcomed the commitment of ASEAN Secretariat and UNOCHA in further deepening their relationship for regional initiatives based on coordination, instead of competition, with the support to the ASEAN Centrality.

3 Review and Updates of the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief

3.1 Review of Implementations of Work Plan

3.1.1 Overview

43. Mr. Kenichi Katagiri, Official, National Security Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, touched upon Japan's proposal on the update of the ARF Work Plan for Disaster Relief, as the Work Plan will expire and needs to be updated at the ARF Ministerial Meeting this summer. He reminded the participants of regional challenges, which are incorporated in the existing work plan, that requires further discussions, such as strengthening synergy among regional frameworks, involving international bodies and pursuing more robust civil-military coordination. Moreover, he drew participants' attention to the ongoing processes of revision of the work programme of the AADMER and adoption of Post-HFA. Given these processes, he mentioned that it will be challenging to secure enough time to discuss substantial updates by this summer. Given such

situation, he expressed that Japan will not propose major amendments on the existing priority areas.

3.1.2 Update on Priority Area 1: Promote Networking and Information Sharing to Enhance the Capacity of ARD Participants Particularly in the Areas of Risk Assessment, Monitoring and Early Warning

44. Mr. Collett, Assistant Secretary of Crisis Coordination Branch, Emergency Management Australia, presented the work of the Australia-Indonesia FTA, launched in 2008, which has reduced risk in vulnerable communities in scientific approaches, including implementing a real-time earthquake risk assessment system and free software scientists can use to input data to assist in earthquake scenario projections. He expressed the intention of Australia to continue partnering with Indonesia on these initiatives and developing services which can be used to all countries in the region. Moreover, he emphasized that Australia has continued to support the staffing of AHA Centre, which has made considerable achievements in enhancing its capacity to respond to emergency situations and providing education as well as the overall capacity of the region. As to the communication of policy coordination, he mentioned that Australia will continue leveraging communication channels initiated by the EAS Statement on Rapid Disaster Response in 2014.

3.1.3 Update on Priority Area 2: Promote International Cooperation and Assistance in HA/DR Operations

45. The delegate from Singapore expressed that in the second phase of the project, it will be important to establish more satellite warehouses to ensure speedy response to emergencies. He announced that Singapore is planning to hold a closer working relationship with UNOCHA on these issues. He emphasized that, beyond the initial stages, a long-term perspective on logistics, supply, communication and networking is important. He also informed the participants that Singapore is cooperating with the New Zealand University of Canterbury to foster a new generation of experts on HA/DR.

3.1.4 Update on Priority Area 3: Promote Interoperability and Coordination in HA/DR Operations

46. Mr. David Max, Military Advisor, Department of State, the United States, highlighted the important role of UNOCHA and AHA Centre in the HA/DR coordination. He mentioned that several coordination meetings were held on the margins of major conferences to promote interoperability and coordination. In connection to this, he also encouraged ARF participants, co-chairs of regional initiatives on HA/DR and representatives of relevant international bodies, to actively participate in the upcoming ARF Workshop on Multi-year Strategic Exercise Plan to share their expertise.

3.2 Direction for Updating the Work Plan

47. Mr. Katagiri, Official, National Security Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, briefed the detailed draft Work Plan. He explained that some paragraphs will be added to the “Context” to describe recent developments of HA/DR initiative in the region under the existing Work Plan. Given the ongoing process of the work programme of AADMER and Post-HFA, the draft reserved the possibility of review and revision before the expiration. Furthermore, some language was planned to be added in order to encourage ARF participants to propose projects in line with the Work Plan. Regarding to the “Annex”, he proposed to add some potential projects in the Priority Area 3 upon the regional interest of strengthen civil-military coordination in operational manner, which was stirred up in wake of recent experience of response to major natural disaster. The draft updated Work Plan is attached as **ANNEX 15**.

Open Discussion

48. The Meeting welcomed the fact that Priority Areas have been implemented appropriately in forms of diverse projects, which contributed to richer regional capacity of HA/DR coordination and operation.

49. The Meeting noted some participants’ suggestion to make more references to the recent initiatives and conferences on HA/DR in the updated Work Plan. In particular, ASEAN Joint Taskforce was given as an example of an initiative, which respects ASEAN Centrality. In this regard, the Meeting noted that some participants recommended the involvement of high-level delegates from ASEAN in this conference as a driving force to all HA/DR projects in the region.

50. The Meeting noted some participants’ suggestions including the concept of DRR in the updated Work Plan as a cost-effective approach.

51. The Meeting suggested the necessity of better synergy and coordination among the countries as well as the regional frameworks such as ARF and ADMM Plus in the region, and the further promotion of partnerships between the public and private sector. In this context, the Meeting reaffirmed the importance of regional coordination efforts on HA/DR in a harmonized manner.

52. The Meeting approved the direction of the proposed draft of the updated Work Plan and confirmed that the incorporated draft is to be circulated to ARF participants for further inputs and suggestions, and to be discussed at the upcoming ARF-ISG to be held in the Spring, 2015 in Tokyo. The Meeting reaffirmed that further suggestion and input on the draft Work Plan from all of participants are welcomed.

Wrap-up by the Chair/ Closing

53. The co-chairs appreciated the informative presentations and active contributions by all participants, which were helpful in sharing the recent development of activities on HA/DR and identifying the challenges for future cooperation and coordination in this area. The meeting deepened the understanding on the efforts of DRR in the international community and encouraged ARF countries to actively participate in the upcoming WCDRR with high level political commitment.

54. The Meeting extended an invitation to all participants to attend the upcoming DiREx 2015 to be conducted in May 2015 in Malaysia, which is expected to be a good opportunity for testing regional practice of HA/DR operation and identifying challenges that need to be further tackled for better operational coordination.

55. The Meeting looked forward to further discussions on HA/DR coordination in the region involving diverse stakeholders in future meetings.

(END)