

ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY WORK PLAN

Introduction

1 The ASEAN Regional Forum's (ARF) founding document, the 1995 *ARF Concept Paper*, identified a three-stage process for ARF to develop a more predictable and constructive pattern of relations for the Asia-Pacific. It was agreed that ARF would progress from Stage I - Promotion of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs); through Stage II - Development of Preventive Diplomacy Mechanisms; and ultimately Stage III - Development of Conflict-Resolution Mechanisms. Noting ARF's success in implementing CBMs, the 8th ARF in July 2001 judged that the time was right to begin a discussion on preventive diplomacy. At the 8th ARF, Ministers adopted the paper *ARF Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy*.

2 The 14th ARF in August 2007 welcomed the Track II *Study of Best Practices and Lessons Learnt by Selected International and Regional Organisations in Preventive Diplomacy* (the PD Study). At the 16th ARF in July 2009, Ministers mandated officials to begin development of an ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan by drawing on the PD Study and other relevant ARF documents. The 16th ARF also tasked the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) to provide their views on the elements of such a Work Plan. The 4th Meeting of the ARF EEPs was held in December 2009 and prepared a paper entitled *Draft Elements of a Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy*. This ARF *Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan* has been prepared taking into account the above discussions and papers.

Objectives

3 The objectives of the Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan are as follows:

- To establish appropriate preventive diplomacy measures/mechanisms for the ARF;
- To move the ARF process forward from Stage I - Confidence Building Measures to Stage II - Preventive Diplomacy, on the basis of consensus through action-oriented cooperation and activities, while continuing confidence building measures, mindful of ARF's intention ultimately to move to Stage III and;
- To increase the capacity and capabilities of the ARF and its participants in the area of preventive diplomacy.

Definition

4 ARF's agreed definition of preventive diplomacy is contained in paragraph 7 of the 2001 paper, ARF Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy.

"Preventive diplomacy is consensual diplomatic and political action taken by sovereign states with the consent of all directly involved parties:

- *To help prevent disputes and conflicts from arising between States that could potentially pose a threat to regional peace and stability;*
- *To help prevent such disputes and conflicts from escalating into armed confrontation; and*
- *To help minimise the impact of such disputes and conflicts on the region."*

Principles

5 Preventive diplomacy measures/mechanisms in the ARF should be subject to a step-by-step approach and applied subject to the following principles:

- Those agreed by Ministers in the Concept and Principles of the Preventive Diplomacy document adopted at the 8th ARF;
- based on consultation and consensus;
- the application of existing CBMs and the development of new CBMs should be continued;
- the application of preventive diplomacy measures/mechanisms should be non coercive, and voluntary upon specific request and clear consent of all parties directly involved in a particular dispute;
- preventive diplomacy should be conducted in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law embodied, inter alia, in the UN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC).

Work Plan

- Strengthen concrete cooperation in the ARF areas of Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Maritime Security, Non-proliferation and Disarmament, and Peacekeeping Operations.

- Continue to implement and enhance CBMs.
- Encourage ARF participants to contribute to the ARF Annual Security Outlook with review and analysis of it conducted when practical to identify possible areas of ARF PD work.
- Develop standardised formats and reporting criteria for CBMs.
- Identify and partner with mutually agreeable organisations, such as the UN, on preventive diplomacy capacity building programmes, experience sharing and training.
- Conduct workshops and training programmes for ARF participants on preventive diplomacy.
- Strengthen the ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat by providing it with the necessary manpower, expertise and resources to support and monitor ARF activities as well as to support the ARF Chair.
- As appropriate, utilise the ARF EEPs, CSCAP and ASEAN-ISIS as expert consultative bodies for monitoring and identifying potential flashpoints.
- In the longer term, consider the establishment of a regional risk reduction centre to monitor regional trends.
- On the basis of consensus, identify and develop optional and voluntary preventive diplomacy mechanisms that could be utilised by ARF participants. These could include:
 - capacity-building such as technical assistance;
 - good offices role consistent with the Hanoi Plan of Action (ARF Chair, ASEAN Secretary-General, and Friends of the ARF Chair);
 - consider expanding the functions of the ARF EEPs;
 - fact-finding and observer missions; and
 - those identified in the TAC.
- Over time, with the consent of all directly involved parties, explore and consider the potential for:
 - mediation/facilitated dialogue;
 - conciliation.

Review and Implementation

- The implementation of the work plan should be reviewed and evaluated as appropriate by the ISG and SOM to ensure that its activities are responsive to the needs and priorities of the ARF.
- Any amendment to the work plan should be made with the consent of all ARF participants and adopted by ministers.