



CONCEPT NOTE

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop on “Raising Awareness and Promoting Cooperation on CBRN Risk Mitigation”

Proposal

1. The United States proposes co-chairing an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) workshop on *“Raising Awareness and Promoting Cooperation on CBRN Risk Mitigation”*- A challenge for security and social agendas. Subject to the endorsement of ARF member nations, the workshop will be held in 2018.

Co-Chairs

2. The United States is seeking an ASEAN country to Co-Chair and Co-Chair the workshop.

Background

3. The Chair’s Statement of the 18th ARF held in Bali, Indonesia on July 23, 2011 mentioning, under point 42, the inclusion of chemical, biological, radioactive, and nuclear (CBRN) aspects in the ARF Work Plan on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC);

4. The Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN Regional Forum Vision Statement of 2010 in the areas of Counter Terrorism – Transnational Crime (in particular point 2.5: Support the development of national strategies and legal frameworks in the field of counter terrorism and transnational crimes through such means as information exchange and capacity building) and point 4.10: Exchange experience and promote the development of relevant best practices and with a view to building common approaches in strategic export controls where appropriate.

5. Regulation 1717/2006 of the European Parliament and the Council establishing an Instrument for Stability that outlines in its Article 4 (2) risk mitigation and preparedness relating to CBRN materials or agents as areas in which the United States shall provide technical and financial assistance including, among others, the exchange and sharing of information;

6. The UN Security Council Chair Statement of April 19, 2012 in which the establishment of the EU CBRN CoE Initiative was welcomed, the New York-Statement on behalf of the European Union at the United Nations 67th General Assembly Resolution on the Report of the IAEA of November 5, 2012, stating as one objective is to step up its outreach and coordination efforts to key partners and international organizations;

7. The Bandar Seri Begawan Plan of Action to Strengthen the ASEAN-EU enhanced Partnership (2013-2015) that promotes cooperation in mitigating risks associated with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials, and facilitate transfer of technology, exchange of expertise and physical or legal requirements, best practices and capacity building through the

CBRN Centre of Excellence in South-East Asia in accordance with the respective domestic laws and policies on the matter.

Objectives

8. Build upon the European Union's and the Republic of the Philippines related ARF workshop in September 2015;
9. Identify regional forums for exchanging and sharing of information;
10. Facilitate international and interagency stakeholders involvement (including regional Centers of Excellence);
11. Exchange best practices and views to building common approaches;
12. Examine national and regional protection and response plans for "First Responder" (i.e. police, fire, and medical)

Challenges

13. Most CBRN incidents involve different national ministries, and successful interagency cooperation is essential in the prevention, detection, preparedness, and response as well as risk mitigation in general. Whereas an appropriate response might already be challenging at national level, it becomes more complex at provincial (local) levels. At the same time, CBRN threats are transnational and global in nature and there is a vital need to address them beyond national boundaries.

14. Prerequisites for an efficient interagency cooperation among stakeholders include an awareness for the need to have a cross-sectoral response that includes the relevant ministries and agencies. Secondly, the establishment of suitable procedures, the availability of adequate information, trained human resources, and appropriate equipment also play also a critical role in efficient interagency cooperation.

15. Currently, there are many international efforts which demand a frequent need for coordinated and harmonized approaches to ensure the optimization of resources and avoid duplication. The United States "CBRN Risk Mitigation" workshop is one attempt to achieve this objective. It supports the efforts of ASEAN Member States in CBRN risk mitigation at the national and regional level. There is currently a need to strengthen regional cooperation further and to multiply national efforts. Global and transnational threats raise this issue to the level of the ARF.

16. Although the 2015 EU CBRN CoE Initiative (September 2015) has already been conducted an ARF workshop, the need exists to continue highlighting the latest developments of the initiative and to exchange views between national and regional stakeholders.

Participants

The workshop would be co-chaired by the United States and an ASEAN Member State. Participants at the workshop would include representatives from relevant agencies that include ministries of foreign affairs, health, strategic communications, government and military officials responsible for national and regional security policies, and law enforcement experts.

Language, Venue, Date and Duration

Language: English

Location: TBD

Date: 2018

Duration: Two to three Days