



**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT  
ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM  
DEFENCE OFFICIALS' DIALOGUE**

Ottawa, Canada, 10 May 2017

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Dialogue was co-chaired by Undersecretary Lieutenant General (Retired) Cardozo M. Luna, Undersecretary of National Defense of the Philippines, and Major General Derek Joyce, Director General International Security Policy, Department of National Defence of Canada.
2. All ARF participants except Bangladesh, DPRK, India, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, and Sri Lanka were present. Representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat were also in attendance. The list of participants appears in **ANNEX 1**.
3. Mr. Gordon Venner, Assistant Deputy Minister (Policy), Department of National Defence of Canada, delivered the welcoming remarks and highlighted the importance of strengthening maritime domain awareness in the region as well as strengthening cooperation in the areas of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to further contribute to peace and security in the region. He expressed confidence that the Dialogue would strengthen mutual understanding and further build relationships among the ARF participating countries.

**AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING REMARKS**

4. Major General Derek Joyce welcomed all participants to the ARF DOD and reiterated that the ARF DOD is a testament to the mutual commitment of ARF countries in ensuring that the region's security architecture remains strong in the face of rapidly evolving global security environment. Further, he expressed hope that the discussion and presentations would showcase the mutual engagement in the region and deepen understanding on the conduct of different countries in addressing and approaching

current security challenges.

5. In his opening remarks, Undersecretary Luna underscored the success of the ARF DOD since its establishment in providing a platform to promote confidence building and networking as well as facilitate discussions among defence officials in various issues of mutual interest. Undersecretary Luna further expressed hope that the discussion and exchange of views would further promote confidence building and mutual understanding in the ARF.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

6. The Dialogue adopted the agenda which appears as **ANNEX 2**.

## **AGENDA ITEM 3: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENES**

7. The Dialogue shared experiences and best practices in addressing maritime security challenges such as sea piracy, robbery at sea, terrorism, illegal smuggling of drugs and trafficking of people. The Dialogue observed that maritime domain awareness is not an issue that can be undertaken by one country alone and that there is a need to promote cooperation in this area. In this connection, the Dialogue was of the view that the ARF DOD is a useful platform which can be utilised to increase understanding and enhance cooperation among various maritime law enforcement agencies and reiterated the need to further strengthen dialogue on this issue to facilitate cooperation and coordination.

8. The Dialogue noted the briefing and presentations on the challenges of addressing maritime domain awareness and the efforts that have been undertaken to address these challenges. Some of the challenges identified include the protection of international communication resources and the different jurisdictional responsibilities of national and international agencies. It was also noted that in responding to threats, parties should not solely rely on the use of technology but to also build networks and relationships with each other to deepen mutual understanding and share information. The presentations appear as **ANNEX 3**.

9. It was further noted that ASEAN and China are continuously working together towards the conclusion of the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea including the development of a framework which is hoped to be finalised by July this year and other early harvest measures such as the MFA Hotlines. In addition, the Dialogue recognised the rise of sea piracy incidents and was of the view that such threats can only be effectively addressed through joint efforts. Further to this, the Dialogue noted the suggestion to take into consideration the experiences in addressing sea piracy incidents in the scenario of future maritime exercises in the region and reiterated the need to enhance cooperation in tackling and addressing maritime security threats.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: APPROACHES TO PEACEKEEPING AND PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

10. The Dialogue expressed condolences to Cambodia on the recent loss of four peacekeepers in the line of duty. The Dialogue noted the briefing on the update of peacekeeping related activities under the ambit of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting – Plus Experts Working Group (ADMM-Plus EWG) on Peacekeeping as well as the briefings of various ARF countries' contribution towards the UN Peacekeeping Missions around the globe. The Dialogue expressed confidence that the ARF will continue to play a larger scope in multilateral cooperation and to complement efforts of other sectoral bodies. The presentations appear as **ANNEX 4**.

11. The Dialogue took note of the positive rise of female peacekeepers participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions and observed that there is a need to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the UN and other international and regional organisations. Further to this, it was also noted that there is a need for countries to continue developing soft and hard capacities in the area of peacekeeping including strengthening pre-deployment trainings as well as to consider stocktaking its peacekeeping capabilities to avoid overlap of efforts and facilitate conducive missions.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5: ARMED FORCES AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF MISSIONS**

12. On the issue of HADR, the Dialogue noted the briefings on the experiences of some ARF countries in responding to disasters and the lessons learned from the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The presentations appear as **ANNEX 5**.

13. It was observed that in some countries, military components are utilised as a last resort and only in the event when civilian capacities are overwhelmed. It is also noted that

military apparatuses are deployed only upon the request of others as the role of defence components is to support the role of other government agencies. Recognising the multifaceted nature of disaster relief, the Dialogue observed that enhanced civil-military coordination is crucial in ensuring effective and efficient delivery of assistance. The Dialogue was of the view that sharing of experiences and lessons learned are beneficial in preparing and responding to future calamities.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6: CLOSING REMARKS**

14. In his closing remarks, Major General Joyce expressed appreciation to all participants for the active contribution which has allowed deeper understanding of the current areas of cooperation and gathered ideas for future collaborations and partnerships among ARF participants.

15. Undersecretary Luna further expressed appreciation to all ARF participants for the exchange of views and active participation which contributed to the success of the Dialogue. He further reiterated the importance on continuously strengthening cooperation and collaboration among ARF participants.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7: OTHER MATTERS**

16. The Philippines shared its intent to streamline and rationalize meetings and activities, including the ARF's dialogue platform for the defence sector such as the Defence Officials Dialogue (DOD) and the ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC). There is a need to synergize the two platforms in order to arrive at an effective and efficient platform for defence dialogue within the ARF. The Philippines' intent is to combine the DOD and ASPC to create a single, defence officials-led ARF defence and security dialogue. The Philippines expressed hope that the DOD participants would support this endeavour.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

17. The Dialogue expressed appreciation to the Co-Chairs for their effective leadership and fruitful discussion. The Dialogue also extended their appreciation to the Government of Canada for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality accorded to all ARF participants.

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