

**Co-Chairs' Summary Report of
the Twelfth ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief
Padang, Indonesia, 12-13 March 2013**

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 19th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Phnom Penh on 12 July 2012, the Meeting of the 12th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) was held in Padang, Indonesia on 12-13 March 2013. The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Jose Tavares, Director for ASEAN Political and Security Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, and Mr. Rod Smith, First Assistant Secretary, South-East Asia Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

2. All ARF participants except Bangladesh, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the European Union, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, and Timor Leste attended the Meeting. Representatives of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the ASEAN Secretariat were also present. The List of Participants appears as **ANNEX 1**.

Agenda Item 1: Opening Session

3. In his opening remarks, Mr. Jose Tavares, Director for ASEAN Political and Security Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, highlighted the region's vulnerability to natural disasters and the fact that no single country can effectively manage disasters on its own. He underscored the need to enhance cooperation on disaster preparedness and response based on the lessons learned. He touched on the progress of ARF cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) since the first ISM on DR in 1997, including the adoption of the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief 2012-2014 by ARF Ministers last year. He then outlined several priorities in the Work Plan which could serve to guide the discussions in the Meeting, namely ensuring greater synergy and coordination among existing HADR arrangements and mechanisms and overcoming bottlenecks in managing international assistance; enhancing early-warning systems in disaster preparedness and mitigation; and enhancing information-sharing and capacity-building between all stakeholders both civilian and military.

4. Mr. Rod Smith, First Assistant Secretary, South-East Asia Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, delivered Australia's opening remarks. He emphasised the significant contribution of the ISM on DR in tackling the wide range of challenges in HADR cooperation in the region as well as the ways in which the ARF can maximise its contribution, particularly in coordination with other mechanisms in ASEAN. He recalled the discussions of the previous ISM on DR in Brisbane which highlighted the need for synergy while allowing for overlaps, and the need to implement the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief 2012-2014 through identification and confirmation of Lead Countries for the three priority areas. He expressed hope that the discussions could generate ideas for concrete activities to be implemented under the Work Plan.

Agenda Item 2: Adoption of Agenda

5. The Meeting considered and adopted the Agenda, which appears as **ANNEX 2**.

Agenda Item 3: Administrative Arrangements

6. The Meeting was informed of the Programme of Activities, which appears as **ANNEX 3**.

Agenda Item 4: Regional Coordination/Synergy between Regional Mechanisms

4.1. Briefing on HADR Cooperation within ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) by *ACDM Chair*

7. Mr. Arun Pinta, representative of the Chair of the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), provided an overview on the composition, mandate and core work of the ACDM since its establishment in 2003. He recalled how the 2004 India Ocean Tsunami created a strong impetus for the strengthening of the ACDM and that less than a year later the ten ASEAN Member States signed the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). He outlined the significant achievements of ASEAN cooperation in disaster management including disaster relief and response operations during Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar in 2008, the development of the ASEAN Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP), the establishment of the ASEAN-Emergency Rapid Assessment Team (ERAT), the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) in November 2011, and AHA Centre's response to the earthquake in Myanmar in November 2012 and Typhoon Pablo/Bopha in the Philippines in December 2012. He touched upon the preparations for the upcoming ARF DiREx 2013, which will be conducted on 7-11 May 2013 in Cha-am/Hua-Hin, Petchaburi Province, Thailand. It is expected that the AHA Centre will be exercised at the DiREx, with the AHA Centre and ERAT, the UNDAC team and other humanitarian actors in the region expected to be present. His presentation appears as **ANNEX 4**.

4.2. Briefing on HADR Cooperation within ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) by *Co-Chairs of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on HADR*

8. Senior Colonel Bo Zhou and Senior Colonel Do Mai Khanh, Viet Nam's and China's Co-Chairs of the Experts' Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (EWG on HADR), briefed the Meeting on the mandate and activities of the EWG on HADR. The EWG on HADR has held two meetings which discussed, among others, the scope of HADR cooperation within the ADMM-Plus, developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the use and participation of military assets and capabilities in international disaster relief operations, capacity building activities in HADR, and conducting joint exercises. On this note, the EWG on HADR Co-Chairs informed the Meeting of the preparations for the inaugural ADMM-Plus HADR/Military Medicine Exercise. The Exercise will be the first large-scale joint exercise under the ADMM-Plus framework and is aimed at strengthening military-to-military cooperation in HADR. The Exercise will be conducted on 17-20 June 2013 in Brunei Darussalam. Their presentation appears as **ANNEX 5**.

4.3. Briefing on disaster issues within the East Asia Summit *by Australia*

9. The Meeting noted the briefing by Ms. Kerry Vine-Camp, Assistant Secretary at Crisis Coordination Branch of Emergency Management Australia on the work of EAS participating countries on HADR. She provided an overview of the Indonesian-Australian Paper on A Practical Approach to Enhance Regional Cooperation on Disaster Rapid Response, particularly three clusters of issues to be addressed, i.e. information-sharing; overcoming bottlenecks; and capacity building and promoting collaboration partnerships in disaster response. As an initial step, the ACDM convened a Working Group on 2 June 2012 to identify linkages between AADMER Work Programme and priorities under the EAS paper developed by Indonesia and Australia. Several recommendations were offered, including exchange of staff and experts. At the 21st ACDM Meeting in January 2013, the ACDM convened a session on EAS cooperation, to further discuss the linkages between the AADMER Work Programme and the EAS paper. She highlighted some HADR-related activities organised by the EAS participating countries in 2012, such as the EAS Seminar on Capacity Building on Disaster Preparedness (held in China) and the EAS Workshop on Building a Regional Framework on Disaster Management (held in India). For 2013 several activities were highlighted, including the International TTX in Indonesia on 20-26 April 2013 to which EAS participating countries have been invited to participate, and an EAS Rapid Disaster Response Workshop, to be co-chaired by Indonesia and Australia later this year. She underscored the need to minimise duplication of efforts and maximise practical cooperation and outputs, as outlined in the EAS paper.

10. Many participants commented on the number of existing HADR exercises. Some participants inquired on the International TTX to be organised by Indonesia involving the EAS participating countries. The Meeting noted the clarification that the ADMM-Plus focuses on military-to-military cooperation while the ARF focuses on civil-military coordination. A view was expressed that the operational tempo within disaster management in ASEAN should be organized so that there was one field exercise per year, should the frameworks be able to agree and coordinate amongst themselves.

4.4. Synergy and Coordination between ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Mechanisms *by the ASEAN Secretariat*

11. Ms. Adelina Kamal, Head of the Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division of the ASEAN Secretariat, briefed the Meeting on promoting synergy and coordination between HADR mechanisms in ASEAN. Her briefing focused on taking stock of existing ASEAN HADR mechanisms, examining recent decisions and efforts on HADR, and offering relevant suggestions to synergise and streamline efforts. She recalled the Chair's Statement of the 18th ARF in 2011 underlining the ARF's role as the primary forum to discuss political and security issues in the region, as well as the decision of ASEAN Leaders at the 19th ASEAN Summit in November 2011 and the 21st ASEAN Summit in November 2012 to have the AADMER as the main regional policy backbone and the AADMER Conference of the Parties, the ACDM and AHA Centre as the coordination platforms for HADR in ASEAN. She highlighted the ongoing efforts by the ACDM, ARF, ADMM, ADMM-Plus and ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) to synergise and complement each other's HADR activities. She offered several suggestions to promote synergy and coordination, i.e. conducting dialogues among internal ASEAN mechanisms to accelerate efforts for an integrated ASEAN HADR, conducting reviews on how other mechanisms can best complement ASEAN's own arrangements and bring comparative advantages or added values, cross-reporting

between the various existing mechanisms, back-to-back timing of relevant events, particularly when similar topics are discussed, scheduling similar events with longer intervals, building on existing/planned activities under the AADMER Work Programme while expanding the involvement of non-AMS under ARF, EAS or ADMM-Plus, finding interface/collaboration points between ARF, EAS, and ADMM-Plus, and rationalising the number of exercises particularly large-scale field exercises. The ASEAN Secretariat's presentation is attached as **ANNEX 6**.

12. The Meeting welcomed the presentation by the ASEAN Secretariat and expressed support for the efforts to promote synergy and coordination in view of the proliferation of HADR activities under existing ASEAN mechanisms, as well as the need to determine whether these activities will in the end contribute towards better disaster preparedness, response and relief in times of actual disasters. The Meeting also supported the primacy of AADMER in guiding HADR activities in ASEAN and encouraged a greater role for the AHA Centre in these activities. The Meeting noted the ongoing stock-taking efforts and ASEAN Secretariat's plan to come up with a paper on promoting synergy among the mechanisms, including rationalisation of exercises, for consideration by the relevant ASEAN bodies. Many members expressed that country resources are strained by the proliferation of exercises. Several members offered their suggestions for synergy, such as holding the ARF DiREx every three years with table top exercises from other mechanisms supporting the theme of the DiREx or utilizing the after action report to focus and reduce the scope of exercises.

13. Several participants commented that the promotion of synergy and coordination of HADR activities should take into consideration the scope and mandates of the various mechanisms and allow for the natural progression of these mechanisms based on their respective strengths. The Co-Chairs suggested that while the proliferation of these mechanisms and their activities illustrated the growing interest among countries in the region to cooperate on HADR matters, it has become important to streamline these existing HADR activities in order to ensure synergy and coordination more effectively and efficiently. It is also important to consider whether the activities of the various mechanisms will in the end contribute to enhancing the region's preparedness and response in times of actual disasters.

14. Several participants inquired on the progress of the initiative for an expanded ACDM as suggested by the Indonesian-Australian Paper on A Practical Approach to Enhance Regional Cooperation on Disaster Rapid Response. The Meeting noted advice from the ASEAN Secretariat that the ACDM had taken a cautious approach to the issue, encouraging the AADMER and its Work Programme to remain the centerpiece and principal vehicle for such linkages. The Secretariat further advised that work is underway between the ASEAN Member States and non-ASEAN members countries to identify detailed key activities.

15. Some participants commented on whether there is a need for non-ASEAN countries to adhere to AADMER since the agreement is only binding to ASEAN Member States. The Meeting noted that the AADMER is a legally-binding agreement for the ASEAN Member States, but Dialogue Partners and other parties are encouraged to consider the AADMER and its mechanisms when collaborating with ASEAN in the area of disaster management.

4.5. Strategic Coordination Mechanisms for the Humanitarian System by UNOCHA

16. The Meeting noted the briefing by Mr. Oliver Lacey-Hall, Head of the Regional Office for Asia and the Asia Pacific of the UNOCHA. Mr. Lacey-Hall recalled his presentation at the previous ISM on DR in 2012 and reiterated UNOCHA's commitment to support disaster relief activities in ASEAN, including through technical support for the AHA Centre and the convening of an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) Training Course in Thailand prior to the ARF DiREx 2013. He pointed out the need to coordinate the roles of the ASEAN Secretary-General as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator and the Emergency Relief Coordinator under OCHA during times of actual disasters in the ASEAN region. He informed the Meeting of an upcoming document titled "Disaster Response in Asia and the Pacific: A Guide to International Tools and Services" which would provide a comprehensive, yet concise reference to simplify the intricacies of international disaster relief operations and cooperation. He also informed the Meeting on several HADR activities under the UN/UNOCHA framework which were conducted in the region, such as the Regional Civil-Military Coordination Guidance Harmonisation Workshop in December 2012. This workshop was used as a platform to launch the final Asia-Pacific Regional Guidelines for the Use of Foreign Military Assets in Natural Disaster Response Operations, and the document will be disseminated by the end of March in Indonesia, Thai and English. Mr. Lacey-Hall's presentation is attached as **ANNEX 7**.

Agenda Item 5: Lessons Learned Presentations

5.1. Lessons Learned Presentation by Indonesian National Agency for Disaster Management

17. Mr. Wisnu Widjaja, Head of Education and Training Centre of the Indonesian National Agency for Disaster Management (*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana/BNPB*), provided an overview of Indonesia's national disaster management system, including the organisational structure of BNPB, the national laws and regulations governing domestic disaster relief and response, the development of short-term and long-term national action plans on disaster management, and the current priorities for national disaster management. Several challenges were highlighted, including monitoring & evaluation of the disaster risk reduction programme, lack of public and government awareness and understanding on disaster risk reduction, minimal involvement from the media and private sector, and maintaining the political will. The presentation is attached as **ANNEX 8**.

5.2. Lessons Learned Presentation by the Philippines

18. No discussions were held under this agenda item.

5.3. Lessons Learned Presentation by the United States

19. Mr. Alex Amparo, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Recovery Directorate of the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), gave a presentation on the US government's response to Hurricane Sandy, the second largest Atlantic storm on record which caused infrastructure damage and power outages to a significant population of the United States. He highlighted the role of FEMA in coordinating the federal government's response and recovery efforts, such as providing housing to the displaced population, removal of debris, restoring power to affected districts, and engaging voluntary agencies as well as the private sector in providing recovery. He

underscored several lessons learned, including acknowledging the complexity of managing a large-scale disaster in terms of resource requirements and allocation, the importance of engaging the whole community (government, private sector, volunteer agencies, and survivors themselves), and the need to improve on many areas such as orienting relief & recovery efforts towards survivors, ensuring unity of effort across the federal response, and developing an agile, professional emergency management workforce. Mr. Amparo's presentation appears as **ANNEX 9**.

20. The Meeting exchanged the views on the need to address the emotional impact of disasters to the survivors, the scope of insurance coverage to natural disasters, and the provision and coordination of consular services for foreign nationals in times of disasters.

5.4. Lessons Learned Presentation by the People's Republic of China

21. The Meeting noted the presentation by Ms. Xin Luo, Director of the Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Civil Affairs of China, on capacity building on comprehensive disaster prevention and reduction in China. She highlighted China's national disaster management framework including the relevant national laws on disaster management and the organisational structure of the National Commission for Disaster Reduction (NCDR), which is the highest coordinating organ for disaster relief in China. Her presentation appears as **ANNEX 10**.

Agenda Item 6: Progress on the Implementation of the ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan 2012-2014

6.1. Update on Priority Area One (Australia and ASEAN co-lead, tba)

22. The Meeting welcomed Australia's reconfirmation it would continue to lead Priority Area 1 – Promote Networking and Information Sharing to Enhance the Capacity of ARF Participants Particularly in the Areas of Risk Assessment, Monitoring, and Early Warning. Australia updated the Meeting of the work it was doing regionally that advanced the priority, including through the Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR), which among other elements, provides support for the ASEAN Secretariat and the AHA Centre for the implementation of AADMER. Australia also reaffirmed availability of the ARF Disaster Relief Mapping Service and invited ARF participants to take advantage of the service. The Meeting encouraged ASEAN ARF participants to join Australia as co-lead for Priority Area 1.

23. The Meeting took note of the proposal under Priority Area 1 for an ARF workshop on consular contingency planning which will focus on building ARF participants' understanding of key elements and benefits of consular contingency planning and strengthening consular crisis coordination linkages. Australia opened the draft concept paper for the workshop to ARF participants for comments or questions. The concept paper appears as **ANNEX 11**.

6.2. Update on on Priority Area Two (TBA)

24. The Meeting welcomed the offer from Singapore to co-lead Priority Area 2 – Promote International Cooperation and Assistance in HADR Operations, and invited non-ASEAN ARF participants to join Singapore in leading the Priority Area. Singapore

reaffirmed the importance of aligning Priority Area 2 with the AADMER Work Programme, particularly the component on Preparedness and Response led by Malaysia and Singapore.

The United States welcomed Singapore's leadership in this area and offered its support. The United States also explained that it would continue to find a way to have the Rapid Disaster Response agreement concept better fit ASEAN and the region, and would work with Singapore and the non-ASEAN lead, if the co-leads so desired and felt it was in line with their objectives for the priority area, in order to lend expertise and support in the development of SASOP Chapter 6 in connection with this.

25.

6.3. Update on Priority Area Three (US)

26. The Meeting welcomed the interest of Malaysia and the United States to be Lead Countries of Priority Area 3 – Promote Interoperability and Coordination in HADR Operations. Malaysia indicated that the agreement for Malaysia to lead in this Priority Area is in line with the AADMER Work Programme, where the component of Preparedness and Response is led by Malaysia and Singapore.

27. The United States informed the Meeting of the proposal to convene an ARF workshop on reconciling, creating synergy and coordination between ARF disaster relief exercises throughout the ASEAN mechanisms, which will correspond with the objectives of this Priority Area. The proposed workshop will develop a multi-year exercise plan and calendar of HADR activities in the region to facilitate long-term planning. The US emphasized that this type of workshop would require experts from all ASEAN mechanisms to ensure the equities of all mechanisms and countries are adopted.

Agenda Item 7: Update on ARF Disaster Relief Exercise 2013 by Thailand and Republic of Korea

28. Thailand and the Republic of Korea briefed the Meeting on the outcomes of the Initial Planning Conference/Site Survey (IPC/SS), which was held in Bangkok and Cha-am on 14-16 January 2013. The Meeting welcomed the briefing and video presentation on the latest preparations for the ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx) 2013 which elaborated on the exercise schedule, the list of topics to be discussed in the Table Top Exercise (TTX), the various areas of operations of the Field Training Exercise (FTX), and the expected contributions of assets and personnel from ARF participants. The briefing is attached as **ANNEX 12**.

29. The next stage of the preparations will be conducted at the ARF DiREx 2013 Final Planning Conference (FPC), which will be held in Cha-am on 1-3 April 2013. Thailand and the Republic of Korea invited participants to actively take part in the FPC and submit their registration forms for the ARF DiREx 2013 by 15 March 2013.

30. Thailand also informed the Meeting that the OSOCC Training Course will be convened on 3-6 May 2013, prior to the ARF DiREx 2013. Participants were invited to send their representatives to attend the activity.

Agenda Item 8: Looking Ahead

8.1. Assessment and Overview of 2012-2013

31. The Co-Chairs provided an overview of the progress in ARF HADR cooperation under the co-chairmanship of the ISM on DR by Indonesia and Australia. The Co-Chairs regarded the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief 2012-2014 as a living document, which could be updated to reflect changes and updates as necessary. The Co-Chairs highlighted the importance of the Work Plan that had been formulated with reference to the AADMER and so would contribute to the promotion of synergy between the work of ARF and other existing regional mechanisms. In pursuance of this objective, the Co-Chairs appreciated the presence of the ACDM and ADMM-Plus Representatives at the meeting and welcomed the discussions on promoting synergy and coordination among existing ASEAN HADR mechanisms during the 11th and 12th Inter-Sessional Meetings on Disaster Relief. The Co-Chairs encouraged this good practice be applied within the other regional mechanisms. The Co-Chairs also underscored the importance of scheduling the various HADR activities to enable effective participation and sequencing.

8.2. Expiry of term of current co-chairs

32. The Meeting noted the offer of China to take up the co-chairmanship of the ISM on DR for the next cycle and encouraged ASEAN ARF participants to take up the co-chairmanship of the ISM on DR for the next cycle.

33. Japan informed the Meeting of its interest to co-chair the ISM on DR with China and will inform the other ARF participating countries upon coordination with China.

Agenda Item 9: Closing remarks by Indonesia and Australia

34. The Co-Chairs expressed appreciation to all ARF participants for their views and contributions to the discussion in the area of disaster relief. The Co-Chairs also expressed appreciation to the ASEAN Secretariat for the excellent presentation and for supporting the successful conduct of the Meeting.

35. The Meeting expressed gratitude to Indonesia and Australia for their effective co-chairmanship. They also thanked the Government of Indonesia for the hospitality and arrangements in hosting the 12th ARF ISM on DR.
