

Speech by

**Police Major General Nguyen Phong Hoa, Deputy Director-General,
Police General Department on Crime Prevention and Suppression,
Ministry of Public Security, SRV**

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Mr. Co-chairs,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the current Chairman of the 13th ASEAN Senior Official Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), it is a great honour of mine to be invited to attend and make presentation at the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security on the topic of "*Briefing on maritime cooperation within SOMTC*"

As you may be aware, maritime security, which is closely related to the maintenance of peace and stability, mutual trust, respect in the region and in the world; based on the legitimate implementation of international treaties regarding law on the sea, other related legal instruments, codes of conduct to solve disputes on jurisdiction over the sea, islands of all countries in the world. New developments in the South China Sea at present are considered as typical examples. There are many threats to maritime security, including sea piracy, armed robbery at sea and armed robbery against ships of countries involving maritime activities, it still causes great concern to countries with ships passing in the region. Therefore, the issue is of special interest in regional and international fora, conferences and meetings.

In the framework of SOMTC, at present, SOMTC focuses on 8 priority areas, including sea piracy, which is related to maritime security. Malaysia is the Lead Shepherd for sea piracy, and responsible for coordinated cooperation and making recommendations to be included in the SOMTC Work Programme (sea piracy component).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Activities under the framework of SOMTC are based on important legal instruments:

1. **ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime.** Adopted in 1997. This is one of the most important declarations on transnational crime and sea piracy.

2. **ASEAN Action Plan to Combat Transnational Crime.** Adopted in 1999. The PoA is to implement the ASEAN Declaration on Transnational Crime 1999.

3. Work Programme to Implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime, including information exchange, legal matters, law enforcement, training and capacity building, extra-regional cooperation... The SOMTC Work Programme 2013-2015 endorsed by the 13th SOMTC held in Da Nang, Viet Nam on 19 – 20 June, 2013 and subsequently adopted by 9th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), held on 17 September 2013 in Vientiane, Lao PDR is currently being implemented. The SOMTC Work Programme 2013-2015 focuses on *“To share information on Piracy in return providing a safety precaution to ASEAN Member States on piracy attack”*. Therefore, information exchange is really necessary to identify the scale of pirates’ and piracy ships’ operation and implement preventive measures.

To implement the SOMTC Work Programme, SOMTC-Malaysia convened a “Seminar on ASEAN Maritime Search and Rescue: National Maritime SAR System” on 16-18 October 2012 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. SOMTC-Malaysia is also the project proponent of “Seminar on ASEAN Piracy, Sea Robbery and Maritime Terrorism” under the auspices of the ASEAN- Japan Counter-Terrorism (AJCT) Dialogue which has received funding approval from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) and will be implemented in due course.

Besides its internal cooperation, ASEAN also has an active cooperation with its Dialogue Partners.

Specific cooperation activities have been discussed in the SOMTC + Dialogue Partner Consultations, especially the consultations held back-to-back with the 13th SOMTC in Da Nang, Viet Nam, which reaffirms the view-point of ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners regarding maritime security and combating sea piracy. ASEAN Member States have actively proposed projects to enhance maritime security cooperation and the projects have been supported and funded by the Dialogue Partners, contributing to the effective cooperation.

ASEAN pursues cooperation with the Nippon Foundation in the area of maritime civilian safety. A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was signed between the ASEAN Secretariat and the Nippon Foundation on 27 June 2008 at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. Under the MoA, projects jointly identified by the ASEAN Secretariat and the Nippon Foundation will in principle focus on grassroots level rather than policy makers. For projects in the area of maritime civilian safety, the scope of the projects have been tentatively identified such as training, capacity building, and human resource seminars for public or private sector maritime personnel.

Training would be conducted by experts from Japan and some ASEAN Member States.

A number of Dialogue Partners have expressed interest in working together with ASEAN to combat sea piracy, including Australia, China, the European Union and India.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To enhance the great efforts of ASEAN Member States in the framework of SOMTC and ARF, recommended activities are as follows:

1. In order to deal with threats to peace, stability as well security, safety in the region, ARF participating countries are kindly requested to take an active participation, in good will, in cooperation activities based on the UNCLOS (1982), DOC (2002), ReCAAP (2004)...

2. To unify the cooperation focal points for coordinated arrest, dealing with piracy and other maritime crime effectively.

3. For the ASEAN Member States: Continue to enhance information sharing related to maritime security, to coordinate in arresting, dealing with maritime crime and sea piracy; organizing workshops, conference on cooperation in combating transnational crime and sea piracy.

4. ASEAN Dialogue Partners as ARF Participants are kindly requested to strengthen the effective implementation of the instruments signed with ASEAN related to maritime security cooperation; meanwhile, to research and sign individual legal instruments on maritime security cooperation; to continue to support, as well as fund cooperation projects proposed by ASEAN Member States.

5- To enhance dialogue to deal with issues related to maritime security, sea piracy.

To conclude, on behalf of the current Chairman of the SOMTC, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the Republic of Indonesia as

the host of the meeting for its hospitality and warm reception. Wish all of you good health, success and happiness. May our meeting a great success.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.