

Chairman's Statement
14th ASEAN Regional Forum
Manila, the Philippines

1. The Fourteenth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was convened on 2 August 2007 in Manila, the Philippines. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Dr. Alberto G. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines.
2. The Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers of all ARF Participants, as well as the European Union High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The List of Delegates appears as **ANNEX 1**.
3. A meeting of the defense and military officials attending the 14th ARF was also held on 1 August 2007 in Manila.
4. The Ministers welcomed the admission of Sri Lanka as the 27th Participant of the ARF and took note of its expressed commitment to contribute to the attainment of the ARF's goals and to abide by and subscribe to all the decisions and statements already made by the ARF.

Overview of the ARF Process

5. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the ARF as the main multilateral political and security forum in the region and agreed to its further strengthening. The Ministers reiterated their support for ASEAN as the primary driving force of the ARF and encouraged the continued cooperation and contribution of all the ARF participants in moving the ARF process forward in its evolution toward the next stage of its development.
6. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the significant progress of the ARF and the role that it has played in enhancing political and security dialogue and cooperation as well as confidence building in the Asia-Pacific region. The Ministers agreed to continue to observe in good faith the basic principles of decision-making by consensus and non-interference. In this regard, the Ministers reaffirmed that the ARF should move forward at a pace comfortable to all.
7. The Ministers held comprehensive discussions on issues of common concern and stressed the need for the ARF to focus its deliberations on regional issues, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as international issues with regional and global impact. The Ministers recognized that the challenges facing the Asia Pacific region are becoming more complex and interrelated and require greater regional cooperation.

Highlights of Discussions on Regional and International Security Issues

8. The Ministers expressed their support for and were gratified with the significant progress made in the implementation of the ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action under the Vientiane Action Programme adopted at the 10th ASEAN Summit. The Ministers emphasized the need to intensify security cooperation to preserve and further advance the region towards peace, stability, democracy, and prosperity. The Ministers also welcomed the successful convening of the First ASEAN Defense Ministers' Retreat in Bali on 23-25 March 2007.
9. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the purposes and principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which the ARF participants regard as an important code of conduct governing inter-state relations in Southeast Asia and for the promotion of cooperation, amity and friendship within Southeast Asia and between ASEAN and other ARF participants. The Ministers welcomed the accession of France and Timor-Leste to the TAC during the 12th ASEAN Summit on 13 January 2007. The accession of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to the TAC on 1 August 2007 is further testimony of the continued relevance of the TAC in contributing to regional peace, security and stability. The Ministers also hope for the early accession of the EU to the TAC.
10. The Ministers stressed that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is essential in maintaining the peace and stability of the Asia Pacific region and expressed support for the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiation.
11. The Ministers welcomed the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency verifying the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. The Ministers welcomed the announcement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it shall earnestly implement its commitments to a complete declaration of all nuclear programs and disablement of all nuclear facilities. The Ministers reiterated their support for the Six Party Talks and welcomed the agreements reached at the Heads of Delegation Meeting of the Sixth Round of the Six Party Talks from 18-20 July 2007 in Beijing, China that Parties will earnestly fulfill their commitments in the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005 and the agreement of 13 February 2007 in line with the principle of "action for action".
12. The Ministers also emphasized the importance of addressing the issue of humanitarian and people concerns of the international community.
13. The Ministers exchanged views on the recent developments in Myanmar. The Ministers took note of the briefing by Myanmar on the recent developments in the process of national reconciliation and peaceful transition to democracy as envisaged in the Roadmap to Democracy. The Ministers expressed concern on the pace of the national reconciliation process and urged Myanmar to show tangible progress that would lead to a peaceful transition to democracy in the near future. The Ministers welcomed the convening of the final session of the National Convention, which commenced on 18 July 2007, and were encouraged by the assurances of Myanmar that the National Convention process will be completed within two months. The also expressed the hope

that it would allow Myanmar to move to the next steps of the Roadmap. The Ministers reiterated their calls for the early release of those placed under detention and for effective dialogue with all parties concerned.

14. The Ministers expressed their hope that Myanmar's efforts to deal with its many complex challenges would succeed so that Myanmar can effectively engage the international community, and in this regard the ARF would remain constructively engaged as required.
15. The Ministers welcomed the peaceful and successful conduct of the presidential and parliamentary elections in Timor Leste. Timor Leste expressed its appreciation for the international support it has received, including the monitoring of its elections.
16. The Ministers welcomed the briefing provided by the Thai Foreign Minister on the political developments in Thailand, including the drafting of its Constitution which has been completed and will be voted on at the referendum on 19 August 2007. The Ministers expressed their encouragement for general election in Thailand which is expected to be held by December 2007.
17. The Ministers reaffirmed the continuing relevance of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea as a milestone document between ASEAN and China, embodying their collective commitment to ensure the peaceful resolution of disputes in the area. The Ministers acknowledged that the Declaration had been effective in building mutual trust and confidence among the claimants in the area and in maintaining peace and stability in the region. The Ministers expressed optimism for the need to intensify efforts to move forward the implementation of the Declaration and eventually conclude a Regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.
18. The Ministers encouraged the continued exercise of self-restraint by all the parties concerned and the promotion of confidence building measures in this area and welcomed their commitment to resolving disputes in the South China Sea by peaceful means in conformity with the spirit of the DOC and recognized principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
19. The Ministers recognized the security challenges facing the Pacific Island countries and the need for the international community to play a constructive role in ensuring political stability and socio-economic development, through better aid coordination among other means.
20. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the situation in the Middle East and the need for substantial progress in the quest for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Ministers welcomed the Quartet's reaffirmation of their commitments made in Lisbon on 19 July 2007 to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to undertake serious efforts towards the establishment of an independent, democratic, and viable Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace and security, as a step towards a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, consistent with the Roadmap and UN Security Council resolutions. The Ministers expressed concern over the situation in the Middle East and the need for substantial progress in the quest for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Ministers expressed support for

the Quartet's reaffirmation of commitment to bring an end to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and to work to lay the foundations for the establishment of an independent, democratic, and viable Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace and security, as a step towards a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, consistent with the Roadmap, the Arab Peace Plan, and the related UN Security Council resolutions. The Ministers also welcomed recent call of President Bush on 16 July 2007 for an international meeting on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and expressed hope that this meeting would provide diplomatic support for the bilateral discussions and negotiations between the parties with the aim of achieving progress on the path to a Palestinian state and an end to the conflict.

21. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the report of the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in May 2007 that Iran had not suspended its enrichment related activities. The Ministers urged Iran to comply with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions and IAEA requirements and resolutions. Ministers welcomed recent efforts by the European Union on behalf of the Permanent Members of the UN Security Council and Germany to begin negotiations with Iran. The Ministers stressed the urgent need for a diplomatic solution which addresses the concerns of the international community, while respecting Iran's right to peaceful use of nuclear energy under safeguards and in accordance with its obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
22. The Ministers voiced their concern over the situation in Iraq and reaffirmed their support for the Iraqi government and its efforts in pursuit of a secure, stable, prosperous, and unified Iraq. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the international meetings in Baghdad and Sharm El-Sheikh towards expediting national reconciliation and reconstruction that are crucial to the attainment of peace, security and development in Iraq.
23. The Ministers underlined their continued support for the peace and development of Afghanistan. Afghanistan's stability is crucial for the broader region and the Ministers encouraged ARF participants to consider exploring ways to engage with Afghanistan.
24. The Ministers expressed their solidarity with the people and government of the Republic of Korea and condemned the hostage taking of their nationals in Afghanistan and deplore in the strongest terms the brutal murder of two hostages. The Ministers called for the immediate, unconditional, and safe release of all hostages. The Ministers expressed their deepest sympathy for the family and friends of the murder victims.
25. The Ministers reaffirmed that terrorism, irrespective of its origins, motivations or objectives, constitutes a threat to all peoples and countries, and the common interest of the international community in ensuring peace, stability, security and economic prosperity. The Ministers also reiterated their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and agreed that terrorism should not be associated with any particular religion or ethnic group. The Ministers expressed support and further called for continued international efforts to promote and enhance dialogue and broaden the understanding

among faiths, cultures, and civilizations. The Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to prevent, suppress and eliminate international terrorism consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and other universally recognized international law.

26. The Ministers commended the signing of the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism at the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu, the Philippines, highlighting the commitment of ASEAN to eradicate terrorism. The Ministers also urged the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. The Ministers emphasized the need to continue the strengthening of the international legal foundation in countering terrorism and urged for the adoption without delay of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
27. The Ministers also expressed support and called for continued cooperation among the regional centres on counter-terrorism such as the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) in Kuala Lumpur, the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok, and the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC) in Semarang, Indonesia and the Regional Antiterrorist Structure (RATS) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
28. The Ministers recognized that the illicit use of small arms and light weapons posed a serious threat to human security in every part of the world. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the ARF's strong commitment to work toward the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as United Nations resolution 61/66.
29. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of strengthening controls of the transfer of man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS), to help prevent these weapons being acquired or used by terrorist or other non-state groups. The Ministers noted that the proliferation of these weapons to non-state groups posed a threat to international civil aviation and to all countries in the region.
30. The Ministers welcomed the ARF's continued focus and dialogue on the issue of Maritime Security and reaffirmed the importance of addressing this issue within a cooperative framework that respects the rights of littoral states and the legitimate concerns of user states in accordance with international law. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the holding of the ARF Maritime Security Shore Exercise in Singapore on 22-23 January 2007 and looked forward to the development of other concrete and practical activities in the future. The Ministers noted that incidents of piracy in the region and the Straits of Malacca have decreased substantially in recent years, in large part due to cooperation among the littoral states.
31. The Ministers stated that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems, including its potential use by terrorists, remained a serious security challenge. The Ministers urged States to become parties to the two most recent universal instruments to combat nuclear terrorism; namely, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 April 2005,

and the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, adopted on 8 July 2005 in Vienna. The Ministers recalled UNSC resolution 1673 in which the Security Council reiterated the requirements of UNSC resolution 1540, thereby reaffirming the international community's determination to prevent the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems, including in particular, to non-state actors. In this respect, they expressed their support for the efforts of the 1540 Committee as well as the ARF and emphasized the importance for all States to ensure effective and full implementation of the Resolution.

32. The Ministers of the States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), reaffirming the validity of the Treaty as a cornerstone of global stability and security, expressed the need to undertake further efforts to strengthen the NPT, bearing in mind the discussions at the 2005 Review Conference and the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference in 2007 and agreed to make further efforts to strengthen compliance with and enforcement of all provisions of the Treaty. The Ministers stressed the urgent need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and called for the existing moratoria on nuclear testing. Most Ministers also called for the establishment and maintenance of moratoria on the production of fissile material for weapons pending negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) in the Conference of Disarmament in Geneva. The Ministers reiterated their continued support for the important role of the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency in preventing nuclear proliferation and promoting nuclear disarmament as well as peaceful use of nuclear energy.
33. The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapons-free zones (NWFZs) established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States in the regions concerned and emphasized the contribution of such zones to enhancing global and regional peace and security. The Ministers also further reaffirmed the importance of continued consultation on the Protocol of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty between the nuclear weapon states and the parties to the Treaty. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the meeting of the Commission for the SEANWFZ at the sidelines of the 40th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on 29 July 2007.
34. The Ministers noted that people smuggling and trafficking in persons are issues of ongoing concern. The Ministers acknowledged that the Bali Process on People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime continues to be a valuable forum for regional cooperation.
35. The Ministers agreed that avian and pandemic influenza continued to pose a significant potential threat to countries in the region. The Ministers recognized the importance of working with existing multilateral organizations to ensure that any ARF initiatives complement rather than duplicate existing initiatives. The Ministers agreed that it was important that states were committed to transparency in the reporting of influenza cases in humans and in animals, and stressed the prompt sharing of epidemiological data with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), capacity building to prevent and contain emerging epidemics, and the

early intervention in response to potential outbreaks. The Ministers also discussed the issue of climate change and agreed on the need to forge consensus on the appropriate responses.

36. The Ministers noted that energy security was important and underlined the need to develop renewable and alternative energy and energy-efficient technologies and called for the security of energy transit routes. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the holding of the First ARF Seminar on Energy Security in Brussels, Belgium on 5-6 October 2006 as useful for laying the groundwork for future exchanges on energy security.

Review of Activities of the Current Inter-Sessional Year (July 2006-July 2007)

37. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the success of Track I and Track II activities that had taken place during the current inter-sessional year (July 2006-July 2007). They commended the work of the ARF Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in Manila on 25 May 2007 and the ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures & Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs & PD), co-chaired by Indonesia and the European Union, and held in Batam, Indonesia on 1-3 November 2006 and in Helsinki, Finland on 28-30 March 2007. The Ministers noted the summary report of the co-chairs and endorsed their recommendations. The Report of the SOM is **ANNEX 2** and Co-Chairs' Reports of the ISG appear as **ANNEX 3**.
38. The Ministers welcomed the contributions made by the defence officials in the ARF process. In this regard, the Ministers were pleased with the outcome of the Fourth ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference (ASPC) hosted by the Philippines in Manila on 24 May 2007. They noted with satisfaction that the high-level interaction among the ARF defence policy officials had contributed further to build confidence and fostered mutual understanding, thus contributing to the maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the world. The Chairman's Summary Report of the ASPC is **ANNEX 4**.
39. The Ministers noted with concern the series of natural disasters that have struck the region, highlighting the importance of enhancing cooperation in disaster relief, mitigation, and management. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the outcome of the Sixth ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster relief (ISM on DR) which was held in Qingdao, China from 18-20 September 2006, and was co-chaired by Indonesia and China. The Co-Chairs' Report appears as **ANNEX 5**. The Ministers noted that Australia, China, the European Union, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the United States have volunteered to serve as shepherds to coordinate interim efforts to further the work of the ARF in disaster relief. The Ministers also adopted the ARF General Guidelines on Disaster Relief Cooperation which appears as **ANNEX 6**. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the Australian and Indonesian initiative to develop standard operating procedures through a desktop exercise in the coming year. They also welcomed plans by the Philippines and the U.S. for a 2009 Disaster Relief Exercise.

40. The Ministers welcomed the report of Singapore, Japan, and Russia as Co-Chairs of the Fifth Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC), which was held in Singapore, on 2-4 May 2007, and endorsed its recommendations. The Co-Chairs Report appears as **ANNEX 7**. The Ministers also endorsed the ARF Cooperation Framework on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime and tasked the officials to monitor and sustain its implementation. The Framework, attached as **ANNEX 8**, and is a compilation of ARF commitments in counter terrorism and transnational crime which have already been agreed upon in earlier ARF statements. The Framework was prepared by the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat as requested by the Fourth ARF ISM on CTTC held in Beijing in 2006. The Ministers also adopted the ARF Statement on Promotion of Inter-civilizational Dialogue. The statement appears as **ANNEX 9**.
41. The Ministers adopted the ARF Statement Supporting National Implementation of United Nations Council Resolution 1540 (2004) which appears as **ANNEX 10**. The Ministers endorsed the paper on "Best Practices in Export Control" which was the outcome ARF Export Licensing Experts Meeting convened in Singapore on 17-19 November 2005. The paper appears as **ANNEX 11**.
42. The Ministers noted the following workshops and seminars, which were completed in the inter-sessional year 2006-2007:
- 10th Meeting of ARF Heads of Defence Colleges/Universities/Institutions, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 4-7 September 2006
 - Seminar on Cyber Security, New Delhi, India, 6-8 September 2006
 - Seminar on the Role of Military and Civil Cooperation in the Prevention and Control of the Spread of Communicable Diseases, such as SARS and Avian Influenza, Ha Noi, Viet Nam, 14-15 September 2006
 - Seminar on Energy Security, Brussels, 6-7 October 2006
 - Workshop on Stockpile Management Security: Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS) and Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Bangkok, Thailand, 11-13 October 2006
 - Maritime Security Planning Exercise Planning Conference, Singapore, 7-8 December 2006
 - Maritime Security Shore Exercise, Singapore, 22-23 January 2007
 - 2nd Experts/Eminent Persons Meeting, Manila, Philippines, 5-6 February 2007
 - Workshop on the Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540, San Francisco, USA, 13-15 February 2007
 - 1st Peacekeeping Experts' Meeting, Port Dickson, Malaysia 7-9 March 2007
 - Seminar on Peacekeeping, New Delhi, India, 26-28 April 2007

Programme of Work for the Next Inter-sessional Year

43. The Ministers agreed that the ISG on CBMs & PD will continue to promote confidence building while progressing towards PD and welcomed the offer by Brunei Darussalam and Canada to co-chair the ISG on CBMs & PD in the next inter-sessional year. The Ministers noted the first meeting of the ISG on CBMs and PD for the inter-sessional year 2007-2008 will tentatively be held in Bandar Seri Begawan on 1-2 November 2007 and the second meeting in Canada on 3-4 April 2008.
44. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of the continuation of the ISM on DR and agreed that the ISM on DR should continue its work in exploring ways to enhance regional disaster risk reduction and emergency management. The Ministers welcomed the offer of Indonesia and the EU to co-host the next ISM on DR in Helsinki in October 2007.
45. The Ministers agreed that the ISM CTTC should continue its work to forge a more strengthened cooperation in fighting against terrorism and transnational crime. The Ministers welcomed the offer by Indonesia and India to co-chair the Sixth ISM on CTTC.
46. The Ministers noted with interest the proposal to establish ISM Shepherd Groups, attached as **ANNEX 12**, and tasked ARF SOM to continue discussions on the proposal for the next inter-sessional year
47. The Ministers reaffirmed the procedure that all proposed ARF activities should first be discussed at the ISG/ISM level and agreed at ARF-SOM.
48. The Ministers also noted with interest the EU preliminary concept paper on streamlining decision-making and tasked ARF SOM to continue discussions in the next ARF cycle. The concept paper is attached as **ANNEX 13**.
49. The Ministers noted the proposal by U.S., China, and Singapore to establish an Inter-Sessional Meeting devoted to non-proliferation issues. The Ministers expressed widespread support for the principle of a new ISM on this subject, but further consultations on the terms of reference for such a meeting were needed. The Ministers tasked SOM to continue consultations on the proposal for the next inter-sessional year.
50. The Ministers approved the work program for the next inter-sessional year (July 2006-July 2007) as in **ANNEX 14**.

Future Direction of the ARF Process

51. The Ministers agreed to continue the implementation of the Nine Recommendations of the Stocktaking of the ARF process, which was adopted in Brunei Darussalam on 31 July 2000. The Ministers agreed to extend further cooperation and support for the ARF Chair in carrying out the mandates outlined in the paper on the Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair. In this regard, the Ministers adopted the Terms of Reference of Friends of the ARF Chair (TOR-FOC). The TOR-FOC is attached as **ANNEX 15**.

52. The Ministers welcomed the ARF's progress towards Preventive Diplomacy (PD) in accordance with the adopted Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy and looked forward to the continued development of concrete measures in PD, including the results of a study of best practices and lessons learned by selected international and regional organizations in preventive diplomacy to be implemented by the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat and financed by the ARF Fund.
53. The Ministers adopted the assessment and review of the ARF SOM of the practicability of the recommendations of the First Plenary Meeting of the ARF Experts/Eminent Persons (EEP) on the future course of the ARF and the role of the EEPs as contained in **ANNEX 16**. The Ministers also welcomed the convening of the Second ARF EEP Meeting in Manila which was co-chaired by the Philippines and the Republic of Korea on 5-6 February 2007. The Ministers requested the SOM to submit an assessment of the practicability of the recommendations of the 2nd ARF EEP Meeting in time for their 15th ARF Ministerial Meeting.
54. Ministers agreed on the continued publication of the ARF Annual Security Outlook (ASO) to promote transparency as well as confidence building among ARF participants and welcomed the eighth volume of the ASO.
55. The Ministers emphasized the need to continue strengthening ties with other regional and international security organizations as well as linkages between Track I and Track II. The Ministers welcomed the measures undertaken this intersessional year to implement the Concept Paper on Enhancing Ties between Track I and Track II in the ARF, and between the ARF and Other Regional and International Security Organisations adopted at the 13th ARF and tasked the relevant ARF bodies to continue its implementation in accordance with the guidelines and format contained therein.
56. The Ministers expressed appreciation for the service of H.E. Ong Keng Yong as Secretary-General of the ASEAN for the period 2002 to 2007
57. The Ministers commended the ARF Unit in assisting the ARF Chair and in developing the ARF's institutional memory, including through the regularly updated Matrix of ARF Decisions and their Status, which is made available on the ARFNet, and the development of the ARF Internet homepage and virtual communications network at www.aseanregionalforum.org. The Ministers acknowledged the assistance that some ARF participants were extending to the ARF Unit and encouraged others to do the same.
58. The Ministers welcomed the voluntary contributions of Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines, New Zealand, Singapore, and the U.S. to the ARF Fund for the purpose of implementing projects, activities, and decisions of the ARF and encouraged ARF participants to consider making future contributions.
59. The Ministers noted that applications to participate in the ARF would be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the established criteria. In this connection, they agreed on the need to consolidate ARF activities for the time being and to consider applications at a later period.
60. The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the open dialogue regarding the progress of the ARF process and committed to further advancing the ARF

process towards the preventive diplomacy stage and beyond, on the basis of consensus and at a pace comfortable to all, while continuing to build mutual confidence and trust among its participants.

2 August 2007, Manila