

ANNEX G

ASEAN Regional Forum

Track Two Conference on Preventive Diplomacy

9-11 September 1997

Singapore

CO-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

1. The 3rd ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Track Two Conference on Preventive Diplomacy was jointly organised by the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) Republic of Singapore and the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) in the United Kingdom, using the network of the Council for Security Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific. This conference was co-sponsored by the Republic of Singapore and the United Kingdom/European Union (EU). The proposal for this conference was endorsed by the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting in Langkawi (Malaysia) from 18-20 May 1997, and was welcomed by the ARF Ministers at their 4th meeting in Subang Jaya (Malaysia) on 27 July 1997. The Conference was jointly chaired by Ambassador S.R. Nathan of IDSS and Dr Gerald Segal of IISS. The agenda and programme for the meeting are attached at Annex A.

2. At the 2nd AFR meeting, the Ministers agreed that where the subject matters at Stage One (Confidence-Building) and Stage Two (Preventive Diplomacy) of the ARF overlapped, such matters could proceed in tandem. At the recently concluded 4th ARF meeting, this view was reiterated and the Inter-Sessional Group of CBMs was tasked to identify ways of addressing these matters. In this regard, the primary objective of this Conference was to discuss concrete measures which could be adopted by the ARF to advance to Stage Two.

3. The meeting noted the work already done in the ARF Track Two process on Preventive Diplomacy, and in particular the ideas put forward at the Preventive Diplomacy Seminars in Seoul and developed in the subsequent seminar in Paris, as well

as in the series of CSCAP Meeting. Representatives from all ARF participants were present. The list of those who attended the meeting is attached at Annex B.

The following is a summary of the key points discussed.

Session 1 – Overview

The Conference reviewed the recommendations and conclusions of preceding CSCAP and Track Two Conferences on Preventive Diplomacy, and re-affirmed its usefulness. It was accepted that the difference circumstances and actual conditions in the Asia-Pacific would often call for different approaches from those employed in other parts of the world. With that in mind, some felt that CBMs, as one element of Preventive Diplomacy, had the best prospects of success in the immediate future and efforts should be focused on them.

Session 2 – The European Union Experience in Preventive Diplomacy

The meeting addressed the experience of the EU in Preventive Diplomacy, which provided examples spanning CBMs and Preventive Diplomacy. It was suggested that key factors influencing the efficacy of the EU's Preventive Diplomacy were the particular circumstances of conflict, the will of the actors to engage in Preventive Diplomacy

beyond third party mediation, and the degree of incentive for parties concerned. Much of the discussion focused on the varying applicability of the EU experience to circumstances in the Asia-Pacific.

Session 3 – Preventive Diplomacy in Southeast Asia

The meeting exchanged views on the prospects for further efforts in Confidence Building and Preventive Diplomacy in Southeast Asia and focused in particular on the South China Sea and Cambodia. The meeting noted the ongoing preventive diplomacy efforts in the region and acknowledged the contribution of Indonesia-organised workshop on the South China Sea. The meeting affirmed the importance of bilateral negotiations and took note of the useful role which third parties might play in facilitating diplomacy.

Session 4 – The Chinese Perspective on Preventive Diplomacy

In response to the presentation of the Chinese perspective, the meeting noted the importance of CBMs in the entire process of Preventive Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific and agreed that bilateral and multilateral CBMs should be explored and exploited more fully by the states in the region. The meeting focused on the importance of consensus in the practice of Preventive Diplomacy. However, some participants expressed that in certain circumstances, third parties' good offices could be valuable in helping to resolve disputes.

Session 5 – Preventive Diplomacy and Map Exercises

The meeting was briefed on the nature of Map Exercises. They were defined as simulation exercises designed to enhance multilateral understanding and co-operation in crises. As such, they were deemed to be good examples of co-operative measures to foster comprehensive security.

Session 6 – Preventive Diplomacy : Freedom of Navigation

The meeting discussed the term “Freedom of Navigation” and “Navigational Rights”, and the possibility of an ARF declaration on the latter as a CBM. Given the diversity of views, it was recommended that the issues raised be discussed in the CSCAP Working Group on Maritime Security.

Session 7 – Preventive Diplomacy : Towards Track One

The meeting considered options which would enable the ARF to enhance its Preventive Diplomacy role. To that end, it considered; the role of the ARF chair; the possibility of intensifying the consultative process at the level of officials; drawing on UN experience; provision of training; and early warning capabilities. But different views were expressed at this meeting in this regard.

Dinner Commentary – The Role of the UN Secretary General

The meeting welcomed the presentation on the good offices role of the UN Secretary General by Mr. Francesc Vendrell of the UN and re-affirmed the UN's important role in maintaining international peace and stability.

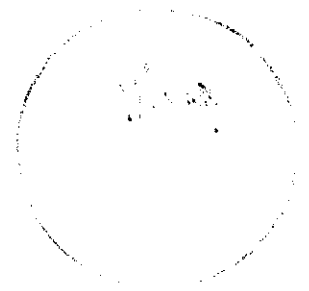
Conclusion

The Co-chairs agreed to forward the following proposals to the current Co-chairs of the Inter-Sessional Group on CBMs (Brunei and Australia) as well as to the ARF SOM for their consideration.

- a. The codification of principles regulating international behavior in the region.
- b. An enhanced role for the ARF chair or other third parties in providing good offices in certain circumstances.
- c. Explore the relevance of Sino-Indian and Sino-Russian experience in CBMs for Preventive Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region.
- d. Multilateral co-operation as a form of Prevention Diplomacy on trans-national issues such as drug trafficking; shipment, storage and disposal of nuclear waste; major movements of population etc, where directly linked to security.
- e. An annual Security Outlook to be discussed in Track One, but produced at a Track Two level.

The Co-chairs agreed to forward the following proposals to the current Co-chairs of CSCAP (Malaysia and Japan) with the suggestion that CSCAP explore further:

- a. The utility and feasibility of Map (Simulation) Exercises.
- b. The issues raised in the paper on Freedom of Navigation.



The meeting endorsed the view that close co-operation be enhanced between CSCAP and ARF.

The Meeting was held in a warm and constructive spirit. The participants expressed their appreciation to Amb Nathan and Dr Segal for their able co-chairmanship. They also thanked the Republic of Singapore and the United Kingdom/EU for sponsoring the Conference and for the generous hospitality accorded to them.

6 May 1998