

Concept Paper

Table Top Exercise ASEAN Regional Forum: Disaster Relief Exercise 2013 (ARF DiREx 2013)

1. Background

- 1.1 Upon agreement between the Kingdom of Thailand and the Republic of Korea, the co-hosts of ARF DiREx 2013, Table Top Exercise (TTX) will be jointly conducted as one of the major components of the ARF DiREx 2013 in May 2013 at the simulated disaster affected area of Petchaburi Province, Thailand.
- 1.2 The TTX will focus on addressing existing procedures of national and regional coordination mechanisms for management of multi-national humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), using the scenario of an 8.9 Richter scale earthquake in Sumatra that will trigger a destructive tsunami along the Andaman coast of Thailand. (To synchronize with FTX for consistency)
- 1.3 The *main objective of the TTX* will be to test and identify gaps and challenges of existing standard operating procedures and protocols of the affected country, ASEAN, ARF members and international humanitarian community (e.g. the UN, IFRC, INGOs) in strategic level civil-military coordination response to a large-scale natural disaster.

2. Approach and Design

- 2.1 Discussion-based approach will be applied for this TTX. There will be both plenary and thematic group discussions.
 - 2.2 Based on the main scenario described in the ARF DiREx 2013 concept paper, facilitators in each group will ask participants various questions and encourage discussion and decision-making according to the participants' respective roles and functions in disaster relief operations. There will be a recorder assigned to each group to capture the main points.
 - 2.3 The TTX will be a part of the AAR and will closely coordinate with the AAR team throughout the planning and exercise stages.
 - 2.4 Participants are encouraged to revisit relevant documents related to civil-military and multi-national HADR coordination, such as Oslo Guidelines, SASOP, ARF Guidelines, etc.
 - 2.5 TTX will be carried out and supervised by a multi-agency team, composed of;
 - 2.5.1 Control group: controllers, scenario manager and time-keeper (To be elaborated at FPC)
 - 2.5.2 Facilitators (participation and number to be determined at FPC)
 - 2.5.3 Recorder (number to be determined at FPC)
 - 2.5.4 Logistic officers (number to be determined at FPC)
 - 2.6 Potential participants of TTX include but are not limited to:
 - 2.6.1 Stakeholders: Civil defense and military officers representing ARF member countries, Embassy and consular staff, and selected international organizations and non-governmental organizations responsible for HADR at the operational and strategic level.
 - 2.6.2 Observers
-

3. Scope of exercise

- 3.1 The exercise has been designed and developed to address the diverse strategic issues of multi-national disaster relief operations involving ARF participants based on the agreed upon ARF DiREx 2013 Concept Paper.
- 3.2 Taking into account lessons learned from 2011 ARF DiREx, the TTX will address practical, realistic issues.
- 3.3 The exercise will address strategic issues related to multi-national disaster relief coordination based on relevant regulations and coordination mechanisms within ARF members' countries in different phases/stages.

The phase/stage reflects situational changes according to the flow of time. The early stage deals with emergency response immediately following the occurrence of the disaster. Latter stages deal with recovery and demobilization in the stability phase. For example,

- 3.3.1 *Welcoming international disaster relief assistance:* After the onset of the extremely large-scale disaster, the Royal Thai Government declares a Level 4 State of Emergency wherein international assistance is welcomed in order to increase capacity of RTG during the onset of the disaster response operation.
- 3.3.2 *Requesting international disaster relief assistance:* RTG realizes the complex situation, including mass casualties and secondary disasters, makes it necessary to request additional civil and military assets from ARF member states and international organizations for more efficient relief operations. The request will go through existing mechanisms/tools such as ASEAN's AHA Center, UN system, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), and other bilateral agreements between Thailand and ARF members.
- 3.3.3 *Managing foreign/international disaster relief assistance:* This stage involves the entire process of receiving international assistance to include CIQ and clearances, providing assignments on logistics issues to facilitate and ensure the safety and immunity of the international actors, and tracking their implementation and progress.
- 3.3.4 *Stopping foreign/international disaster relief assistance:* Assuming that the disaster situation becomes stable and needs are fulfilled, it is crucial for the affected country to officially announce to the international and foreign assistance providers to prepare for demobilization. In some cases, it is possible that foreign/international resources are depleted due to prolonged operations. In this case, the assistance provider will inform RTG of their drawdown and demobilization plan.
- 3.3.5 *Demobilization of foreign/international disaster relief assistance:* Once foreign/international disaster relief assistance is no longer required or the provider decides to withdraw from the affected areas, RTG will prepare to facilitate the effective and smooth demobilization of assets out of Thailand. This process should once again involve the protocols/SOPs of CIQ and clearance.

4. Schedule of the exercise

TTX will be composed of three main activities:

4.1 7 May 2013 - *Briefing and Academic Session*

This session aims to provide participants with the exercise background information and relevant knowledge of current HADR coordination practices, mechanisms, and frameworks, particularly on civil-military aspects at global, regional, sub-regional, and national levels.

4.2 8 May 2013 - TTX Session

The session will run according to the exercise design and scope mentioned above, starting with the introduction of the scenario and ground rules.

4.3 9 May 2013 - Participants can either choose to join

- a. *FTX Site Visit*
- b. *TTX summary and team meeting with AAR team*

5. Expected outcomes

- 5.1 Identified gaps, challenges and recommendations for the further development and improvement of relevant strategic issues and products (for example, national laws and regulation, SOP/protocols/tools/guidelines and documents of host country, ARF participants and participating international organizations).
 - 5.2 Strengthened HADR collaboration and coordination among ARF participants and participating international organizations.
 - 5.3 Increased understanding of civil and military coordination mechanisms and processes in order to more effectively utilize civil and military assets for HADR-related activities.
-