

**Co-Chairs' Summary Report
of
the Tenth ASEAN Regional Forum
Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief
(10th ARF ISM on DR)
Bangkok, 2-3 September 2010**

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 17th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Hanoi on 23 July 2010, the Tenth Meeting of the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ARF ISM on DR) was held in Bangkok on 2-3 September 2010. The Meeting was co-chaired by Thailand and the United States.
2. The Meeting was attended by representatives of all ARF participants, except Brunei Darussalam and Canada. A representative from the ASEAN Secretariat was also present, as were representatives from UN ESCAP, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence, the Australia Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction, Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance, USAID and AUSAID. The Agenda of the Meeting was adopted as appears as ANNEX 1. The Programme of Activities appears as ANNEX 2 and the List of Participants appears as ANNEX 3.
3. The Meeting opened with welcoming remarks by the two Co-Chairs, Mrs. Chitriya Pinthong, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and Acting ARF SOM Leader, and Ms. Judith Beth Cefkin, Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the United States and Deputy Chief of Mission. Their remarks appear as ANNEXES 4-5.
4. H.E. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, delivered the keynote address which underscored the need for the ARF to enhance their cooperation in the area of disaster management in order to better protect the Asia-Pacific region from natural disasters. Such efforts should be based on the development of closer coordination between ASEAN, the ARF as well as the envisaged ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus). He stressed that these efforts should ultimately lead to enhanced capabilities of the ARF to help contribute to addressing the

challenges posed by disasters such as the current flooding in Pakistan. The gist of the Secretary-General's remarks appears as ANNEX 6.

Plenary Session

5. The Plenary Session was chaired by Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana, Deputy Director General of ASEAN-Thailand. Mr. Aloysius J. Rego, Deputy Executive Director of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), spoke on behalf of Dr. Bhichit Rattakul, the Director of the ADPC, who was invited as guest speaker. He stressed the need for coordination and information exchange between existing efforts in disaster relief, with the focus on creating synergies between ASEAN, the ARF, as well as Centres of Excellence in disaster relief in the region. The presentation appears as ANNEX 7.

6. The Meeting was briefed by Mr. Guenther Ebenwalder, Assistant Director for Geospatial Analysis and Modeling on the Australia-Singapore Disaster Relief Mapping Service which is linked from the ARF website and became operational in mid July 2010. The presentation appears in ANNEX 8. Views were expressed regarding the need to protect the Service from terrorists and for appropriate screening of data. The site is password protected with passwords to be issued to ARF Participants. ARF Participants were encouraged to input data on a voluntary basis, in coordination with the Australian Department of Defense.

7. The Meeting briefed by Mr. Ade Parmo Sarwono, ASEAN-Indonesia, on preparations for the ARF DiREx to be organized with Japan in March 2011 in Manado. The presentation appears ANNEX 9. Views were expressed that there should be increased interaction and coordination between the ARF DiREx and the ARDEX, including non-ASEAN observership in the ARDEX.

8. The Meeting was briefed by Kevin Sheives, Multilateral Officer, US Department of State, on the Model Arrangement. The presentation appears as ANNEX 10. Several delegations spoke in support of the draft, seeing it as a useful tool to help facilitate bilateral agreements regarding the entry of military personnel in affected countries. Views were expressed on the issue of immunities, privileges and dispute settlement arrangements in the draft. Ideas were proposed on the testing of such a Model Arrangement in the ARF

DiREx.

9. The Meeting was briefed by the Ambassador of Pakistan to Thailand on the recent developments regarding the flooding situation in Pakistan and stressed the importance of regional and international cooperation to help the people and Government of Pakistan in addressing this most serious natural disaster to affect the country in recent years.

10. The Meeting was briefed by Ms. Adelina Kamal, Head of Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division of the ASEAN Secretariat on the latest developments in ASEAN efforts in disaster management, including the development and entry into force of the AADMER and the ASEAN Standby Arrangement and Standard Operating Procedure (SASOP). A call was made for closer coordination of ASEAN and ARF efforts on disaster management and for ASEAN Dialogue Partners to support the implementation of the AADMER Work Programme and the development of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).

General Conclusions

11. The Co-Chairs' sense was that there was a general convergence of views during the Plenary Session on the importance of the following:

11.1 Ensuring that the various humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts will ultimately translate to concrete and effective action to help countries better address disasters such as the current flooding in Pakistan.

11.2 Enhancing information exchange, coordination and synergy between the efforts in disaster management of ASEAN, the ARF and other regional organizations and fora.

11.3 Identifying more clearly the role of both ASEAN and the ARF in the humanitarian and disaster relief architecture in the region.

11.4 Undertaking a serious and comprehensive regional stock-taking/regional mapping of disaster management capabilities and activities in order to minimize duplication of efforts and promote synergies in cooperation amongst various regional bodies and programmes.

11.5 Developing different tools to promote more effective disaster management cooperation in the ARF such as the Mapping Service, the ARF DiREx and the Model Arrangement, recognizing the concrete and value-added nature of these initiatives.

11.6 Examining ways to build further on the existing building blocs of HADR cooperation in the ARF and develop a more systemic, ARF-wide arrangement on HADR cooperation, including possible SOPs and Standby Arrangements/ Modalities that could interact with those of ASEAN and other regional organizations or fora.

Specific Recommendations

12. The following recommendations were offered:

12.1 Develop synergies between ARDEX and ARF DiREx, beginning by inviting some non-ASEAN ARF Participants to observe the upcoming ARDEX in Indonesia in 2010, share lessons learnt between ARDEX and ARF DiREx and ultimately institutionalize coordination between the two sets of exercises.

12.2 Utilise as appropriate the existing work of ARF on civilian-military coordination especially the draft Model Arrangement to help take forward discussions within ASEAN on Chapter 6 of SASOP dealing with civilian-military coordination, and testing of such a Model Arrangement in the ARF DiREx or another appropriate venue over the near term.

12.3 Examine possibilities in developing synchronized SOPs of ASEAN and the ARF as well as develop appropriate interface between the AADMER Work Programme and the ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan, including possible synchronization of the two Work Plans.

12.4 Examine possibilities of developing appropriate interface between the ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan, particularly priority area 1, and the Action Plan on Implementation of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Risk Reduction in Asia adopted at the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on DRR on 4th December 2008 at Kuala Lumpur.

Discussion Group 1 and Briefings by Regional Centers

13. The Discussion Group and briefing by regional centres were co-facilitated by Mr. Aloysius J. Rego, Deputy Executive Director of the ADPC and Dr. Matthew Hayne, Co-Director of the Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR). The discussion focussed on strengthening regional coordination of HADR capacity building and cooperation efforts and the development of synergies between ARF disaster relief efforts and those of other organizations.

14. The Meeting was briefed by Dr. Peter Hazdra of the Delegation of the European Union on preparations for an ARF Training Workshop on developing a common framework for post disaster needs assessment, recovery and reconstruction in Asia, to be co-organized by the EU and Thailand, with the cooperation of the World Bank and UNDP, in Bangkok in November 2010. The latest concept paper of the workshop appears as ANNEX 10.

15. The Meeting was briefed by Malaysia on the latest developments on the WFP humanitarian depot in Subang. The gist of the presentation appears as ANNEX 11.

16. The Meeting was briefed Dr. Matthew Hayne, Co-Director of the Australia-Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR) on the ongoing efforts in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) on disaster management. The gist of the remarks appears as ANNEX 12. The AIFDR programme was bilateral between Indonesia and Australia but it was consistent with ARF objectives.

17. Presentations were made by UN ESCAP, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC), the Asia Pacific Civil-Military Centre of Excellence (APCM-CoE), the Australia Indonesia Facility for Disaster Reduction (AIFDR), Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance (COE-DMHA) and USAID on the various capacity-building and training programmes on disaster management that were available. The presentations appear as ANNEXES 13 to 18.

18. The Meeting took note of some of the ideas for enhancing coordination and synergy between ASEAN, the ARF and other regional organizations/fora as appear in the Information Paper: Towards Enhanced

Coordination and Synergies for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster relief (HADR) Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific as appear in ANNEX 19.

General Conclusions

19. The Co-Chairs' sense was that there was general agreement on the need for the following:

19.1 Enhancing coordination of efforts and developing synergies among regional centers that help develop capacities for and provide training on disaster management through concrete measures, drawing on the comparative advantages of the various organizations and centres. In this regard, while overlaps should be avoided, they should be transformed into opportunities for developing enhanced synergies amongst the various organizations and centres.

19.2 Updating the ARF DR Work Plan and implementing key projects designed to enhance coordination of HADR efforts in the ARF and promote greater synergies with activities of other regional organizations, in particular ASEAN, and fora, such as reactivating ARF priority projects identified in the ARF DR Work Plan under Priority Area #3.

19.3 Enhancing collaboration with the UN system especially the UN ISDR which may assist in regional coordination efforts.

19.4 Adopting a long-term view on improving disaster management capabilities in the region such as by developing sustainable development of institutions that deal with disaster management.

Specific Recommendations

20. The following recommendations were offered:

20.1 Finalize co-leads for all the priority areas of the ARF DR Work Plan and, in this connection, encourage the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) to identify lead countries from ASEAN based on current lead roles in specific ASEAN priority areas.

20.2 Develop an initial matrix of existing training programmes in regional centers that cater to the priority areas as identified in the ARF DR

Work Plan.

20.3 Task the relevant regional centers and organizations to work together to convene a meeting/workshop of regional centres that deal with capacity-building and training on HADR to (1) develop appropriate modalities to enhance coordination of efforts; (2) map out an integrated syllabus of training programmes from which ARF Participants can choose to develop their own capacities based on their respective priorities; and (3) explore the development of joint databases of information and best practices, noting that the ADPC has offered to help coordinate this effort.

20.4 Develop appropriate modalities whereby the ARF could provide updated information on HADR-related activities and programmes into information platforms such as the UN ESCAP's *Asia-Pacific Gateway on Disaster Risk Reduction and Development* and UN ISR database.

20.5 Instruct the ARF Unit to submit annual letters to other regional and international organizations outlining that year's progress by ARF in DR cooperation.

Discussion Group 2: Considering region-wide Standby Arrangement System or Modalities for Civil-Military Assets—Possible Role of the ARF.

21. The Discussion Group Meeting was co-chaired by Ben Hemingway of US AID/OFDA and Colonel Titie Tinsulanonda of the Ministry of Defense of Thailand.

22. The Meeting was briefed by Japan on the concept of ARF registration scheme for disaster relief capabilities and welcomed suggestions and initial questions on the concept to be forwarded to Japan by the end of September. Such a registration scheme would be based on the principles of flexibility, voluntarism and complementarity with ASEAN and UN efforts. The presentation appears as ANNEX 20. Views were expressed on issues such as the types of information required for the registration, possible links with ASEAN standby arrangements and those of the UN, the appropriate level of commitment for the registered resources, and registration of physical capabilities not only physical assets.

23. The Meeting was briefed by the Thai Ministry of Defense and Royal Thai Armed Forces on the role of the Thai military in supporting HADR operations as well as initial rehabilitation and recovery efforts, in close cooperation with civilian agencies as are the lead agencies in disaster management. The importance of the contribution of ASEAN defense agencies to enhanced coordination at the regional level, including through coordination with the AHA Centre, was emphasized. The presentation appears in ANNEX 21.

24. The Meeting was briefed by China on the role of Chinese Armed Forces in disaster relief as well as in support of international HADR missions and assistance delivery to some 19 affected States. The importance of close civilian-military coordination was underscored as reflected in the development of civilian-military information-sharing institution.

25. The Meeting was briefed by India on the contribution of the Indian military in assisting HADR efforts in the region, including in South Asia and Southeast Asia, as well as recovery operations such as infrastructure repair. Several challenges in international civil military coordination were identified such as identification of exact assistance required, lack of knowledge of local practices, resource sharing, different concepts of operations, legal issues, delays caused by diplomatic/overflight clearances and need for clear command and control. The need to protect the rights and privileges of both, the assisting nation as well as the assisted nation, was emphasized.

26. The Meeting was briefed by Singapore on a concept of having an linkage between a potential ARF standby arrangement and the existing ASEAN standby arrangement. The presentation appears as ANNEX 22.

General Conclusions

27. The Co-Chairs' sense is that there was agreement to attach importance to the following:

27.1 Recognizing the potential contribution of appropriate standby arrangement/modality in the ARF to facilitating more effective regional response to disasters that complements other arrangements in the region, bearing in mind existing multilateral standby arrangements under the United Nations which will enhance effective and efficient application of resources and address comprehensive needs of affected nation.

27.2 Continuing to enhance civilian-military coordination in HADR operations, recognizing the lead coordinating role of civilian agencies in many countries and the comparative advantage of the military in areas such as assets in support of HADR operations which makes them a key first responder to disasters, bringing in the role of private sector perhaps through collaboration with other regional groupings.

27.3 Examining areas where overlaps in responsibilities and resource earmarking can be opportunities for development of synergies and which can pose problems that should be rectified.

Specific Recommendations

28. The following recommendations were offered:

28.1 Pursue further development of the concept of an ARF registration scheme for disaster relief and, to this end, invite additional ideas and suggestions from ARF Participants. Comments would be forwarded to Japan.

28.2 Explore possible modalities for interaction between the existing ASEAN standby arrangement and a potential ARF standby arrangement, with the AHA Centre playing some form of coordinating role. Comments on this concept would be forwarded to Singapore.

28.3 Strengthen the capabilities of the ARF Unit in order to help support HADR cooperation efforts in the ARF particularly in the area of follow-up and support the proposal for an ARF technical advisor in the ARF Unit for disaster relief issues.

28.4 Compile and exchange contact information of organizations and centers in the region dealing with disaster management.

Discussion Group 3: ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan and Hanoi Plan of Action

29. The Discussion Group Meeting was co-chaired by Adthaporn Singhawichai, Director of Research and International Cooperation Bureau,

Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of Interior of Thailand, and Kevin Sheives, US Department of State.

30. The Meeting was briefed by Thailand on the ASEAN lead countries in the four strategic components of the AADMER Work Programme as follows: Risk Assessment, Early Warning and Monitoring: Cambodia and the Philippines; Prevention and Mitigation: Lao PDR and Thailand; Preparedness and Response: Malaysia and Singapore; Recovery: Indonesia and Myanmar. Ideas were proposed to match the ASEAN lead countries for the AADMER strategic components with the priority areas of the ARF DR Work Programme.

31. The Meeting was briefed by the ASEAN Secretariat on the latest developments on the development and implementation of the Five Year AADMER Work Programme. Progress has been achieved in the preparedness and response recovery component particularly in SASOP, ERAT and ARDEX, and other programmes on prevention and mitigation such as safe schools programmes as well as recovery. Gaps have been identified in risk assessment and early warning which would require further cooperation and assistance from Dialogue Partners.

32. The Meeting was briefed by Viet Nam on the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement, focusing on disaster relief cooperation and the five objectives of the Hanoi Plan of Action in this regard such as the support for implementation of the AADMER and its Work Plan. The fact that disaster relief cooperation is a cross-cutting issue was underscored as it affects cooperation in other issues in the ARF such as maritime security cooperation. Other important issues include enhancing interoperability, coordination with other regional organizations and arrangements and more effective use of military assets. The Hanoi Plan of Action appears in ANNEX 23.

33. The Meeting reviewed the Work Plan, particularly the objectives, the organizational structure and priority areas, which remains a living document.

34. The Meeting was briefed by Australia, as non-ASEAN Lead Country, on updated developments in the disaster risk reduction priority area #1 of the ARF DR Work Plan. The need for greater coordination of capacity-building and training programmes in disaster risk reduction, better methodologies, holistic approaches, was underscored. Spatial data (elevation data,

infrastructure data) and supporting domestic legislation were stressed as a key factor in effective disaster risk reduction.

35. The Meeting was briefed by the U.S., as non-ASEAN Lead Country, on developments on the improving government emergency response, relief and early recovery priority area #2. Key developments include the ARF DiREx, examining of standby arrangements system, disaster relief mapping service, and Model Arrangement.

General Conclusion

36. The Co-Chairs' sense is that there is a general convergence of views to consider adjusting the ARF DR Work Plan so that the ARF priority areas would be more focused and align more closely with the AADMER Work Programme. Such adjustments could be undertaken by the ARF Unit and the ASEAN Secretariat personnel responsible for the AADMER.

Specific Recommendations

37. The following recommendations were offered:

37.1 Promote interoperability among ARF bodies by getting the ISM DR Co-Chairs to update the outcome of this Meeting with other ISMs such as the ISM on Maritime Security.

37.2 Give more importance to the response and relief aspects of priority #2 of Tier One in ARF Work Plan and consider recommending to ACDM of matching the ASEAN Lead Countries in the AADMER Strategic Component of Preparedness and Response with this ARF priority area.

37.3 Encourage ARF Participants to consider becoming co-chairs of the *Capacity Identification and Improving Coordination of Capacity-Building Efforts in Asia* priority area with a view to submitting proposal by the next ARF ISG on CBM and PD in Indonesia in November 2010.

37.4 Task the ARF Unit to revise the Work Plan in accordance with the above objectives. The proposal for an ARF Unit technical advisor for disaster relief issues was put forward for consideration.

37.5 Request the ACDM and ASEAN countries to brief the Fall ISG on their progress in identifying ASEAN Lead Countries for each of the three Priority Areas of the ARF DR Work Plan.

Closing Session

38. The Meeting was briefed by UN OCHA on the Asia-Pacific Conference on Military Assistance to Disaster Relief Operations (APC MADRO), the fourth meeting of which would be convened in Thailand in October 2010. The presentation appears as ANNEX 24.
39. The Meeting took note of the briefing by the Philippines on the ARF Workshop on Bio Risk Management to be convened in Makati City on 28-30 September 2010 and was encouraged to send participants to the Workshop. The details of the Workshop appear as ANNEX 25.
40. The Meeting took note of Cambodia's willingness to be the ASEAN Lead Country on the priority area #2 (Improving Government Emergency Response, Relief and Early Recovery) in the ARF DR Work Plan.
41. The next Co-Chairs of the ISM on DR as well as the venue of the next Meeting would be decided in due course.
42. The Meeting agreed to submit the report and its recommendations to the ISG on CBM and PD for consideration.
43. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to Thailand as host of the ISM on DR and thanked Thailand and the U.S. as Co-Chairs of the ISM on DR.
