Concept Paper
For the Establishment of
ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of
Information and Communications Technologies
(ARF ISM on ICTs Security)

I.   BACKGROUND

1.   Since its establishment in 1994, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has contributed to the maintenance of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond by elaborating various regional and international issues of common concerns. The breadth of such issues has reflected the fact that there has been a certain common level of comfort among ARF participants in discussing issues of peace and security in the region. One of the main issues being discussed by the ARF is security of and in the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs).

2.   During the 19th ARF Ministerial Meeting on 12 July 2012 in Phnom Penh, the ARF Foreign Ministers adopted the Statement on Cooperation in Ensuring Cyber Security that sets out a number of measures to intensify regional cooperation on the issue of ICTs security including the development of a work plan on security of and in the use of ICTs whose purpose is to promote a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative ICT environment and to prevent conflict and crises by developing trust and confidence between states in the ARF region, and by capacity building. At the 21st ARF Ministerial Meeting on 10 August 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, the ARF Ministers in the Chairman's Statement tasked officials to submit the work plan to the following Ministerial Meeting. Thus, during the 22nd Meeting on 6 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, the ARF Foreign Ministers adopted the ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies.

3.   Following the adoption of the work plan, the ARF discussed many issues with regard to security of and in the use of ICTs, including enhancing cooperation among the ARF members through the implementation of the projects enumerated in the ARF Work Plan.

4.   Against that background, the importance of addressing the increasing number of issues related to security of and in the use of ICTs is clearly recognized among ARF members. With a view to providing a venue for ARF to further discuss, identify, and coordinate ARF's efforts on it, particularly to enhance discussions, reaching common understanding. Malaysia and Japan propose the establishment of an ASEAN Regional

Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ARF ISM on ICTs Security) .

II. PLATFORMS WHERE THE ISSUES OF SECURITY OF AND IN THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES (ICTs) ARE BEING DISCUSSED

5.   The Ministers acknowledged the importance of addressing issues on security of and in the use of ICTs, and started deliberating on this matter at the 19th Ministerial Meeting in Phnom Penh in 2012 through the adoption of the ARF Statement on Cooperation in Ensuring Cyber Security. In addition, the ARF members continue to make efforts in this field based on the work plan endorsed in 2015.

6.   Issues on this topic in the ARF have been addressed in its various meetings, such as:

- ARF Workshop on Operationalising Confidence-Building Measures for Cooperation During Cyber Incident Response (co-chaired by the EU and Malaysia) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2-3 March 2016;
- ARF Seminar on Operationalising Confidence-Building Measures in the ASEAN Regional Forum (co-chaired by the United States and Singapore) in Singapore, 21-22 October 2015;
- ARF Workshop on Cyber Security Capacity Building (co-chaired by China and Malaysia) in Beijing, China, 29-30 July 2015,
- ARF Workshop on Cyber Confidence Building Measures (co-chaired by Australia and Malaysia) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 25-26 March 2014;
- ARF Workshop on Measures to Enhance Cyber Security-Legal and Cultural Aspects (co-chaired by China and Malaysia) in Beijing, China, 11-12 September 2013;
- ARF Seminar on Confidence Building Measures in Cyberspace (co-chaired by Republic of Korea and Malaysia) in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 11-12 September 2012;
- ARF Workshop on Cyber Security Incident Response (co-chaired by Australia and Singapore) in Singapore, 6-7 September 2012; and
- ARF Workshop on Proxy Actors in Cyberspace (co-chaired by the United States and Vietnam) in Hoi An, Vietnam, 14-15 March 2012.

7.   In addition, the issues of security of and in the use of ICTs have also been addressed intersessionally in the ARF Ministerial Meeting, Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) and Inter-sessional Support Group Meeting on Confidence Building Measures

and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs and PD), during which ARF participants acknowledged the importance of addressing them to support peace and stability in the region.

8. On the other hand, it is widely recognized that there is no specific venue for ARF to discuss issues on security of and in the use of ICTs. At some meetings, the need to establish a specific intersessional meeting on security of and in the use of ICTs within ARF was articulated.

9. Thus the issues of ensuring security in the use of ICTs are withdrawn from the capacity of the ARF Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ARF ISM on CTTC) and transmitted to the ARF ISM on ICTs Security. Simultaneously an open ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of ICTs, which is subordinate to the ARF ISM on ICTs Security, is established and begins its work.

III. OBJECTIVES

10. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security will be a forum for more focused dialogues on security of and in the use of ICTs to assess basic and common regional needs, including capacity building.

11. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security will focus on comprehensive implementation of ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of ICTs.

12. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security will assist in development of a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative ICT environment and to prevent conflict and crises by developing trust and confidence between states in the ARF region by capacity building.

13. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security is envisioned to enhance cooperation among ARF participants in addressing issues on security of and in the use of ICTs by advancing the objectives identified in the Work Plan.

IV. STRUCTURE

14. While aspects of security of and in the use of ICTs can be expected to be discussed or raised at other fora or sub-fora within the ARF's framework, the ARF ISM on ICTs Security will serve as the main strategic level venue for ARF participants to discuss issues on security of and in the use of ICTs so that there is a holistic oversight of the various aspects of ICTs security. The participants of ARF ISM on ICTs Security will

be senior government representatives responsible for ICTs security.

15.   The ARF ISM on ICTs Security will report to ARF SOM, through the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD, and to the ARF Ministerial Meeting for guidance. Ministers will provide final approval for recommendations adopted by the ARF ISM on ICTs Security.

V.   MANDATE

16.   The mandate of the newly established ARF ISM on ICTs Security is to provide a focused forum for ARF participants to comprehensively discuss issues on security of and in the use of ICTs under the ARF's framework. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security should take into consideration and coordinate as far as possible with ICT security initiatives undertaken by other ASEAN mechanisms such as the ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers Meeting (TELMIN), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus) and ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC).

17.   The mandate of the ARF ISM on ICTs Security includes considering and approving proposals developed by an open ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of ICTs, implementing the ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of ICTs, as well as making recommendations for the Ministers to review its progress.

VI.   GUIDING PRINCIPLES

18.   The organization of the ARF ISM on ICTs Security should be in conformity with the guidelines to govern ARF's ISG and ISMs as stipulated in the Chairman's Statement of the 2nd ARF of 1 August 1995 i.e.
-    The ARF ISM on ICTs Security shall be co-chaired by at least one ASEAN and one non-ASEAN ARF participants;
-    The ARF ISM on ICTs Security shall be held in between ARF Ministerial Meetings; and
-    The ARF ISM on ICTs Security shall present its findings and recommendations to the ARF SOM, through the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD, and to the ARF Ministerial Meeting during the effective inter-sessional year.

19.   The ARF ISM on ICTs Security shall adhere to existing ARF principles, including moving at a pace comfortable to all participants.
-    that will contribute to efforts towards Confidence Building Measures

(CBMs) for Preventive Diplomacy; and

- All decisions shall be based on the consensus of ARF participating members.

20.   The ARF ISM on ICTs Security will build on relevant work underway in other international fora such as the United Nations and will not duplicate such work.

VII.   MEETING MODALITY

21.   The ARF ISM on ICTs Security continues to work under current mandate, unless otherwise decided at the ARF Ministerial Meeting. The ARF ISM on ICTs Security holds a meeting annually for a term not less than one working day in order to consider proposals developed by the open ended Study Group and discuss other relevant matters as well as to direct the Study Group for further work.

22.   This Study Group will hold a meeting not less than twice a year at the expert level authorized by states, from ARF members. The Study Group will develop specific proposals on confidence building measures as well as proposals to address the whole range of issues on ICTs Security which are submitted to the ARF ISM on ICTs Security. The Study Group develops proposals on a consensus basis. The Study Group Chairs, responsible for the organization of its meetings, will be the chairs of the ARF ISM on ICTs Security at the moment.   In order to facilitate the participation of ARF member-states, one of the meetings of the Study Group may be held on the margins of the ISM on ICTs Security.

VIII.   THE 1st ARF ISM ON SECURITY OF AND IN THE USE OF ICTs

23.   Once it is endorsed by the Ministers at the 24th ARF Ministerial Meeting in Manila in August 2017, the 1st ARF ISM on ICTs Security is planned to be held during the 2017-2018 inter-sessional year. Malaysia and Singapore are prepared to be co-chairs with Japan during the 1st term of the ARF ISM on ICTs Security.

24.   The 1st ARF ISM on ICTs Security will focus on:
- discussing the scope, procedure, work schedule, chairmanship rotation in the ISM on ICTs Security.
- assessing issues discussed in previous ARF related meetings including the open ended Study Group.
- discussing further specific issues on security of and in the use of ICTs including, inter alia, ICT threats and incidents, use of ICTs in criminal purposes, use of the internet for terrorist purposes.
- determining and prioritizing activities and projects in the ARF Work Plan

on Security of and in the Use of ICTs and providing draft proposals, where possible, for consideration by senior officials and by the Ministers.

IX. FUTURE REVIEW

25.   This document may be periodically reviewed as necessary and, once it is endorsed, would become the ARF ISM on ICTs Security's Terms of Reference. It may be further reviewed in conjunction with the review of the mandate of ARF ISM on ICTs Security.