CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT OF THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM TRACK 1.5 SYMPOSIUM ON PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY

1-2 July 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 21st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held on 10 August 2014, in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, the ARF Track 1.5 Symposium on Preventive Diplomacy (PD) was held on 1-2 July 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Symposium was co-chaired by the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, the Government of New Zealand and the Government of the United States of America.

2. 91 representatives from 22 ARF participants took part in the Symposium, involving officials, representatives of Track 2 institutes, and academics. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

3. The Symposium built on the successful ARF Roundtable on Training Resources for PD on 20-21 March 2014, in Wellington, New Zealand, as well as other ARF initiatives. The Symposium aimed to provide an opportunity to exchange views and experiences on successful PD in the region, with a view to developing a shared understanding of PD traditions in the ARF context. The programme is attached as Annex II.

Opening Session

4. Mr. Jakkrit Srivali, Director-General of Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, Ms. Wendy Matthews, Deputy Director-General of Asia Pacific Regional Integration Division, New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Mr. Jason Lewis-Berry, Deputy Assistant Secretary, United States Department of State, as Co-Chairs, gave their opening remarks.

Keynote Address

5. His Excellency Dr. Kantathi Suphamongkhon, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, delivered the keynote address. Drawing upon his own experiences as a practitioner and an academic, Dr. Suphamongkhon shared to the participants on the first recognition of the term "PD" at the United Nations, the DPRK's security perception and how the ARF could play an important role in building trust and confidence in the Korean Peninsula.

Address

6. His Excellency Mr. John Hayes ONZM, former Parliamentary Private Secretary for Foreign Affairs and former New Zealand High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, delivered an address highlighting the importance of establishing personal relationships in applying PD.

Session 1

Track II Speakers: "Putting the Theoretical Concept of Preventive Diplomacy into Practice in the ASEAN Context"

7. Dr. Somkiati Ariyapruchya of Rangsit University, Thailand, also a member of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) Governing Council, stressed on the AIPR's capacity to be a PD actor by carrying out researches and provide policy recommendations on peace and reconciliation upon ASEAN Member States' request. Mr. Jeffrey Helsing of United States Institute for Peace (USIP) presented on how well-calibrated Track 1.5 techniques can bolster policymakers' Track 1 efforts to reduce and manage tensions. Dr. Jim Rolfe of the Centre for Strategic Studies at Victoria University of

Wellington outlined the recent PD work by the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), noted the theoretical difficulty of defining the term "PD" and recommended steps towards putting PD theory into practice.

Session 2

Case Study: Using Preventive Diplomacy to Address Non-Traditional Security Challenges

8. Mr. Jason Lewis-Berry, Deputy Assistant Secretary, United States Department of State, presented on cross-border issue of child migrants and how to effectively manage tensions between concerned parties. Dr. Kitti Prasertsuk of Thammasat University raised the question of sovereignty and non-interference in implementing PD. He also used the case of irregular migration in the Indian Ocean to stress on the needs to involve non-state actors in the issue.

Case Study: Southern Philippines/Mindanao

9. Dr. Jennifer Santiago Oreta, Assistant Secretary for Policy, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), presented the Southern Philippines case of Bangsamoro Peace Process and the PD interventions of preventing disputes from escalating and creating peace architectures in the communities. She emphasised the need to build partnership with all stakeholders including women and the CSOs.

Case Study: Bougainville

10. Mr. James Batley PSM, Australian National University, presented on the case of regional support for Bougainville peace processes, covering the times of when regional diplomacy did not work, what made regional intervention possible in 1997 and the form of this intervention, as well as the reasons of why it worked. He also discussed the legacy after this regional intervention, namely the Biketawa Declaration in 2000. Mr. Frank Mizigi, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Papua New Guinea, Jakarta, shared his insights on the issue, and noted that third parties needed to accept that conflict prevention/resolution involved a time and resource commitment, as there were no quick fixes. Confidence-building measures could lay the conditions for peace.

Session 3

Challenges in Maritime Security

11. Mr. Ben Ho, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), discussed the regional security architecture, China's relations with neighbours and the role of the United States in East Asia in explaining the challenges in the context of maritime security in the region. Ms. Yanmei Xie, International Crisis Group, elaborated on the prevention and management of incidents at sea, the issues of illegal poaching and CBMs and PD efforts, such as Foreign Ministries' hotlines that have been implemented with regard to the South China Sea, and the benefits and the limitations of regional mechanism, including the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) and hotlines.

Korean Peninsula

12. Professor Yoo Ho-yeol, Korea University, presented on the inter-Korean conflicts and cooperation, including the resumption of Six-Party Talks, sanctions and humanitarian assistance. Relations between major powers i.e. the United States, China and Japan also had impact on the situation in the Korean Peninsula. Dr. John Delury, Yonsei University, outlined the inter-Korean conflicts and how PD could be applied in such context. He emphasised the need to prevent conventional conflict escalation. In this connection, the ARF can provide "political space" for all key players in the Korean Peninsula.

Closing Session

Lessons Learnt from the Symposium and Consideration of Next Steps for Preventive Diplomacy

13. Mr. Jeffrey Helsing summarised key points and observations raised during the Symposium.

Key Points

- PD is a set of skills and approaches to help provide a way to address existing conflicts or potential conflicts.

- In the context of the Symposium and the regional context, we have to look for opportunities to operationalise PD through mechanisms that could be utilised by conflict-affected diplomats and countries, including developing regional mechanisms that could prevent future conflicts. However, PD approaches should continue to focus on informal and individualised efforts, especially in cases where it is necessary to open communication channels and build trust.

- Building on the ARF Roundtable on Training Resources for PD in March 2014 in Wellington, speakers and participants at the Symposium reinforced the scope, priorities and practical operation of the ARF training on PD that were identified in that Roundtable, namely that that the training should be knowledge-based, skills-based, and build from concrete learning objectives. Trainees could learn to apply early warning diagnostic tools and conflict analysis skills; diagnose the origins and sources of different types of conflict; develop monitoring and fact finding practices; engage with others to build trust and conflict sensitivity; work collaboratively and in consultation with others; and incorporate best lessons learnt from ASEAN's experiences.

- The Symposium noted the value of Track 1.5 as a consultative process that is less formal and conducted out of the public eye. The Symposium also stressed the importance of being able to exchange information, explore concepts, test new ideas, and develop patterns of cooperation, as well as create networks of PD without being locked into positions of governments or states.

- Track 1.5 and PD are tools to deal with conflicts and sensitive issues. The basis of PD is that it is a problem solving approach, and, to that end, there are also diplomatic and conflict resolution skills that can be developed and can enhance conflict prevention. The Symposium and prior initiatives are starting points to develop sets of skills and tools on PD.

- Trends that have emerged from this Symposium and previous initiatives on PD:
    - Consent and commitment from all parties concerned and participation of local community are important in the application of PD, involving local and all parties concerned. As well as state actors, it is essential to involve non-state actors in PD.
    - It is essential to incorporate consensus, and provide different perspectives to the conflict.
    - There is a need to understand different cultures, as well as the perspectives of different stake holders and parties, including local perspectives.
    - AIPR and CSCAP are examples of the institutionalisation of PD expertise, which can provide more robust Track 1.5 PD processes.

- It is important for Track 1.5 discussions on PD to be innovative and bring new ideas and complement Track 1 efforts of PD, by allowing for a more open discussion and bring about new ideas to address conflict and solve problems. Track 1.5 discussions and PD are, therefore, are complementary tools.
- It is critical to address problems at their roots, as doing so may reveal various ways to operationalise PD.
- PD does not constitute interference; is not unilateral but based on consent and consensus.
- It is important to recognise that there are distinctions between state conflicts and intrastate conflicts, which require different approaches of PD.
- Track 1.5 can be utilised to better align and explore a potential crisis out of the spotlight as an effective way to help prioritise the use of diplomatic resources and time.
- Confidence-building is an important step towards PD, and can develop parallel to PD and as a complement to PD.
- Participation of women in the peace process is encouraged.
- PD should not be a stage in diplomacy. It should be something that we are always doing.
- While encouraging the participation of all stake holders in the PD process, it is also important to manage the increased level of expectation.

Recommendations for the ARF

- **Training**. Having discussed PD traditions, best practice, and possible training curricula in previous initiatives, it was thought timely for the ARF to move to providing pilot training courses:
  - ARF training course should enhance ARF officials' PD capacity by sharing best practices and developing strong communication skills, and being trained in the regional norms and culture of PD. Training tool kits and PD curricula should also be developed for this purpose.
  - ARF training courses should take into account comparable experiences on PD from other regions, including peace keeping experiences.

- **Community of Practice**. To ensure that ARF's expertise is best captured and utilised a "community of practice" could be established, whereby contact details for individual practitioners, academics, government officials or institutions in the ARF countries could be compiled and circulated for the purposes of developing a regional network through which PD information could be easily disseminated. The alumni of ARF training courses would be invited to join the community of practice.

- There was a proposal that **maritime security**, including maritime safety and marine environmental protection, be a priority on the PD agenda of the ARF in the future.

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