

ASEAN Regional Forum
Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy in a Post-conflict Environment
Dili, Timor-Leste
19-20 April 2017

Co-Chair's Summary Report

1 As discussed at the 23rd ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial in Vientiane, Lao PDR, in July 2016, the ASEAN Regional Forum Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy (PD) in a Post-conflict Environment was held in Dili, Timor-Leste, on 19 and 20 April, 2017. The workshop was co-chaired by Timor-Leste Director General for ASEAN Affairs, Ambassador Jorge Trindade Neves de Camões, Permanent Representative of Singapore to ASEAN Ambassador Tan Hung Seng of Singapore, and New Zealand Special Envoy for Disaster Risk Management Phillip Gibson.

2 The workshop was attended by participants and speakers from 23 ARF member countries. This included representatives from foreign, development and defence ministries and agencies in Malaysia, Viet Nam, India, Australia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Indonesia, Singapore, Canada, China, EU, Indonesia, Japan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. The ASEAN Secretariat representatives were also present. A total of 81 participants registered for the workshop.

Opening Remarks

3 In their opening remarks, the co-chairs discussed the founding of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and noted that it was fundamentally a consultative forum set up with the aim of fostering habits of constructive dialogue. At its genesis, a three-stage process for PD was identified for the ARF to develop a more predictable and constructive pattern of relations in the Asia-Pacific. The three stages are:

1. Stage 1: Promotion of confidence-building measures
2. Stage 2: Development of preventive diplomacy mechanisms
3. Stage 3: Development of conflict resolution mechanisms.

4 The co-chairs recognised that the ARF had successfully moved into stage 2, and that this workshop would be useful in addressing the gap within the ARF in capacity and awareness around preventive diplomacy in post-conflict contexts. This was the first workshop to be held on this specific theme. Ambassador Gibson outlined the eight key principles that guide the practice of ARF preventive diplomacy:

1. Relies on diplomatic and peaceful methods
2. Non-coercive
3. Timely
4. Trust and confidence
5. Consultation and consensus

6. Applies to conflict between and among states
7. Conducted in accordance with universally recognized basic principles of international law and inter-state relations.

5 Ambassador Tan made three observations. First, the establishment of ASEAN in 1967 was in itself an act of preventive diplomacy, coming from a desire for peace. The founders knew that “if we didn’t hang together, we would hang separately”. Second, over half a century, ASEAN had gradually and consistently built up its capacity to pursue peace and prevent conflicts. Third, over the years, ASEAN and the ARF have since then achieved much success and have played a key role in regional stability and peace. Ambassador Tan also expressed hope that the ARF would continue to make good progress and eventually make a “quantum leap” to Stage 3 on the Development of Conflict Resolution Mechanisms. He also added that it was appropriate for the Workshop to be held in Dili, as the story of TL’s restoration of independence was not only the story of the spirit of the Timorese people, but also of the success of PD in a post-conflict environment. Ambassador Camões wrapped up the co-chair opening remarks by reflecting on the difficult question of whether peace or development should be prioritised. He affirmed that ARF is an important common space in which countries, small and large can exchange views and ideas ranging from traditional to non-traditional facing humanity. He further assessed that the ARF as a whole is moving at the right pace in the right direction – it is a diverse grouping of countries with their own political cultures, social fabrics, histories, among other diversities and challenges the world is facing. He welcomed participants to learn about Timor-Leste’s experiences over the workshop days.

Keynote Speech – Dr José Ramos-Horta

6 The keynote speech of Dr Ramos-Horta comprised both personal reflections as well as recommendations for ways through and forward after conflict. He stressed that the prevention of armed conflict was our greatest obligation, but not enough resources or commitment by member states was forthcoming, particularly in the area of assessing how and why conflicts emerge. Investing in capacity to prevent conflict was essential, and the ARF’s preventive diplomacy agenda could be a part of this. Dr Ramos-Horta fully subscribed to the ARF definition and principles of preventive diplomacy but also saw a major role for the United Nations in investing in early warning and conflict prevention. Preventive diplomacy must be prioritised locally, nationally and globally.

7 In thinking about what sustains peace, Dr Ramos-Horta emphasised the building of long-term resilience. This was elaborated on when he described what happened during and after the sudden re-emergence of conflict in Timor-Leste in 2006. Putting aside pride, Timor-Leste’s government acted quickly to request international assistance. This help came quickly and allowed for the situation to be brought under control swiftly, meaning the peace process could be brought back on track. What came through strongly in Dr Ramos-Horta’s speech was that sustainable peace is a long, arduous and, oftentimes, bumpy road.

8 A key lesson for him, and Timor-Leste generally, has been the importance of leadership – credible, honest and informed national leaders are essential for success. There are no shortcuts for fragile, post-conflict states – leadership of the highest calibre is required to deliver tangible results. You can't just have 'vision'. Deliverables must transform people's lives and be felt, and for this you need credible national actors.

Panel Discussion: What happens after conflict stops and how do you make peace durable?

9 The panellists, Professor Miriam Ferrer Coronel (of the University of the Philippines), Dr Helder da Costa (of g7+) and Professor Jeffrey Helsing (of the United States Institute of Peace) discussed the topic of what happens after conflict stops and how you make peace durable. Key themes that emerged in the discussion, and from questions from the participants, included:

- How far Timor-Leste has moved forward in its journey for peace, and the very real hope that it gives others in showing that resolution is possible.
- The threat of violence re-emerging in post-conflict contexts never really goes away. Mechanisms need to be put in place to allow for quick action to emerging situations.
- It took the Philippines 17 years to come to a peace agreement for Mindanao. It's a long process. Positively, in the Philippines, both the MILF and the new president remain committed to the peace agreement and process.
- Adjustments need to be made along the way – there is no perfect peace agreement and no perfect parties either.
- Two key principles of preventive diplomacy are building trust and home-grown, that is local, solutions – and the g7+ operates on this principle in exploring and promoting fragile to fragile cooperation.
- National ownership and leadership are required to direct national development agendas.
- While Timor-Leste has spent the last 10 years focused on peacebuilding, it will spend the next 10 years focusing on state building.
- International actors are very able to undermine peacebuilding just as much as they can aid it.
- Panellists agreed with Dr Ramos-Horta about the fundamental necessity of having credible national leadership.
- There should be more focus on peace processes rather than simply on reaching agreements. A peace agreement should be seen as an initial part of a longer process.
- The peace process can slip back as much as it can go forward – all peace processes need to be carefully monitored and nurtured.
- Inclusivity is another key element for success; whole societies need to commit to peace, not just the elites or military/militia groups and the government.

Session I: Case Studies from the Region

10 As a regional mechanism, the ARF is uniquely placed to act as a platform for ensuring local and regional knowledge, dynamics, and traditions are incorporated into preventive diplomacy practices and understandings. In this session, participants learnt about successes/best practices from preventive diplomacy in post-conflict environments from around the ARF region.

11 Case study 1: H.E. Dr Dionisio Babo Soares presented on the Timor-Leste and Indonesian Truth and Friendship Commission as a case study in preventive diplomacy in action. After providing a historical retrospective culminating in the creation of the commission, Minister Soares accounted for the reasoning behind the terms of reference, objectives, mandate, and working principles of the commission. He recounted the process the tribunal worked through, building peace slowly and block by block. It was with determination and commitment that this bilateral governmental commission (the first bilateral commission of such a nature) came to fruition. The final report, entitled 'Through Memory to Hope' is representative of the report's substance and recommendations, which included the need and importance of accountability, institutional reform, promotion of conflict resolution, provision of psychosocial services for victims, and official expressions of regret. Minister Soares assessed that the Commission's work had aided greatly in progressing Timor-Leste's and Indonesia's relationship to become deepened, peaceful, collaborative, and mutually respectful, exemplified with Indonesia's encouragement for Timor-Leste's membership application into ASEAN.

12 Case study 2: Brigadier-General (Retired) Eric Tan spoke about Singapore's journey with Timor-Leste from 1999 - 2012, particularly in terms of stakeholder engagement in complex peace support operations. BG Tan served in Timor-Leste in both 2002-2003 and 2006-2007, and emphasised that Singapore was only one of many nations that contributed to peace in this post-conflict country. His reflections ultimately concluded that Timor-Leste is very much a success story, but that was never guaranteed at the start. Multiple stakeholders and shifting loyalties and circumstances translated to dynamic situations which needed to be adapted to. What was key to the success was building and keeping the trust and confidence of the Timor-Leste people, and communication is key to building this. Part of this was the inclusion of national actors, for example in allowing the F-FDTL to contribute to the restoration of peace, and their commitment to peace. Accessibility to the host country's leadership was a further helpful condition for peacekeeping operations to be successful, as was the host country's desire for peace, and the commitment of significant time and resources necessary to yield lasting results.

13 Case study 3: Professor Miriam Coronel Ferrer spoke about the Mindanao peace process in the Philippines. Professor Coronel Ferrer covered the peace architecture and the role of international actors, and how they assisted the parties to arrive at a negotiated settlement. Her reflections and assessments of her time as the head of the Philippines Government negotiating panel valuably increased participants' awareness and understanding of how peace processes worked and, usefully, how the Philippines reacted (quickly) when tensions and conflict re-emerged at times, quite suddenly. This reflection aligned with Professor Helsing's emphasis on the importance of the longer-term process rather than the simply the 'agreement'. In talking about the specific processes

and mechanisms put in place during the Philippines peace process (and implementation process), Professor Coronel Ferrer showed just how essential the commitment of the parties themselves, the national and local actors, are to maintaining peace – the parties themselves are the only real guarantors for peace.

Session II: Peace Support Operations

14 This session allowed participants to hear military perspectives of peace support operations. Speakers addressed a gap in ARF knowledge sharing around the practice of preventive diplomacy in post-conflict environments.

15 Colonel Martin Dransfield from the New Zealand Defence Force shared New Zealand's approach to peace support operations, or '21st Century Peace Support'. His experiences across Timor-Leste, Bougainville, Afghanistan and elsewhere, provided unique insights into peace support operations, the key objective of which being to provide people with the conditions necessary to get on with their lives. Key lessons throughout his deployments included the need and value of good training for police, especially with regard to community policing; building trust (an example he provided was the decision to not carry guns in the Bougainville operation – while it was a risk, the valuable result was the trust with local people that was built more easily due to the absence of guns); the better results delivered when you have a collaborative, pragmatic team working together on a coordinated response; and the underlying essential principle of working with and alongside the local people.

16 Colonel Luke Foster from the Australian Defence Force spoke about best practices for regional cooperation, using his experiences with the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) as a case study. RAMSI, which ran from 2003 until June 2017, represented a regional integrated approach to an international security intervention that aimed to end the ethnic conflict and violent criminality in the Solomon Islands that saw 20,000 people displaced. RAMSI was there to build governance, but security needed to be achieved first. In reiterating a key point from Brigadier General Tan's presentation, Colonel Foster stressed the importance of rebuilding trust, including in the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force. The main lessons learned/recommendations that Colonel Foster addressed included the need for a clear mandate and adequate resourcing, integrated and collaborative leadership, understanding the security-development links, regional participation, and national ownership and leadership.

17 In his facilitation of the session Ambassador Tan noted a couple of striking take-away points from the presentations: Peace Support Operations were highly complex undertakings, as they: (i) had to cover a broad spectrum of tasks that ranged from military to political, economic, social and humanitarian measures; (ii) required a coherent strategy and demanded a high degree of cooperation and coordination among a multitude of actors, such as governmental, non-governmental, national, transnational, regional and international organisations; and (iii) were mounted in response to highly complex and challenging situations

in failed or disintegrated states, and in conflicts involving genocide and ethnic cleansing or extreme violence.

Chega! Exhibition Visit

18 The visit to this museum and exhibition offered participants a chance to reflect on the realities that the communities savaged by conflict in Timor-Leste's recent past have faced. The visit allowed for an exploration of reconciliation by learning from the past and focusing on the future.

Session III: Increasing the participation of women in post-conflict peace and security decision-making

19 Participants' understanding and awareness of women, peace and security issues was enhanced in this session. They heard from three women leaders who have successfully worked to increase the meaningful participation of women in peace and security decision-making and processes in their countries and the region.

20 Professor Miriam Coronel Ferrer, discussed how to create equality in peace and peacebuilding processes, using examples from the Philippines to demonstrate what is possible. A key point she made in her talk was that peace and gender is about breaking patterns. This means bringing more women into the process. Professor Coronel Ferrer explained how there was a resistance and lack of acceptance for women negotiators at the start of the Philippines peace process, but there were ways to work around that and gradually build the trust and acceptance of those for whom negotiating with women was problematic or previously inconceivable. In breaking patterns in the Philippines' peace process, parties who once always referred to 'our brothers' only, were instead referring to 'our brothers and sisters' – a norm shift had occurred.

21 Ms Mi Kun Chan Non, from Myanmar's Mon Women's Organization, spoke on empowering women from grassroots communities and groups to participate in peace and security processes. She talked about her experiences with the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace process in Myanmar, which aimed for establishing inclusive peace processes and political dialogues. Ms Chan Non discussed the social factors which often hindered women's participation in peace processes, from being too busy with household labour to lacking confidence, to not being able to access male-dominated networks, or not having their skills and input recognised or valued by those setting the agenda. Her recommendations included advocating strongly to leaders for women's participation; building women's networks, knowledge and capacity to engage and participate.

22 Ms Lurdes Bessa, a Timor-Leste politician, presented on recognising women for their contributions to peace and security decision-making and creating space at the table to expand their participation. Her key message was that women must be recognised for their contributions and that space must be created for women to expand their participation; and that this was everyone's issue, not just

a 'women's issue'. Ms Bessa outlined the myriad ways women have been involved in resolving disputes and preventing violence in Timor-Leste; how they are too often just viewed as victims of violence, rather than active agents of community peacebuilding; and the benefits that come from women getting a voice in security decision-making. In terms of Timor-Leste's successes in this area, Ms Bessa noted that In 2016 Timor-Leste became just the third country in South East Asia to adopt a National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; and that women now account for 33 percent of the country's parliamentarians.

Session IV: Long-term peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution

23 Professor Kevin Clements, from New Zealand's National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago, focused his presentation on the nexus of development and peacebuilding, framed against a backdrop of an historic decline in global peace. His key point throughout the presentation was that both development and peacebuilding are prerequisites for sustainable peace and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16. He differentiated between the two challenges conflict and post-conflict communities faced: the first being how to end current violence; the second being how to build sustainable peace. The United Nations Secretary-General has stressed that the best means of prevention is inclusive and sustainable development, which needs investment in services, effective and accountable institutions, sustainable energy and much more. In discussing the economic costs of conflict, Clements promoted social peacebuilding and the concept and implementation of cooperative security as positive alternatives. Clements emphasised the need for locally driven peacebuilding based on local conceptions of peace and justice.

24 Professor Helsing, the Associate Vice President of the United States Institute of Peace's Academy, presented on peace processes, specifically how they can be effective. Over 50% of peace agreements fail within the first five years, and even those that do not fail remain fragile. A comprehensive overview was provided about the roles of different actors and the mechanics of reaching a peace agreement. Professor Helsing's emphasis in this presentation was on the need to focus on the peace process comprehensively and as a journey, rather than just aiming to reach a peace agreement, as an outcome. Focusing on peace processes as a whole requires a long-term view, and for comprehensive and multi-level engagement to take place, e.g. at the national, sub-national, and community levels with actors from across the spectrum. This inclusivity is essential to gaining public support. A sustainable peace requires more than an agreement among elites, there needs to be a transformation of power dynamics and the consent of local parties. This can effectively be done in incremental steps and by valuing each stage of the process.

Group exercise: Peace and conflict impact assessment

25 Professor Kevin Clements led a Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) exercise with participants. PCIA is a process that helps to anticipate, monitor,

and evaluate ways in which interventions can affect the dynamics of peace or conflict in fragile environments. The exercise involved participants breaking into groups to assess a scenario and complete both a risk and opportunity assessment and a peace and conflict impact assessment

Session V: Inclusive preventive diplomacy in post-conflict environments

26 Colonel Martin Dransfield presented on 'Teaming for Success', that is how military and civilian, international and local actors can collaborative for successful peace support operations in post-conflict contexts. In terms of how to better collaborate can be achieved Colonel Dransfield spoke of how he has been thrust into deployments that not only have security implications, but also governance and developmental ones. If necessary, the military will play all three roles, but there is also a clear need for more support around the governance and development needs within peace support operations. Support for the reintegration of combatants, the organisation of elections, promoting human rights, and restoring the rule of law cannot just be achieved by the military alone. Local leadership and local engagement were necessary components, and to do this successfully, civilian-military collaboration and coordination need to be effective. Reconciliation was highlighted in Colonel Dransfield's presentation as a necessary foundation for both peace and development to progress.

Closing Session

27 This discussion followed on from the expert panel and saw the participants break into three groups to work together to identify, prioritise and refine best practices and regional guidelines on ship profiling. Each group then reported back to the whole workshop.

28 Each group sought to:

- 1) Identify, refine and prioritise key principles, best practices or approaches to preventive diplomacy in post-conflict contexts for the ARF region.
- 2) Make two recommendations for topics that future ARF preventive diplomacy workshops or activities should cover.

29 Group recommendations:

Group 1:

Identified principles/ best practices/approaches:

- Leadership: sharing vision, legitimacy and credibility, political will, conscious selection.
- Inclusive approach: unification of the community, identification and focus on commonalities, and communication

Potential topics for further focus:

- Preventive diplomacy in the realm of maritime issues
- More case studies from host countries in the region.

Group 2:

Identified principles/ best practices/approaches:

- Permission
- Leadership (and commitment)
- Resilience and promotion of peace
- Changing mind-sets
- Analysis of root causes
- Cultural sensitivity
- Inclusivity (gender, ethnicity)
- Local ownership & accountability

Potential topics for further focus:

- How can the ARF promote practical cooperation in peace support operations (utilising frameworks with military, political and socio-economic focuses).
- Cooperation between international and regional organisations on preventive diplomacy.

Group 3:

Identified principles/ best practices/approaches:

- Recognising women and their meaningful contributions to preventive diplomacy.
- Recognition of leadership, that has to be supported by activities and deliverables.
- Inclusivity (or example, with the active participation of civil society).

Closing Remarks

30 The Co-Chairs summed up the workshop by reiterating key themes that had emerged throughout the two days, namely:

- Peace can only be achieved with national responsibility and commitment from all actors. It is a very fragile thing and can never be taken for granted.
- Timor-Leste's story is very much a success story. It has shown how hope and optimism, both political and community commitment to reconciling and moving forward, has made peace achievable.
- Peace can 'slip' so easily. Peace, once achieved, needs to be vigilantly nurtured and protected, and in this we all have a role to play.
- Hope should not be lost if peace does 'slip'. Conflict and tensions can re-emerge quickly, but it is very possible to de-escalate and, if required, seek assistance quickly, and with concerted effort get back on track to the peace process. Examples of this came through from both Timor-Leste and Mindanao presentations/speeches.
- Trust and respect are fundamentally essential to any sustainable peace process. A big part of this is the need to prioritise local solutions and local engagement.

31 The Co-Chairs thanked participants for collaborating together and sharing their ideas and experiences over the last two days.