



**ARF Seminar on Preventive Diplomacy and  
Mediation Training  
Bandar Seri Begawan, 7-10 October 2014**

# ARF Seminar on Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation Training



ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM



# I. Introduction

- The founding participants of ARF agreed that as a high-level consultative forum, the ARF would enable the countries in the Asia Pacific region to foster the habit of constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common concern.
- The Forum also agreed that the way to move the ARF process is to be gradual through three phases namely the promotion of confidence building measures, development of preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution.

## Objective of briefing:

To provide the outcome of the ARF Seminar on Preventive Diplomacy and Mediation Training held in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam 7-10 October 2014

## Outline:

1. Look at what was learned by the participants at the Seminar.
2. Examine the immediate future follow-ups from the Brunei and Beijing Training on Preventive Diplomacy.

# Introduction

In adopting the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 'Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan' at the 18<sup>th</sup> ARF in 2001, Ministers agreed to:

- Identify and partner with mutually agreeable organisations, such as the UN, on preventive diplomacy capacity building programmes, experience sharing and training.
- Conduct workshops and training programmes for ARF participants on preventive diplomacy.

# ARF DOCUMENTS AS REFERENCE

- Ha Noi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement;
- 2011 ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy;
- 2013 Concept Paper on Moving Forward the Preventive Diplomacy;
- 2014 ARF Roundtable on Training Resources for Preventive Diplomacy, Wellington, New Zealand

# Ha Noi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement

The Plan of Action (PoA) implements the ARF Vision Statement adopted by ARF Foreign Ministers who at their 16th ARF Meeting in July 2009 charted out a vision for the ARF by 2020. It is a step to strengthen the ARF process, with ASEAN as the primary driving force, as a central pillar in the evolving regional security architecture.

# ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy

## **Objective:**

- Increase the capacity and capabilities of the ARF and its participants in the area of preventive diplomacy.
- As Preventive Diplomacy is considered sensitive to certain ARF participants, the Work Plan contains in it the definition and principles of Preventive Diplomacy as agreed in the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Concepts and Principles Paper adopted at the 8<sup>th</sup> ARF in 2001.



# Key work in the Work Plan includes:

- Continue to implement and enhance CBMs;
- Identify and partner with regional and international organization on preventive diplomacy capacity building programmes;
- Conduct workshops and trainings on preventive diplomacy;
- With consensus, develop the following possible preventive diplomacy mechanism:
  - Capacity-building such as technical assistance;
  - Good Office role such as Friends of the ARF Chair;
  - Fact-finding and observer missions.

# Brunei's Concept Paper on Moving Forward the PD

- At the 20<sup>th</sup> ARF in Bandar Seri Begawan in 2013, ARF Ministers adopted the Concept Paper on moving to Preventive Diplomacy and called for greater efforts to ensure the full implementation of the ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy, including the provisions on training.

Conflict prevention and peace building is an area in which the goals and activities of the EU, the ARF and UN are united by the premise that the case for multilateralism and international co-operation is unequivocal.

# Brunei's Concept Paper on Moving Forward the PD

- Calling on the creativity of its members to ensure that the ARF enjoys the support of its diverse participants.
- Gradual progression of preventive diplomacy, dividing the PD activities into stages and allowing a more acceptable and comfortable move towards preventive diplomacy by all its participants.

# ARF SEMINAR ON PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND MEDIATION TRAINING, BRUNEI

- Approximately 50 to 60 participants attended the seminar from foreign affairs and defence ministries from ARF countries and United Nations, ASEAN, European Union, key officials and mediation experts.
- The good attendance confirms that there is a growing commitment and willingness among ARF members in ensuring strengthened familiarity with PD.
- A wide array of discussions on different experiences enabled good exposure to preventive diplomacy and mediation. The evaluation forms demonstrate that the participants were extremely happy with the seminar/training.

# Lessons Learned:

- It was aimed at increasing learning, sharing and understanding in PD and mediation.
- The familiarization ARF participants to this field was facilitated and together we explored some of the guiding principles, tools and skills.
- We raised awareness that mediation and preventive diplomacy are useful tools for preventing and resolving conflicts.
- Mediation was not interference as it was only carried out on a basis of invitation and consent to begin with and then if the parties changed their minds during the peace process, as was the case of the Mindanao process, they were also free to request a change of mediators.
- During the training explored the options of both external mediators such as in Aceh and Mindanao and insider mediators such as in Myanmar.

# Current Developments

- Suggestions to improve ARF working methods.
- Calls for ARF to implement the discussion into actions
- More active in developing common procedures for collective response to threats facing the region and stocktaking best practices in various areas of cooperation.
- Widen the engagement and involvement of security and defense officials.

# Conclusion

- ARF has been working to create the atmosphere of trust and confidence among the participants, while at the same time laying the groundwork for the implementation of preventive diplomacy.
- Current developments also suggest that ARF is strengthening itself to be better prepared in facing threats in the region.
- The issue at hand is how to mobilize the available resources and to put the agreed principles into practical actions, when needs arise.

# NEXT STEPS:

- ARF ISG ON CBM AND PD, MELAKA, MALAYSIA, NOVEMBER 2014
- ARF EEP's, MARCH 2015, HELSINKI, FINLAND
- ARF ISG ON CBM AND PD IN 2015
- FOCUS: TO BUILD UP THE MOMENTUM OF PD ACTIVITIES IN THE ARF.



Questions:

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