

ANNEX D

Non-Traditional Security Cooperation – Remarks to the ASPC Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Robert M.Scher

When the ARF was established in 1994, all of us were still grappling with the implications of the end of the Cold War. It was already clear that the nature of the global security environment was changing; that nations were interconnected in a manner that they never had been previously, but it was not yet certain what the post-Cold War world would look like.

Fifteen years later, it is clear that the international security environment has become much more challenging and complex, especially here in Asia. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review recognizes that the complexity of the 21st century security environment is leading to significant changes in the way the United States must think about security.

Non-traditional security threats, whether they are natural disasters, trafficking in persons, or even cyber-crimes, are trans-national problems. Because we face a far more complex range of threats, the strength of our mutual commitment is more critical than ever before.

To address these growing complexities of the 21st century security, Secretary Gates has stated that we need a broad portfolio of military capabilities with maximum versatility across the widest possible spectrum of conflict. In other words, we must rebalance our forces to meet both the urgent demands of today's conflicts and the likely and lethal threats of the future.

The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review has laid four priorities for the Department of Defense:

- prevailing in today's wars,
- preventing and deterring conflict,
- preparing to defeat adversaries and succeeding in a wide range of contingencies, and
- preserving and enhancing the All-Volunteer Force.

While we are working to achieve all of these objectives through our engagements in Asia, our predominant efforts in the region and with the ARF are preventing and deterring conflict and preparing to respond to a wider range of contingencies.

The Department of Defense is working to achieve these objectives for a number of reasons:

- to create the conditions so that US forces can help deter conflicts, and even prevent them where possible;
- to effectively respond to a wide range of contingencies where the President has asked the military to respond, most recently in this region to a range of natural disasters;
- to build partner capacity so that nations can do for themselves, and also so that some partners can work with us to address common interests;

- to ensure that US forces can train with other forces that they may, or are likely to, operate with, either in contingencies close to home, or coalition operations outside the region; and
- to ensure that US military has capability to operate from and within the region, to reassure our partners that we can and will live up to our commitments to our friends and allies in East Asia.

In order to prevent and deter conflict, and be able to succeed in operations across the full spectrum of operations, we need to have a flexible force, but also one that can do operate around the globe, and in conjunction with friends and allies. This is why we work closely with the nations of Asia-to help them create the conditions so that US forces can help deter conflicts and prevent them where possible, but also operate with regional forces for contingencies in the region or beyond.

Just as we have for the past half-century, America will address these problems together with our regional allies and partners. These relationships continue to provide the foundation for our presence in Asia. But presence alone is not enough. If we are to successfully meet the challenges ahead, we must bring a renewed sense of purpose to the concept of regional cooperation.

Transnational security threats are not any one nation's alone, nor does the responsibility to counter these threats belong to any one nation alone. Just as we have a shared interest in ensuring continued peace, prosperity, and stability in the region, we must all share in the responsibility for maintaining this peace.

As Deputy Secretary of State Jim Steinberg has note "With greater voice comes greater responsibility. Responsibility for policing the global commons, for contributing to global economic growth, for showing leadership in addressing transnational and international problems that require the cooperation of us all."

Yet we know that we cannot only look to bilateral relationships to achieve our goals. Multilateral institutions such as ARF provide key opportunities to encourage multilateral cooperation and strengthen communication among partners in the region, which will enable more thorough and effective responses to non-traditional security threats.

We believe that our bilateral relationships will be stronger, and our cooperation more effective, when they are complemented by multilateral engagement to confront regional security threats. In fact, President Obama has stated his commitment to engaging more actively with Asian regional forums. Both Secretary Gates and Secretary Clinton have made this an important part of their approach in this region.

We in the USG understand this, and, realizing the importance that ARF members states place in the ARF as an organization, have prioritized strengthening the ARF as well. Further, we see the ARF as critical part of a broader regional architecture discussion on how the nations of Southeast Asia and Asia writ-large can pursue their interests.

Future Activities/ Challenges

We in the Department of Defense are committed to multilateral, intuitional capacity-building and improving cooperation in regional security, and we are eager to strengthen the ARF. We are seeking to engage even more regularly with the ARF to build upon the institution's recent success.

We see a few particularly promising areas of cooperation where we believe the ARF can continue to focus on providing greater regional leadership.

First, in the area of **humanitarian assistance and disaster relief**:

The ARF voluntary Demonstration of Response (ARF-VDR) in the Philippines was a success in terms of providing a clear demonstration of how we can work together for the common purpose of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

We are pleased that the region is continuing to build upon this success through this next year's ARF Disasters Response Exercise, co-sponsored by our friends in Indonesia and Japan.

Yet our ability to respond quickly and efficiently to natural disaster will require well-practiced habits of cooperation, not only between our militaries but within our governments as a whole. We would encourage the development of more regular disaster relief exercises that incorporate a wider range of actors, in order to establish routine habits of military cooperation as well as greater civil-military coordination.

The ARF can also help improve regional response capabilities by working to develop tools such as standardized regional best practices for disasters response, SOFA-like arrangements to facilitate foreign military assistance, and new multilateral facilities for pre-positioned supplies.

These types of innovative initiatives that can ultimately create an effective regional disaster response framework that will strengthen and complement existing international guidelines.

Second, in the area of **Maritime Security**:

We would also welcome a more robust role for the ARF in promoting maritime security. The 2010 QDR discusses the need for us to work together more collaboratively to promote the openness of the "global common" – those domains such as air, sea, space, and cyberspace that do not belong to any one nation.

The need for greater maritime security cooperation is especially evident in Asia, a region whose economy depends on the openness and security of its waterways.

The United States is working to promote greater maritime domain awareness with many of our regional partners and we believe this is an area where the ARF can help promote greater dialogue transparency, and habits of cooperation.

We have also worked closely with our partners in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines to promote maritime security and counter piracy in the tri-border region. Here too we believe the ARF can play an essential role in expanding regional cooperation on counter-piracy and establishing multilateral exercise that will allow a wider range of nations to play a role in protecting our maritime waterways.

We also believe that adherence to customary international law is an essential component of promoting greater maritime security. We believe that ARF can play a greater role in promoting the development of regional maritime security arrangements and promoting compliance with relevant international legal instruments and treaties.

Strengthening the ARF

Finally, it is important to note that in order to strengthen the ARF's role promoting regional security, we must strengthen the integration of defense agencies in to the overall ARF process.

Defense agencies bring together substantive expertise and unique capabilities towards all the issues on the ARF's agenda, to include disaster relief, non-proliferation and disarmament, counter-terrorism, transnational crime, maritime security, and peacekeeping operations.

We believe there is more that can be done to link our defense discussions into the overall ARF process and promote greater practical results from our conversations

It will also be important to align our efforts in the ARF with the proposed ASEAN Defense Ministers' Plus Mechanism (ADMM-Plus). These can serve a complementary role in the region, but it will be critical that we avoid any conflicting and duplicated efforts within these organizations, so that both organizations can be strengthened and evolve alongside one another.

Conclusion

As we have discussed, the scope and magnitude of the transnational threats we face in this region will only continue to grow in the coming years. Over the past fifteen years, the ARF has established itself as the region's leading forum to promote greater dialogue about how we can all address these threats together.

We are please that with the Hanoi Plan of Action, the ARF is now moving more assertively to develop practical implementation plans to put may of these ideas into action. We all have a shared responsibility to work together to promote greater stability in this region, and to strengthen the ARF's ability to take leading role in this important task.

I'd like to thank you again for the opportunity to be here to day, and I'd like to offer a special thanks to hosts in Vietnam for leading such an important event.