

SYNERGY BETWEEN THE ARF AND THE ADMM-PLUS TO AVOID DUPLICATION OF ACTIVITIES

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Background

Four months before the inauguration of the ADMM-Plus in 2010, the issue on duplication of activities between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus has come to the front. In the 43rd ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting held in Ha Noi in July 2010, the issue was raised and since then it has been discussed in various meetings namely ASEAN SOM in Indonesia in 2011, the ARF DoD in Sydney in 2011, and the ADSOM-Plus in Yogyakarta in 2011.

In the ARF-DOD held in Sydney last April 2011, the Forum recommended to bring the issue on synergy between the ARF and the ADSOM-Plus at the ASPC level, and hereforth that issue has become one of the agenda items at this Forum.

Based on the above consideration this paper is prepared in order to seek for an appropriate solution to create synergy while avoiding duplication between the ARF.

Potential Overlapping Areas in the ARF and the ADMM-Plus:

No.	AREA OF COOPERATION	ARF	ADMM-Plus
1.	Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARF DR TTX (1 – 2 Mei 2008, Co-hosted by Indonesia – Australia) • 10th ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ARF ISM DR) (Bangkok, 2-3 September 2010) • ARF DiREx (Manado, 14-19 March 2011) 	2011: EWG on HADR co-hosted by Viet Nam & PRC.
2	Counter-terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2003: ARF ISM on CTTC • 2009: Adopted ARF Work Plan on CTTC • 9th ARF ISM on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ARF ISM CT&TC) (Kuala Lumpur, 29-31 May 2011) 	2011: EWG on CT Co-hosted by Indonesia – USA
3	Maritime Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARF ISM on Maritime Security held annually. • 3rd ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ARF ISM MS) (Tokyo, 14-15 February 2011) 	2011: EWG on Maritime Security, Co-hosted by Malaysia and Malaysia.
4	Peacekeeping Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARF Peacekeeping Expert Meeting. 	2011: EWG on PKO, Co-hosted by Philippines and New Zealand.

The above matrix shows that there are potential areas that could potentially lead to duplicative activities. It is indicated that at present there are four duplicative areas in both fora, namely HADR, Counter Terrorism, Maritime Security, and Peacekeeping. From the four areas depicted above, we see that the potential duplication in activities cannot be avoided. Hence, this Forum is an appropriate venue to discuss the issue thoroughly and find such a solution that could bring the synergy between the two fora and reinforce one another.

Each of the two fora basically has its own emphasis. As focal point of the ARF is the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, while the ADMM-Plus is the Ministers for Defence, this shows that each forum has its own emphasis which cannot be deemed as an area of duplication.

Since its inception the ARF has been focusing on its two objectives namely; fostering a constructive dialogue and consultation on political and security issues, common interests and concerns, and contributing to efforts towards confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy in the Asia Pacific Region.

The ADMM-Plus has also set up its objectives which include building ASEAN capacity to promote mutual trust and confidence, enhancing regional peace and stability, contributing to the realisation of an ASEAN Security Community, and facilitating the implementation of building a peaceful, secure, and prosperous ASEAN.

In order to have more perspective on the ADMM-Plus, let me quote the statements of several Defence Ministers during the inaugural ADMM Plus in Ha Noi in October 2010. Secretary Gates denoted that ADMM Plus is the most useful innovation that can strengthen the participants' capacity to cope with regional security challenges. Complementing Mr. Gates' view China's Defence Minister in a similar tone deemed the ADMM Plus as an important official platform to jointly deal with non-traditional security challenges and strengthen mutual trusts and cooperation amongst its members.

In addition, the ADMM Plus is an avenue to develop cooperation amongst eighteen members to encourage and when possible to facilitate the development of the capacity of each ASEAN Defence Ministry to design and implement its own defence policy within a multilateral regional context. Despite the similarities in the objectives of both fora, we can also see the distinctions between the ADMM Plus and the ARF, that is, the ADMM Plus is a venue where defence ministers from the Asia Pacific Region (currently 18 countries) can get together to directly discuss regional security issues either in multilateral or bilateral meeting. This would not happen in the ARF.

For example, the US Secretary of Defence and China's Defence Minister have made use of the ADMM Plus to conduct a bilateral meeting at the same venue of the ADMM Plus session which has also been the first multilateral meeting in the Asia Pacific.

From the objective of the two fora, we can conclude that both the ARF and the ADMM-Plus can complement each other. What we really need in promoting the peace and stability of the region is that how concrete activities can be made. In this realm, then the ADMM Plus is an important and relevant entity that should be reinforced while the ARF can also be improved to function better.

A Way-out to create synergy and ovoid duplication of activites

Looking at the role of ADMM Plus that is vital in the promotion of regional peace and stability and at the same time the ARF is also playing such a similar role, then the need for creating synergy and complementarities while avoiding any duplication of activities that would happen in certain areas of cooperation is inevitable.

Indonesia has the same view as the ASEAN Secretariat in the ADSOM-Plus in Yogyakarta last April and the ASEAN SOM in Lombok on 15 January 2011 who both viewed that the ARF should focus on broad strategic and policy issues, while the ADMM-Plus on practical cooperation and capacity building. In order to create synergy between the two fora, the ADMM-Plus, on the one hand, could take the ARF's results as considered references in developing its programs. At the same manner, the ARF could also utilise the ADMM-Plus activities and results for developing broad strategic and policy issues in relevant areas.

To facilitate the creation of the ARF synergy between the ARF and the ADMM Plus, there has been a need that the two fora should develop regular communication and sharing of information about each other's activities. The following suggested steps can be taken in the future which include:

Firstly, the ARF and the ADMM-Plus including their sectoral bodies should work hand-in-hand to thoroughly identify issues that would impact the duplication and ineffectiveness of the two for a in pursuing their respective objectives.

Secondly, the ARF and the ADMM-Plus including their sectoral bodies should create a synergy in providing information for their respective members while conducting an annual review of the two fora.

Thirdly, the Chairman of ASEAN plays an important role to make the synergy of both for a while avoiding such a duplication of effective. It is suggested that Chairman of should develop constructive communication involving members of both fora in evolving their agendas so as to avoid duplication of activities but to strengthen and support one another's work programs.

Fourth, the establishment of a combined Working Group of the ARF and the ADMM-Plus tasked to discussed the synergy of both for a may be a relevant venue to be considered in the near future.

Fifth, the establishment of a clear delineation of the potential overlapping areas of cooperation through coordination and constructive communications between ARF and ADMM-Plus, including their sectoral bodies to avoid any possible duplications.

Sixth, both the ARF and ADMM-Plus should open opportunities to each others participants in their respective programs.