

ANNEX D

Speech by Gen. Ma Xiaotian
Deputy Chief of General Staff
People's Liberation Army (PLA), China
At the ASPC, 19 May 2010

Respected Mr. Chairman,

Dear colleagues,

It gives me great pleasure to come to the beautiful city of Da Nang. First of all, I would like to extend our gratitude to the Ministry of Defense of Vietnam for the thoughtful preparations made for this conference. My thanks also go to Mr. Chairman for giving me the chance to exchange views with my dear colleagues present here on international and regional situation, and the potential to further non-traditional security cooperation within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Dear colleagues,

At present, the security situation in the Asia-Pacific region remains generally stable. Since last year, with the concerted efforts of the international community, the deepening and spread of the global financial crisis have been curbed and world economy has shown signs of recovery. The Asia-Pacific region will hopefully be the first to step out of the recession. Relations among the major players of the region are in good shape. Shared interests exceed disputes. The Cold War mentality and Zero-sum game theory have been discarded by the main stream of the international community. ASEAN plays a significant role in regional and international security issues by further strengthening its internal integration on the one hand, and actively pushing forward regional security cooperation on the other. With the joint efforts of the countries concerned, regional hotspots are brought under control to some extent.

However, challenges confronting regional security can not be neglected. The foundation of the recovery of world economy remains fragile, development disparity is yet to be resolved, and potential threats are thus posed to regional security and stability. Non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism, proliferation of WMD, and transnational crimes, stand out one after another, and severely challenge Asia-Pacific countries and the region as a whole. It should be

noted that, in recent years, frequent natural disasters in the region, such as earthquake, flood, hurricane and drought, caused great casualty and losses, and grew into an unignorable element undermining regional security.

Comparatively, although challenges of traditional security threats to regional peace and stability still exist, non-traditional security threats are more direct and realistic. Facing the common security challenges, countries of the region are bound to further strengthen cooperation and respond jointly.

Dear colleagues,

The ARF is the most inclusive multilateral security cooperation mechanism of the region with the broadest participation. In the past 16 year since its founding, the ARF made major contributions to increasing mutual understanding and mutual trust among its members, and maintaining regional peace and security. Nevertheless, it has to be recognized that the ARF is not flawless in its course to enhance regional non-traditional security cooperation. To be more specific, planning of regional non-traditional security cooperation is yet to be improved; capabilities of ARF members to respond to non-traditional security challenges remain uneven; and functions of the ARF and other security cooperation regimes of the region overlap in some aspects.

To respond to non-traditional security threats more efficiently, the ARF should make full use of its strength and potential, and endeavor to enhance cooperation. To this end, we, the Chinese side, would like to propose the following suggestions:

First, we need to reinforce strategic guidance. Currently, non-traditional security challenges are the common concern of Asia-Pacific countries, especially the developing countries. The ARF should take this fact into account, give full play to its own advantage of being the highest level multilateral security cooperation mechanism of the region with the broadest membership, and give priority to non-traditional security cooperation. Furthermore, it should encourage the discussion on the strategic questions, such as the objectives and principles of non-traditional security cooperation, provide guidance in this respect, and cement the legal groundwork accordingly, so as to complete the institutional framework to deepen non-traditional security cooperation.

Second, we need to straighten out the ARF's internal and external relationships. The ARF should make efforts to fully integrate its internal resources, encourage the participation of defense establishments and actively coordinate its relationship with other security cooperation regimes of the region. Since almost all major countries in the Asia-Pacific region are members of the ARF, in the future, with the consent of related parties, non-traditional security

cooperation among the armed forces of relevant countries beyond ARF framework can be more open to the ARF by means of making briefings, and inviting observers or participants of other members, for instance.

Third, we need to deepen practical cooperation. Taking into consideration the practical problems, such as the insufficiency of its members' capability to respond to non-traditional security challenges, lack of experience of international collaboration and weak legal foundation, the ARF should further enhance practical cooperation under its framework through personnel training, material aids, information sharing, desktop exercises and real ammunition exercises etc. Due to the considerable number of the ARF members, cooperation of all kinds should be carried out openly and transparently on the principles of voluntarism and gradualism.

Fourth, we need to adhere to the founding principles of the ARF. The development of the ARF in the past 16 years has proved that the "ASEAN Way", which features consensus building, non-interference in other's internal affairs, gradualism and taking full account of each other's comfort level, is effective and remains the source of vitality of the ARF. It is imperative that we continue to stick to the principles in non-traditional security cooperation.

Dear colleagues,

Similar to other countries of the region, in recent years, China also faces grave non-traditional security threats. The Chinese armed forces made active efforts to improve the capabilities to respond to non-traditional security threats and to carry out non-war-fighting military operations. Take disaster relief for example, efforts have been made in the following aspects: First, we put into place a civil-military information sharing mechanism concerning disaster relief. Second, we upgraded the PLA's command system of emergency management, and highlighted the role of the General Staff Headquarters of the PLA in command and control of emergency response. Third, we strengthened civil-military cooperation. Chinese Ministry of National Defense put into place a joint meeting mechanism with over 20 governmental agencies. Fourth, we made efforts to boost the building of professional teams. In January 2009, the Chinese government issued the Plan to Promote the PLA's Capabilities to Carry Out Non-War-Fighting Military Operations. According to the Plan, mainly based on the resources of the PLA, we established 8 national professional disaster relief teams, which are composed of 50,000 people and cover the areas such as earthquake search and rescue, medical aids, transportation and engineering. The teams are due to be deployable by the end of 2010. Fifth, we endeavored to optimize the legal system of emergency management. The Regulation on Command of the PLA in Emergency Response is about to be issued, which is

expected to standardize the principles, contents, procedures and requirements of the command and control for the armed forces to carry out various non-war-fighting military operations. Sixth, we strengthened material and equipment support of disaster relief. Seventh, we stepped up efforts in political work to better support non-war-fighting military operations in the aspects such as raising morale and facilitating publicity.

Chinese armed forces act as vanguards and backbone force in response to non-traditional security threats. The Chinese government and armed forces are concerned about other countries threatened by catastrophic natural disasters, and are willing to do their utmost to provide assistance. In response to the earthquake which hit the town of Yushu, Qinghai province last month, 12,000 PLA and People's Armed Police (PAP) troops were immediately deployed to the site, an area with an average altitude of 4,400 meters. Within 5 days, the troops rescued 1,564 people buried in ruins, and provided medical service to over 20,000 injured. In the wake of the calamity, the international community, including the members of the ARF, provided assistance to the affected area, and expressed compassion and consolation to the Chinese government and people. Hereby, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to you all. China is also active in participating in international disaster relief efforts to provide assistance to other countries affected by natural disasters. After the Haiti earthquake in January, the Chinese government provided emergent humanitarian material aids to the value of 30 million RMB yuan, and sent international rescue teams and medical teams to help on the ground. What's more, the Chinese government also provided snowstorm-stricken Mongolia and earthquake-stricken Chile with humanitarian material aids to the value of 10 million RMB yuan and 2 million US dollars respectively.

China actively shoulders its international responsibilities and participates in international non-traditional security cooperation. In the Asia-Pacific region, China, together with relevant countries, made active efforts to explore different ways of cooperation in response to non-traditional security challenges: In April 2009, under the framework of the ARF, China and Singapore co-hosted the 1st ARF Seminar on Laws and Regulations on the Participation in International Disaster Relief by Armed Forces. In addition, in this April, China, Australia and New Zealand carried out joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Desktop Exercise. In a given scenario, military and civilian personnel of the three countries broke up into groups, worked and discussed with each other. They exchanged views over the organization and planning of joint HADR operations, coordination on the ground in the case of such operations and post-operation handover and withdrawal. The exercise promoted the exchange among the armed forces of the countries and set a solid foundation for further cooperation.

Dear colleagues,

China appreciates the contributions made by the ARF in maintaining regional peace, and is willing to continue to actively participate in the non-traditional security cooperation under the ARF framework. In September, China and Thailand will co-host the 2nd ARF Seminar on Laws and Regulations on the Participation in International Disaster Relief by Armed Forces in Beijing. In October, the 2nd Forum on Non-traditional Security Issues by Armed Forces of 10+3 Countries will be held. We are ready to continue to make joint efforts with all parties of the ARF to meet non-traditional security threats, and thus contribute to a better Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you.