

Maritime Security Remarks by
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At the Third ARF Security Policy Conference
(18 May 2006 at Karambunai, Sabah, Malaysia)

Mr. Chairman!

Distinguished guests!

Ladies and gentlemen!

Now I would like to say a few words on the position of Vietnam on maritime security and its efforts in enhancing maritime security cooperation.

1. Vietnam's position on maritime security

Maritime security, especially in the regions with important sea lanes of communications such as the Malacca Straits, East Sea (South China Sea), has been facing both traditional and non-traditional threats that might lead to conflicts. Recently island and territorial waters disputes, piracy and armed robberies have occurred in the region.

For Vietnam, cooperation with other ARF participants in maritime security is very important. The cooperative activities should be undertaken on the basis of ARF's fundamental principles, namely "gradualness, progress and comfort with all participants" and "consensus" principle that generally recognized in ASEAN; at the same time, respecting the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS);

respecting national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-interference in others' internal affairs; cooperation in maritime security does not cause any effects, damage or concern to any countries.

In multilateral cooperation, role of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) should be highlighted in contribution of promoting maritime security, particularly in the context that the threats for maritime are increasingly severe, exceeding the form of traditional crimes.

Viet Nam highly appreciates the role of ARF as the most important forum in the region where the ARF members can exchange views and experience, including education and training as well as cooperative measures. ARF has adopted the "Declaration on Cooperation against Piracy and other Threats to Maritime Security". Many ARF workshops have been organized, namely "Regional Cooperation in Maritime Security" co-hosted by Singapore and the US, "Maritime Security" co-hosted by Malaysia, Indonesia and the US; "Maritime Security Cooperation Training" held in India, "Maritime Security Capacity Building" in Japan.

2. Vietnam is to promote maritime security cooperation

As a country with the long coastline, large territorial waters and exclusive economic zone, adjacent to the important Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOC) of the region and the world where many piracy and smuggling activities occurred, including arms and drug trafficking, Viet Nam realizes the importance of maritime security and bilateral and multilateral cooperation in

ensuring maritime security, contributing to maintaining defence - security, serving efficiently for the cause of the national construction and development.

Therefore, Vietnam has been actively participating in maritime cooperation, especially negotiations on demarcation of overlapping areas with neighbouring countries; conducting joint maritime scientific research with the Philippines; implementing the tripartite agreement of Vietnam-The Philippines-China on sea seismological survey; conducting coordinated patrol and establishing hotlines between the Vietnam People's Navy and the Royal Thai Navy, Royal Cambodian Navy and the Navy of the Chinese People's Liberation Army; and actively implementing the "Declaration of Conduct" (DOC) of the parties in the South China Sea.

Vietnam actively engages in cooperative activities on maritime environment protection such as the Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA); United Nations Environment Programme's activities of maritime environment protection; signing the joint agreement on "Cooperative Preparedness in Respond to oil spill in the Gulf of Thailand" with Thailand and Cambodia.

Recently, Vietnam has made important decisions concerning maritime security such as the decision by Vietnam's President to adhere to the "Agreement of the Implementation of Part XI of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea"; the decision by the Vietnam's Prime Minister to sign and approve the "Regional Agreement on Piracy and Armed Robbery against ships in Asia".

In spite of limited experience and capabilities, Viet Nam could participate in such areas as:

- (1) Customs Cooperation;
 - (2) Cooperation against piracy;
 - (3) Cooperation against trafficking of drug, arms and materials related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD) at sea;
 - (4) Cooperation to prevent maritime pollution;
- and
- (5) Cooperation against Terrorism and on Search & Rescue;

Through the forms of:

- Activities aimed at further promoting confidence building
- Sharing information at bilateral and multilateral conferences and workshops;
- Defence Official's Dialogue; and
- Establishing the hotlines and, if possible, bilateral coordinated patrol between the Vietnam People's Navy and Navies of other Southeast Asia countries.

Thanks for your kind attention!