

CO-CHAIRS' REPORT
ASEAN Regional Forum Intersessional Meeting
on Maritime Security (ARF ISM-MS)
2019-2020
Viet Nam, Australia, EU

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Co-Chairs of the Asean Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM-MS), Viet Nam, Australia and the EU, were unfortunately not able to hold the 12th ISM-MS in the 2019-2020 Inter-Sessional year. To take forward the operation and activities of the ISM-MS in the context of the pandemic, the Co-Chairs have implemented electronic provisional measures, as outlined by ASEAN.

The Co-Chairs are pleased to report as follows on: proposed co-chairmanship arrangements for the ISM-MS; the progress of ISM-MS activities in 2019-20; and proposed ISM-MS activities for 2020-21.

I. ARF ISM-MS Co-Chairmanship

1. Extension of the current Co-Chairmanship

Taking into consideration the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the management and activities of the ISM-MS, and in order to ensure continuity of the activities of the ISM-MS and the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security 2018-2020, Viet Nam, Australia and the EU communicated their proposal to extend their tenure as ISM-MS Co-Chairs by 12 months until August 2021, by email to ARF participants dated 3 April 2020.

As no ARF participant raised any objection, the Co-Chairs will formally convey this proposal to the ARF ISG and ARF SOM for endorsement, before formal adoption at the 27th ARF Ministerial Meeting.

The Co-Chairs will continue to implement the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security 2018-2020 until the conclusion of their extended tenure as Co-Chairs in August 2021.

2. Co-chairs for the next ISM-MS cycle

To date, the Co-Chairs have received two expressions of interest from ARF participants to co-chair the ISM-MS in the next cycle (commencing from the 2021-22 inter-sessional year): one jointly from Indonesia, India and the United States, and the second from China. In accordance with ARF procedures, the co-chairmanship for the next period will be decided by consensus at the next ISM-MS, which at this stage is expected to take place in Europe in March 2021. Co-chairs will be formally designated at the 28th ARF Ministerial Meeting in 2021.

II. Progress of ISM-MS Track-1 activities: 2019-2020 intersessional year

1. The following approved ARF ISM-MS Track 1 activities were held in the 2019-20 intersessional year:

(i) *The 3rd ARF Workshop on Ferry Safety* (12-13 November 2019 in Guangzhou, China) - co-chaired by Thailand and China.

(ii) *The 2nd ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to Address Emerging Maritime Issues* (13-14 November 2019 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam) - co-chaired by Viet Nam, Canada and the EU. The Co-Chairs' summary report of this activity is attached as **Annex 1**.

(iii) *The 2nd ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness* (20 February 2020 in Tokyo, Japan) - co-chaired by Viet Nam and Japan. The Co-Chairs' summary report of this activity is attached as **Annex 2**.

(iv) *The ARF Workshop on Dispute Resolution and Law of the Sea* (27-28 February 2020 in Dili, Timor Leste) - co-chaired Malaysia, Australia and Timor Leste. The Co-Chairs' summary report of this activity is attached as **Annex 3**.

2. The following approved activities will be moved to the 2020-2021 intersessional year due to the disruption caused by COVID-19:

(i) *The 3rd ARF Workshop on Enhancing Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation* – to be co-chaired by Viet Nam, Australia and the EU.

(ii) *International Ship and Port Facility Security Code Training Series and Manual* – to be co-chaired by the Philippines, India, Papua New Guinea and the United States.

Co-chairs will update ARF participants on arrangements for these activities in due course.

III. Proposals for the 27th ARF Ministerial Meeting

ARF Participants have put forward various proposals for activities for the 2020-2021 inter-sessional year for consideration at the 27th ARF Ministerial Meeting - concept papers for proposed initiatives are attached. ARF participants are invited to provide comments on, and inputs to, concept papers directly to proponents for each proposal.

1. *Concept paper on “Establishment of an Online Working Group on Guidelines for Preventing and Managing Incidents between Maritime Law Enforcement Units” proposed by Viet Nam, Australia and the EU:* The proponents expressed their appreciation for comments and feedback received from the Philippines and China on the concept paper, and have separately communicated with the Philippines and China on input received. Following this consultation process, an updated Concept Paper is attached as **Annex 4**. The proponents invite further comments and inputs from ARF participants on the updated Concept Paper, and will continue to consult and work with ARF participants on the proposal.

2. *Concept Paper on the ARF Training on Ferry Safety Capacity Building proposed by China:* The proponent would welcome expressions of interest from ARF participants, including at least one ASEAN member, to co-chair this training workshop. The Concept Paper is attached as **Annex 5**.

3. *Concept Paper on the 3rd ARF Workshop on Maritime Domain Awareness proposed by Japan:* The proponent would welcome expressions of interest from ARF participants, including at least one ASEAN member, to co-chair this workshop. The Concept Paper is attached as **Annex 6**.

4. *Concept Paper on the ARF Workshop on the Law of the Sea and Fisheries proposed by Australia:* The proponent is discussing co-chairmanship with a number of ARF participants. The Concept Paper is attached as **Annex 7**.

5. *Concept Paper on the ARF Seminar on Marine Debris – Solid Waste Management and Scalable Solutions proposed by the United States*: The proponent would welcome expressions of interest from ARF participants, including at least one ASEAN member, to co-chair this seminar. The Concept Paper is attached as **Annex 8**.

6. *Concept Paper on the 3rd ARF Workshop: Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instrument proposed by Viet Nam, Australia, Canada, the EU and India*. The proponents also encourage other ARF Participants to join as co-chairs. The Concept Paper is attached as **Annex 9**.