



ASEAN
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ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM
ANNUAL SECURITY
OUTLOOK **2020**



ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM ANNUAL SECURITY OUTLOOK

2020

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FOREWORD

Complicated changes are taking place in the regional and global geostrategic landscape. Uncertainties and complexities have been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are deeply saddened by the loss of lives and sufferings caused by this dreadful pandemic. Nevertheless, we are determined to enhance solidarity and cooperation towards effective efforts to respond to the pandemic as well as prevent future outbreaks of this kind.



Since its founding in 1994, the ARF has become a key and inclusive Forum working towards peace, security and stability in the region. Through its activities, the ARF has made notable progress in fostering dialogue and cooperation as well as mutual trust and confidence among the Participants.

In face of the difficulties and challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, ARF Participants have exerted significant efforts to sustain the momentum of dialogue and cooperation, while moving forward with new proposals and initiatives to respond to existing and emerging challenges. At this juncture, it is all the more important to reaffirm the ARF as a key venue to strengthen dialogue, build strategic trust and enhance practical cooperation among its Participants.

In that spirit, Viet Nam is pleased to publish the 21st edition of the Annual Security Outlook. I believe that the Outlook is an important contribution to promoting mutual understanding and confidence building through enhancing transparency and facilitating the exchange of views among the ARF Participants. And for that, I wish to thank all ARF Participants for their support and contribution to this year's ASO.

By constructively working together, we will overcome challenges and see the opportunity for lasting peace, stability, security, cooperation and prosperity in our region and beyond.

Pham Binh Minh

Chair of the 27th ASEAN Regional Forum
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 21st edition of the ASEAN Regional Forum Annual Security Outlook (ARF ASO) includes 22 voluntary submissions from the ARF Participants. This is a record-high number of submissions to date.

This publication provides a compilation of the Participants' perspectives on the contemporary regional landscape as well as their expectations on the future role of the ARF. To promote transparency and trust, the Participants share information on their respective national security and defence policies. And in highlighting their national contributions towards ARF activities, the Participants continue to reaffirm their commitment to enhance cooperation in the priority areas of cooperation, which include counterterrorism and transnational crime, non-proliferation and disarmament, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, maritime security and security in the use of information and communication technology (ICT).

In general, the Participants acknowledge the challenges and risks posed to the global and regional geostrategic landscape, particularly by or under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the dynamics in major power relations. Non-traditional challenges such as terrorism, smuggling, natural disasters, and cybercrime, which no single country can tackle and overcome on its own, have also been widely mentioned as common concerns. On counterterrorism and transnational crime, the Participants stress the importance of preventive measures such as information sharing and capacity-building in countering these threats. On non-proliferation and disarmament, the Participants reaffirm their support for and continued participation in international efforts on non-proliferation and disarmament. On humanitarian and disaster relief, the Participants underline the need

to further practical cooperation to enhance preparedness and response capacity. On maritime security, the Participants underscore the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, freedom of navigation and overflight in the region, at the same time emphasising the importance of upholding international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS. In addition, the Participants also acknowledge the need to address other maritime challenges such as piracy, people smuggling, drug trafficking and the protection of the marine environment. On ICTs security, while recognising the opportunities brought about by ICTs in terms of economic and social development, the Participants also share their concern over the increasing cyber threats, which require closer cooperation among countries to respond.

On the future role of the ARF, the Participants express the hope that the ARF could do more to reach its potential and become action-oriented, with more concrete activities implemented on the ground. It is in this spirit that the Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) has been developed, which will guide the Forum's cooperation, development and activities for the next 5 years. The Participants also reiterate their support for ASEAN to remain as the primary driving force in steering the ARF to develop further as a central pillar in the evolving regional security architecture.

ANNUAL SECURITY OUTLOOK 2020

ASEAN Regional Forum

AUSTRALIA

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Australia remains committed to working with its Indo-Pacific partners to support an open and inclusive region of stable, prosperous, sovereign and resilient states that cooperate on shared interests and challenges. ASEAN, and the ASEAN-led architecture, has a central role in supporting the rules and norms that have underpinned regional security and prosperity for more than 50 years. Australia will continue to promote an open, inclusive and prosperous region defined by respect for international law, sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. ASEAN is a key partner for Australia in this regard, and we are committed to supporting the implementation of the 2019 ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

The COVID-19 pandemic is now the overriding challenge for the region. Its humanitarian and economic impacts threaten to: reverse hard-won development gains; retard trade and investment flows; lead to instability in some countries; and increase vulnerability to other risks, such as natural disasters.

The pandemic could add momentum to powerful drivers of change that were converging in the Indo-Pacific before COVID-19. Shifts in the distribution of power across the region could accelerate, and pressure on rules, norms and institutions could become more acute. The US-China relationship is under further strain. Meanwhile, the pandemic could exacerbate other challenges such as: territorial disputes; nuclear and missile proliferation; terrorism and returning foreign fighters; malicious cyber activity; people-smuggling and other transnational crime. Technological change, challenges to globalisation and climate change also continue to require both regional and global responses.

The global nature of the COVID-19 pandemic means that no country in our region can overcome this unprecedented challenge alone. Even as Australia continues to address COVID-19 at home, we are committed to working with regional partners to mitigate the impacts of the crisis and to support regional recovery. Australia's approach centres on: ensuring our domestic policy settings remain fit-for-purpose; strengthening bilateral cooperation with regional partners to coordinate our respective efforts and build resilience; pivoting our development assistance program to respond to the pandemic; and helping build a pathway toward regional economic recovery.

Australia will work through regional and international forums to pursue comprehensive, balanced responses in accordance with international law and norms. We are committed to the central role of ASEAN in regional architecture, including as the convener of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). ASEAN and the ASEAN-centred institutions sit at the heart of the Indo-Pacific, geographically, diplomatically and strategically. Through the ARF and other groupings, particularly the East Asia Summit (EAS), Australia seeks to ensure that all regional countries, large and small, have a voice on regional issues. With its well-established program of activities focused on confidence building

measures and a growing preventive diplomacy agenda, the ARF can help manage tensions, set norms of acceptable behaviour, and bolster regional resilience.

The Informal ASEAN-Australia Defence Ministers' Meeting on 19 February 2020 and 32nd ASEAN-Australia Forum on 18 May 2020 reaffirmed Australia's commitment to ASEAN and reinforced our Strategic Partnership. Our engagement with ASEAN and ASEAN-led frameworks - guided by the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Australia Strategic Partnership (2020-2024) - is focused on building trust, transparency and habits of cooperation across Southeast Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific. Australia's 2020 Vision for Defence Engagement with ASEAN outlines the principles that guide our defence cooperation with ASEAN: mutual respect; ASEAN centrality; supporting sovereignty; addressing areas of shared priority; transparency; and respect for international law and norms.

We are committed to remaining a leading strategic, economic and development partner for ASEAN and its members. We will continue to work through the EAS, ARF and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) to promote peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

Korean Peninsula

The DPRK's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles remains a serious threat to international security. The DPRK has launched shorter range ballistic missiles on 17 occasions since May 2019. On 24 August and 1 November 2019 Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Women strongly condemned the DPRK's repeated launches. Any ballistic missile launch by the DPRK, of any range, clearly violates multiple UN Security Council resolutions. Australia is also deeply concerned by the DPRK's announcement on 31 December 2019 that it no longer feels bound by its moratorium on nuclear tests and intercontinental ballistic missile launches. Australia calls on the DPRK to take clear steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation, to cease all provocations that increase tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and to make a sustained commitment to talks with the United States and the Republic of Korea. We commend the United States' and ROK's commitment to talks with the DPRK.

The UN Panel of Experts on DPRK sanctions continues to identify widespread sanctions evasion, including in our region. Australia remains committed to strictly enforcing sanctions against the DPRK until it takes clear steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation. Australia has, for example, deployed maritime patrol aircraft on six occasions and a vessel to the region on three occasions since May 2018 to monitor and deter shipments of sanctioned goods. It is imperative that all countries implement UN Security Council resolutions on the DPRK and take steps against sanctions evasion. Effective sanctions enforcement requires a global effort.

Rakhine State

Australia continues to accord a very high priority to responding to the situation in Rakhine State – the home of the largest and most complex humanitarian crisis in the region. The UN estimates

715,000 people in Rakhine State (including approximately 126,000 displaced Rohingya), and over 855,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, are currently in need of humanitarian assistance. Work to resolve the crisis has been complicated by ongoing hostilities between the Arakan Army and the Myanmar military in Rakhine and Chin states as well as the COVID-19 pandemic.

ASEAN and Australia have shared interests in helping to resolve this crisis in view of its regional implications, including increased irregular maritime movements and risks of radicalisation. Australia supports Myanmar's efforts to bring durable peace and stability to Rakhine State, while also encouraging it to fully implement the Rakhine Advisory Commission recommendations. We welcome Myanmar's agreement to the involvement of ASEAN in Rakhine State through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) and Ad Hoc Support Team in Myanmar, and note the important role of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in any repatriation process.

Australia has consistently called for accountability for human rights violations and abuses – including serious international crimes – and has welcomed the priority accorded by Myanmar to International Court of Justice processes to date. Australia has provided over AUD250 million in humanitarian assistance to address the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh and Myanmar, and other humanitarian crises in Myanmar, since August 2017. We are committed to sustaining our assistance to this crisis.

South China Sea

Australia has a substantial interest in the maintenance of peace and stability, freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded trade, and adherence to international law (particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; UNCLOS), in the South China Sea. In the current environment, it is vital that parties refrain from destabilising actions and work to ease tensions so the international community can devote full attention to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are concerned by any actions that are destabilising and could provoke escalation in the South China Sea, including: the militarisation of disputed features; the dangerous or coercive use of coast guard vessels and 'maritime militia'; and efforts to disrupt other countries' resource exploitation activities. We continue to urge all parties to take meaningful steps to ease tensions and build trust, including through dialogue. All claims in the South China Sea should be made and resolved in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS. Where claims have already been subject to binding legal judgments, the parties have an obligation to abide by them.

We note ongoing negotiations regarding a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. It is important that any code: does not prejudice the interests of third parties or the rights of states under international law (especially UNCLOS); reinforces existing inclusive regional architecture; and strengthens states' commitments to cease actions that would complicate or escalate South China Sea disputes, notably militarisation.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world, where conflict severely limits provision of essential services. The context is changing rapidly, with a nascent peace process and possible change to international military posture, political instability, and a fiscal cliff in 2020 at the end of donor commitments. The US-Taliban deal of 29 February 2020 was a welcome turning point.

Australia remains committed to a stable and secure Afghanistan, which we consider vital to containing the threat of international terrorism. Our contribution in Afghanistan is part of a global commitment with NATO and our Allies to sustaining improvements in stability and governance, so that Afghanistan does not become a harbour or training ground for terrorists who could again threaten the region. Australia's aid program in Afghanistan contributes to inclusive state-building by assisting the government to deliver basic services for all of society and restart the economy, helping to prevent the reversal of legitimate and inclusive social gains made during the last 19 years.

Needs for international assistance in Afghanistan can be expected to increase due to COVID-19, particularly assistance to support stability and the peace process as foreign troop numbers are reduced. Australia is assisting Afghanistan in responding to the COVID-19 crisis by providing humanitarian support and assistance to the health system.

Middle East

Australia has an interest in a stable and peaceful Middle East and remains concerned by ongoing tensions and conflict in this important region. Australia also recognises the serious challenge that COVID-19 poses to the stability of the Middle East, especially in areas where governance, health infrastructure and humanitarian services are weak. Despite its territorial defeat in Iraq and Syria, Da'esh remains a persistent threat, and Australia continues to engage closely with partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat Da'esh. In Iraq, Australia continues to contribute to Coalition efforts, including by providing support to the Iraqi Security Forces, while encouraging reform and equitable governance. The conflict in Syria continues to exact a humanitarian toll and remains a source of insecurity and instability for many of its neighbours. An inclusive political settlement to this conflict must continue to be a priority for the international community.

The conflict in Yemen remains dangerous, and continued efforts to engage in constructive peace talks are necessary to reach a lasting solution. While welcoming recent reforms to the criminal and juvenile justice systems in Saudi Arabia, the treatment of human rights defenders, women's rights activists, journalists and religious figures remain of concern. As a member of the multinational Combined Maritime Forces and International Maritime Security Construct, Australia is playing an active role in supporting freedom of navigation, maritime security in the Gulf, and the safety of global civilian shipping.

We share with the United States and broader international community many concerns about problematic Iranian behaviour, including missile development, regional interference and support

for sub-state armed groups. Australia continues to support the non-proliferation aims of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and continues to urge Iran to comply with its commitments, including ensuring access by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Australia continues to maintain UN and Australian autonomous sanctions against entities of concern.

Australia remains committed to a two-state solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and will continue to support initiatives that address the legitimate concerns of both parties. A return to direct peace negotiations is critical and Australia will continue to call on both Israel and the Palestinians to refrain from unilateral actions that undermine the prospects of a durable and resilient peace settlement.

MH17

Australia remains committed to protecting the international rules based order, including through our steadfast pursuit of accountability for the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17. We welcome commencement of the national prosecution in the Netherlands, on 9 March 2020, of four suspects in relation to their alleged roles in the downing. These prosecutions send a powerful message that the international community will not tolerate such egregious crimes. We continue to call on all countries, including the Russian Federation, to comply fully with UNSC Resolution 2166 (2014) and cooperate with efforts to establish truth, justice and accountability.

2. National Security and Defence Policy

a. Overview of national security and defence policy

Australia's 2016 Defence White Paper and 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper committed to an enhanced focus on the Indo-Pacific region. This aims to strengthen Australia's contribution to the peaceful evolution of the region and reinforce regional resilience, prosperity and the cooperative relations enjoyed in the region over recent decades. Australia places high priority on our multilateral and bilateral relationships in the Indo-Pacific. We are boosting security and defence engagement, including through increased training, exercises, capacity building and enhanced cooperation on challenges such as terrorism, transnational organised crime and cyber security. Australia's enhanced posture is backed by an investment of over AUD200 billion in military capability, alongside significant reforms to the way Australia's security and defence policy is developed and implemented.

The core principles of Australia's proactive agenda to support an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific, outlined in our 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper and 2016 Defence White Paper, remain at the heart of our approach to the region. Australia will continue to: promote rules and norms to guide peaceful and inclusive cooperation; encourage regional economic integration based on open markets, rules and cooperation; and build resilience and collaboration on issues such as health security, cyber security, counter-terrorism and maritime security.

In the years since the release of the Defence and Foreign Policy White Papers, the profound geopolitical and technological changes they identified have intensified – and many are now being accelerated by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Australia has needed to adapt to these trends, and Australian security policy settings are now subject to more regular review to ensure defence and security organisations are positioned to respond. In 2019, the Australian Government announced a re-examination of the settings underpinning the 2016 Defence White Paper, which is currently ongoing.

b. Data contributions to ARF Arms Register

Australia's 2018-19 fiscal year military expenditure, provided to the UN in accordance with the UN Standardised Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures Guidelines under the UNGA Resolution 35/142B can be accessed at <https://undocs.org/A/74/155>.

3. National Contributions to Regional Security

a. COVID-19 response

Australia is working closely with international organisations and regional partners, including through the ASEAN-led architecture, to mitigate the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and support regional recovery. In line with Australia's new *Partnerships for Recovery* strategy, we have pivoted our development program to support the health security, stability and economic recovery of our Indo-Pacific region. We have redirected over AUD280 million from our existing development program to support the critical health and humanitarian needs of the Pacific, Timor-Leste, and other partners in Southeast Asia.

As at 31 May, Australia's COVID-19 health security assistance totalled more than AUD 120 million. This is in addition to the AUD 170 million that Australia spends annually in support for the development, purchase and distribution of vaccines, drugs and diagnostics globally for a range of endemic infectious diseases. Australia's Indo-Pacific Centre for Health Security, launched in 2017 to support avoidance and containment efforts, is playing a major role in the regional response. Under our Health Security Initiative for the Indo-Pacific, we are providing AUD59.9 million through partnerships involving Australia's premier health and medical research institutions to support health emergency response coordination, laboratory strengthening, disease surveillance and the management of public health information, field epidemiology, and infection prevention and control.

Australia welcomed the adoption of the Resolution on the global COVID-19 response at the 73rd session of the World Health Assembly, which commits to an impartial, independent and comprehensive evaluation into COVID-19, at the earliest appropriate moment, alongside continued work to identify the zoonotic source of the virus and route of introduction to the human population. We are committed to working with the international community and World Health Organization to take these commitments forward.

b. Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Australia engages in bilateral and multilateral efforts, including through the ARF, to counter terrorism and violent extremism in the region. Where possible, Australia has continued this engagement through virtual mechanisms in response to travel restrictions associated with COVID-19.

COVID-19 will continue to shape both the regional terrorism threat environment and counter-terrorism efforts. Terrorist plotting in the region will not stop, as extremists stay connected online and exploit the pandemic in their propaganda. Any diversion of regional security attention caused by COVID-19 could allow terrorists to operate more freely and improve their cross-border cooperation.

The ASEAN-Australia Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation to Counter International Terrorism (MOU), signed in March 2018, continues to provide a platform to strengthen practical regional cooperation to counter terrorism and violent extremism. The MOU gives effect to the 2016 ASEAN-Australia Joint Declaration to Combat International Terrorism.

Australia works closely with our ARF partners to counter terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms, including through the Intersessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM-CTTC), and offers practical assistance where possible. We were pleased to co-sponsor the ARF Statement on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism in 2019.

Australia has assisted with enhancements to legal and policy frameworks, to support the effective implementation of laws, and to strengthen criminal justice processes for the investigation and prosecution of terrorism. Australia has also assisted with enhancements to national approaches to the management of violent extremist offenders, and to the identification and addressing of radicalisation and recruitment to violent extremism in prisons. Australia supports regional capacity building initiatives in Southeast Asia to help enhance partners' border management and security capacity.

After several years of effective assistance, Australia continues to support the Philippines' humanitarian response, recovery and reconstruction in Marawi City, as well as peace building efforts in the Southern Philippines. We also contribute to the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund's local, community-level initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremists, including in the Philippines. Additionally, Australia provides counter-terrorism support and capacity-building to the Armed Forces of the Philippines under the Enhanced Defence Cooperation Program.

Australia contributes to regional counter-terrorism financing efforts in the region through the Financial Intelligence Consultative Group (FICG). The FICG is co-chaired by Australian and Indonesian financial intelligence units (FIU) and brings together all ASEAN, Australian and New Zealand FIUs. The FICG is a leading example of regional multilateral cooperation and works to strengthen collaboration

and financial intelligence sharing on counter-terrorism financing, money laundering and serious financial crime in the region.

Australia also works closely with regional partners to support compliance with international standards on AML and CTF set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). This contributes to improved regional governance, stability, and resilience to illicit financial flows. Bilateral capacity building projects support improvements in AML/CTF frameworks in Indonesia, Cambodia and Mongolia. Australia also co-hosted with Pakistan the inaugural Priority Counter-Terrorism Financing Forum, bringing together international crime cooperation officers from Australia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Australia expanded this effort by hosting the second No Money for Terror conference in November 2019, furthering our shared objectives of preventing terrorist entities from exploiting the global financial system to raise and transfer money for terrorist purposes.

We continue to partner with the Southeast Asian Network of Civil Society Organisations, and work to develop civil society organisations' capacity to partner more effectively with regional governments and the private sector on countering violent extremism (CVE).

Australia is active in the UN and regional forums to strengthen regional counter-terrorism capabilities. We support implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and UN Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE), and encourage regional efforts to implement national action plans on PVE, in line with national priorities. We are supporting the ASEAN Regional Action Plan to Prevent and Counter Radicalization and Violent Extremism through funding for UN Office of Counter-Terrorism to organise a regional conference on radicalisation to violence of migrant workers.

As Co-Chairs of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum CVE Working Group, Australia and Indonesia have hosted a range of activities to share best practice and develop capacity of GCTF members and other stakeholders to counter violent extremism. This included a CVE Working Group hosted by Indonesia in Jakarta on counter and alternative narratives in June 2019.

Australia led the Osaka G20 Leaders' Statement on Preventing Exploitation of the Internet for Terrorism and Violent Extremism. In this Statement, leaders called on online platforms to step up the ambition and pace of their efforts to prevent terrorist and violent extremist content from being streamed, uploaded, or re-uploaded. The Statement urged platforms to adhere to the core principle that the rule of law applies online, as it does offline. Leaders committed to work together to tackle this challenge and to remain engaged with industry progress. To deliver on the statement, Australia, New Zealand and the OECD initiated a project to develop a Voluntary Transparency Reporting Protocol (VTRP). This project is bringing together industry, governments, academia and civil society to establish a common protocol for online platforms to publicly report steps they are taking to prevent, detect and remove terrorist and violent extremist content. The VTRP is expected to be introduced in late 2020.

c. Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Australia considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), marking its 50th anniversary this year, to be the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Australia is working closely with ARF partners to implement the 2010 NPT Action Plan, as the 2018-2020 coordinator of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and through engagement in the ARF ISM on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and with the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network. While COVID-19 safety restrictions prevented the convening of the NPT Review Conference (RevCon) this year, we welcome the efforts of RevCon President-designate Zlauvinen and his Bureau to re-schedule this important conference at an early time in 2021. We encourage States Parties to use the additional time to engage constructively on ways to strengthen the review process and pathways toward a positive outcome. Through the NPDI and other forums, Australia will continue to work hard to ensure NPT States Parties can work past known differences and focus on the vital ongoing role of the NPT in preventing a global nuclear arms race, encouraging disarmament, and containing nuclear weapons proliferation.

Australia congratulates ASEAN on its achievement of obtaining the ratifications of all member states to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Since bringing the CTBT text to the UN General Assembly in 1996, Australia has been at the forefront of efforts to universalise and encourage entry into force of the treaty. ASEAN's achievement is a positive model for other regions.

Australia actively works to promote universal adherence to the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions. Australia engages with ARF partners to strengthen the effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention in the region and globally, including as permanent Chair of the Australia Group strategic export control regime. Through its roles as chair of the UN Disarmament Commission in 2018, a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors and president of the Conference on Disarmament in 2020, Australia is committed to a sustained and progressive approach to disarmament and non-proliferation.

d. Transnational Crime**i. People Smuggling and Human Trafficking**

Australia continues to play a leading role in our region to manage irregular migration and combat people smuggling and human trafficking. At the Ad Hoc group of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime meeting, co-chaired by Australia and Indonesia in July 2019, senior officials agreed to continue to enhance cooperation, improve information and policy sharing, promote regular migration pathways, and counter criminal networks. The Ad Hoc group Senior Officials meeting planned for 23-25 March 2020 in Abu Dhabi was postponed due to COVID-19. We are looking for opportunities to convene the meeting, possibly by videoconference.

Australia's generous humanitarian resettlement program, together with its border protection policies, aim to provide safe and legal migration pathways to those in need, and to discourage people from falling prey to people smugglers. In 2019-2020, Australia continued to deliver a strong Humanitarian Program, with up to 18,750 places to refugees and others in humanitarian need. Over recent years, Australia has also welcomed an additional 12,000 people displaced by the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, while providing substantial humanitarian assistance to Iraq, Syria and neighbouring countries.

Australia is cognisant of the detrimental impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable populations around the world and recognises that people smugglers and traffickers may seek to target the vulnerable. Ongoing collaboration and cooperation with ARF partners during this time will be crucial to addressing and managing emerging irregular migration issues as they arise.

Over the next 10 years, the ASEAN-Australia Counter-Trafficking program, announced at the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit in March 2018, will invest AUD80 million towards protecting the human rights of trafficking victims. This investment will work with, and through, various ASEAN bodies to ensure ASEAN member states have effective justice systems that provide for the just punishment of traffickers.

Australia is involved in international efforts to combat modern slavery by promoting more coordinated action under the Alliance 8.7 – a coalition of governments, UN agencies, businesses and civil society. Australia also co-convened of the Liechtenstein Financial Sector Commission to identify how the finance sector can leverage its influence over global business to invest in and foster business practices that help end modern slavery and human trafficking. Australia continues to support the Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking project to disseminate and promote the Commission's final report, released in September 2019, that contains practical steps financial sector actors can take to improve practices in their industries, as well as recommendations on victim access to finance.

ii. Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime

Transnational, serious and organised crime (TSOC) remains one of the greatest security threats to our region, undermining countries' sovereignty by subverting border security processes and fuelling corruption. TSOC groups weaken regional economies by generating untaxed profit and unfairly competing with legitimate businesses. Despite being global in nature, the destructive consequences of TSOC infiltrate our communities by causing grave health impacts, environmental degradation and violence. These groups also exploit society's most vulnerable through human trafficking and child sexual abuse and exploitation.

COVID-19 is likely impacting the ability of TSOC groups to move illicit proceeds out of Australia as a result of quarantine arrangements and restrictions on travel. Closure of Australian casinos and legitimate businesses, and a reluctance to deal with physical cash, have further impacted the supply and demand for funds and the ability move criminal proceeds. The extent of exploitation by TSOC groups, including money laundering organisations, of crypto-assets as alternative money laundering mechanisms remains an unknown threat.

Guided by its National Strategy to Fight Transnational, Serious and Organised Crime, Australia's cross-cutting measures to counter TSOC span prevention, disruption, investigation, prosecution and asset recovery. Australia works closely with regional and international partners to address collective security challenges by sharing intelligence, capabilities and expertise, including through engagement in the ARF ISM-CTTC and the ASEAN Plus Australia Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime consultations. Australia considers coordinated international efforts, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to be crucial in preventing the geographical displacement of TSOC activity within the region. In 2019, we were pleased to sponsor the EAS Leaders' Statement on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime.

To further enhance Australia's counter-TSOC effort, the Australian Transnational Serious and Organised Crime Committee (ATSOCC) was established in April 2019. ATSOCC brings together Policing and Justice/Attorneys-General agencies from every Australian jurisdiction and is co-chaired by the Commonwealth TSOC Coordinator, Australian Federal Police (AFP) Deputy Commissioner Karl Kent OAM. ATSOCC strengthens cooperation on strategy, policy and capability to enhance Australia's national response to TSOC. The addition of New Zealand representation late in 2019 broadens its focus to the trans-Tasman region. As part of its ongoing work, ATSOCC is concentrating on national capabilities and priorities to counter TSOC, with a current focus on TSOC-driven cybercrime.

Cognisant that TSOC groups continue to utilise and exploit legitimate platforms, services, and supply chains, Australia is exploring the merits in developing a public-private partnership instrument that affords a commensurate level of assurance and legal protection for the private sector in taking action to close or deny services to TSOC groups.

Money laundering is the common element in almost all serious and organised crime. It enables criminals to hide and accumulate wealth, avoid prosecution, evade taxes and fund further criminal activity. Australian law enforcement and intelligence agencies, including the AFP, Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission and AUSTRAC coordinate to collect intelligence, build capacity with partner agencies and disrupt TSOC groups across ASEAN by targeting their financial networks.

iii. Illicit drugs

The global illicit drug trade presents a significant threat to the stability and security of the region. This illicit trade fuels corruption, undermines regional economies and has devastating social and health impacts. Crystal methamphetamine (ice) and its precursors are a key focus for Australia, though other drugs such as cocaine and synthetic opioids remain a concern.

Australia's national efforts to counter illicit drugs comprise law enforcement and border protection activities to reduce supply, balanced with demand and harm reduction initiatives, such as education and treatment support.

Australian Government agencies work closely with regional and international counterparts to prevent and disrupt the manufacture and trafficking of illicit drugs in the region, including through

joint operations, intelligence sharing, and capacity building. Australia supports multilateral efforts to combat cross-border trafficking of illicit drugs and their precursors, including by supporting international bodies such as the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Narcotics Control Board.

Australia will continue to work with regional partners on matters relating to illicit drugs.

iv. Cybercrime

The evolving threat of cybercrime poses significant challenges to regional security and prosperity. Australia is committed to combatting cybercrime and its impacts on our communities, including the harmful impacts of online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Australia works with partners to reinforce international frameworks to combat cybercrime, including ongoing implementation of standards and norms established by the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention). The Budapest Convention helps countries to develop comprehensive national legislation against cybercrime and provides a framework for international cooperation.

Australia looks for opportunities to support international efforts to combat cybercrime and led a landmark resolution at the 28th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Countering Child Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse Online. The resolution urges states to take stronger measures to address child sexual exploitation and abuse online, including by strengthening domestic legislation, resourcing law enforcement, increasing awareness and education, and disrupting distribution of online material. The resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2019.

e. Cyber issues

The frequency, type and sophistication of cyber threats to Australia and the region are increasing. Malicious cyber activity has continued unabated during the COVID 19 pandemic. Australia is committed to deterring and countering malicious cyber activity. Coordinated international responses are needed to effectively shape behaviour and deter malicious cyber activity. Australia will continue to work with partners to strengthen global responses to unacceptable behaviour in cyberspace.

Australia is an active and constructive member of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on ICT Security (ISM-ICT Security) and the Open-Ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures. Both forums play an important role in enhancing strategic awareness and discussion of cyber issues in our region. In 2018, Australia and Malaysia co-sponsored the development of the ARF Points of Contact Directory on ICT Security (ICT Security Directory). The Directory was agreed by Ministers in 2019 and is now fully operational. The Directory consists of relevant points of contact from participating ARF members, across diplomatic, national security policy, law enforcement and technical functions, at the senior and working level. Alternatively, ARF members may provide a single point of contact,

if appropriate. The Directory aims to improve connectivity and communications between ARF members, especially in the event of a cyber-related crisis. Australia and Malaysia will conduct a simple working level connectivity test of the Directory ahead of the next Study Group and ISM-ICT Security.

All countries have a duty to ensure their activities online are consistent with their international obligations. Australia is committed to defending a rules-based order online, just as we do offline. Australia advocates for a framework of peace and stability in cyberspace, underpinned by four key principles:

- existing international law applies to cyberspace;
- agreed voluntary non-binding norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace complement international law and promote predictability and stability;
- confidence building measures prevent misunderstandings and increase trust and stability and
- targeted capacity building enhances the ability of countries to respond to the challenges and embrace the opportunities of increased connectivity.

Australia is investing over AUD 48 million to strengthen cyber resilience in the Indo Pacific region, including through its Cyber Cooperation Program (the Program). The Program was expanded from AUD 4 million to AUD 34 million out to 2023, with a joint focus on the ASEAN and Pacific regions. Australia will continue to deliver activities that focus on: promoting the framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace; enhancing regional capacity and cooperation to prevent and combat cybercrime; enhancing cyber security and incident response capabilities; promoting best practice use of technology for economic, sustainable and inclusive development; and advocating and protecting human rights online.

f. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Australia has responded rapidly and effectively to both sudden onset and protracted humanitarian crises across the globe in 2019-20. We have augmented this support through the deployment of Australian civilian experts to a range of humanitarian organisations in the region, including the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA).

Australia provided AUD 5.7 million over three years (AUD 1.9 million per year; 2016-19) to the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) to support the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Asia-Pacific region. In 2020, Australia was due to co-host, with UNISDR, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to bring countries in our region together to take shared responsibility and make actionable commitments towards implementation of the Sendai framework. This event has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strengthening Australia's engagement in responding to post-disaster stabilisation and recovery, including through civil-military coordination with Defence, remains a key priority. In 2019, Australian

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff supported military exercises with a humanitarian and stabilisation component in the ASEAN region.

g. Maritime Security

As a maritime nation, Australia is committed to comprehensive maritime security engagement in the Indo-Pacific. We work closely with regional partners and through international forums to enhance maritime security and promote habits of cooperation in the region's maritime zones.

These challenges are transnational in nature, and include: terrorism; natural disasters and extreme weather events; illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing; piracy; the smuggling of drugs, people and goods; and the security implications of climate change. They cannot be solved unilaterally, and require multilateral cooperation and collaboration.

Australia is committed to progressing initiatives that build maritime security capacity and counter maritime threats in the Indo-Pacific. Commitments announced by Prime Minister Morrison at the ASEAN-Australia Informal Breakfast Summit in November 2018 are designed to ramp up Australia's contribution to regional maritime security. These initiatives will focus on supporting regional civil maritime organisations, maritime domain awareness, countering IUU fishing, and support for a rules-based maritime order.

Australia is pleased to partner with Vietnam and the European Union (EU) on the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM-MS), as part of our co-chairmanship of the ARF maritime work stream. In 2019-20, our proposed program of activities was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and our proposed joint workshop with the EU and Vietnam on Enhancing Cooperation among Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies, along with the ISM-MS, was unfortunately cancelled. We look forward to working with the EU and Vietnam to reschedule these meetings in the coming intersessional year. We also joined with Malaysia and Timor-Leste in co-hosting an ARF workshop on Dispute Resolution and the Law of the Sea in Dili. This workshop provided a valuable opportunity for practitioners and academics from ARF states to discuss mechanisms for the peaceful dispute resolution of disputes under UNCLOS, drawing on the Timor-Leste and Australia Conciliation as a successful case study. Australia is pleased to support the ARF's central role in addressing regional maritime challenges and is proud to be an active contributor to its maritime security agenda.

Australia acknowledges the important work of international organisations - including the International Maritime Organisation, UNODC and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization - in responding to maritime security challenges, and is committed to continuing to work with them and ARF partners to find solutions.

Regional efforts have been effective in reducing the impact of piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Indo-Pacific. The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia, of which Australia has been a member since 2013, has supported this work. As a member of the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM), Australia

supports HACGAM's initiatives to bolster regional civil maritime security by promoting greater agency-to-agency cooperation and promoting information sharing to achieve mutual outcomes. HACGAM 2020, which was to be hosted in Australia, was cancelled due to COVID-19. Australia looks forward to supporting Vietnam as HACGAM host in 2021.

The vastness of the maritime domain in the Pacific presents unique law enforcement and security challenges. As part of the Pacific Step Up, Australia is assisting regional states to manage their maritime domains through enhanced capacity building and cooperation, complementing the activities of other partners in the region. From late 2018, under the Pacific Maritime Security Program, Australia has been replacing patrol boats we previously gifted to Pacific countries with 19 Guardian-class patrol boats, as well as providing two patrol boats to Timor-Leste. Australia also provides region-wide contracted civilian aerial surveillance, including through the provision of two King Air aircraft (based in Samoa and Vanuatu), which are coordinated by the Forum Fisheries Agency.

h. Space Security

Outer space is becoming increasingly congested, contested and competitive as more states turn to space-enabled capabilities to deliver economic prosperity and other social benefits. Australia continues to work in the region and more broadly to build norms of responsible behaviour in outer space and establish practical transparency and confidence building measures that enhance space security for all.

For example, in January 2020, the governments of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand sponsored a Wilton Park two-day conference in Singapore to discuss key issues that relate to operating in space. Representatives from 17 ARF member states and the United Kingdom discussed the central role clear and effective communications could play in facilitating responsible outer space behaviours. In particular, participants considered appropriate protocols and mechanisms that could enable improved communication between operators and by governments in order to reduce the perception of threats in outer space.

4. Role of the ARF

Australia is committed to continuing its longstanding active engagement with ASEAN regional security architecture, including the ARF, the EAS and the ADMM-Plus. As the region's longest-established forum for security dialogue and cooperation, we see the ARF as an important mechanism for frank dialogue and practical, working-level cooperation on regional security challenges.

Australia has a busy ARF agenda. We are especially active as co-chair of the ISM-MS and of maritime security focused workshops and other initiatives which seek to build confidence in the maritime domain. We are also particularly engaged in the ISM-ICT Security, including on operationalising the ARF ICT Security Directory.

Our defence engagement in the ARF supports integrated approaches to many of the complex regional security challenges outlined above, including maritime security, counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation and humanitarian and disaster relief. The participation of defence subject matter experts also promotes alignment with defence-led cooperation under the ADMM-Plus.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The Asia-Pacific region is often characterised by its diversity in its geographical, political and socio-economic aspects and as an engine of world economic growth. However, the current global economic environment saw a downturn since 2019 and according to the World Bank June 2020 Global Economic Prospects report, the global economy is expected to contract by 5.2 percent in 2020.

The COVID-19 outbreak that started in China in December 2019 has become a global pandemic and greatly impacted different regions and variedly among emerging and developing economies. According to the projection by the Asian Development Outlook 2020 (ADO 2020), the aggregate economic growth of ADB developing member countries will decelerate to 2.2% in 2020, but is expected to reaccelerate to 6.2% in 2021, assuming that the pandemic ends by 2020 and activity promptly normalises. Nevertheless, outbreaks could worsen in more countries, and containing them could take longer than currently projected.

The uncertainty in the current world economic crisis due to the pandemic is also expected to increase budgetary pressures on governments. In this regard, defence and security may be affected in particular as constraints on government spending grows as nations focused to ensure public health safety amongst others.

Meanwhile, the ongoing changes in the geopolitical and geo-economic landscapes have brought a wide range of security challenges. The evolving regional architecture, and new power dynamics require all countries to maintain a delicate balance of protecting national interests while ensuring international peace and stability.

While lingering traditional security issues remain, the region has also seen growing non-traditional security challenges that are increasingly complex, which cut across different sectors, and which threaten progress, as well as the well-being and livelihood of its people. Underlying this, technological advancements and rapid information flows especially through social media, and influences of non-state actors, have also contributed to the evolving and emerging security issues in the cyberspace.

Concerns over terrorism and violent extremism endure in multicultural and diverse societies. Since the defeat of ISIS, the movement and returning of fighters to their countries of origin, the spread of its radical ideological narratives and influence on terrorist-linked groups and sympathisers have made Southeast Asia vulnerable. The recent trends of attacks by groups or individuals as seen in New Zealand and Sri Lanka in 2019, many under the guise of religion and nationalism, reaffirmed the importance to deepen understanding and closer cooperation among security law enforcements but also with the community as a whole.

Natural disasters have been a recurrent challenge in the Asia Pacific region as it experiences more disasters from floods, severe storms, droughts, tsunamis to earthquakes in comparison to any other region. At the same time, climate change adds on to the complexity and coupled with increased population densities and urbanisations, this has increased the risk landscape in an escalation in severity of disasters. These unforeseen disasters have severe socio-economic impacts and may have destabilising effects to the affected countries and its neighbours. This has called for improvements in national disaster-response capabilities and for stronger regional coordination of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

At the same time, the momentum that brought positive development in the Korean Peninsula with the two Summits between the US and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), as well as closer interactions between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and DPRK seems to have lost momentum. Instead tensions have arisen with missile tests and the demolition of inter-Korean liaison office at Kaesong by DPRK. This development highlights the unstable relations amongst the countries involved that could affect the maintenance of peace and security in the region. This stressed the importance to resume peaceful dialogue and continue to work towards lasting peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and acknowledge/appreciate the international efforts to bring about a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Peninsula.

The fluidity of existing security issues and the diversity of the region reiterate the need for multilateral approaches to address challenges affecting the region. The momentum towards cooperation between and among countries in various multilateral mechanisms and levels of participations have continued to endure in the region. This has been reflected by efforts in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and initiatives in countering terrorism and maritime security in ASEAN-led mechanisms including the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), ADMM-Plus and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), as well as coordinated ASEAN management and disaster response. The impacts of non-traditional and traditional security challenges alike also underscore the need for holistic approach with wider involvements from all sectors and levels of society.

Brunei Darussalam values the open and outward looking regional security architecture as it brings regional and international friends and partners closer to build confidence, deepen understanding and address common security challenges. ASEAN-related platforms in particular are key to Brunei Darussalam as this accords ASEAN member states to contribute in shaping the region's future.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Overview of national security and defence policy

In support of the national development agenda in the National Vision 2035, Brunei Darussalam places importance on a whole of nation approach in providing assurances to the well-being of its people and the interests of the nation. The National Vision 2035 laid out three goals for Brunei Darussalam. Firstly, to be known for its educated, highly skilled and accomplished people and

secondly, a country that has high quality of life of amongst the top 10 in the world. Lastly, a dynamic and sustainable economy with income per capita among the world top 10's.

Brunei Darussalam views defence as a public good that benefits citizens and residents of the country. In line with this, Brunei Darussalam's defence remains committed to play its role, whether it be a leading or supporting capacity, in defending Brunei Darussalam's sovereignty through a holistic approach as reflected in the Ministry of Defence and the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) concerted efforts with relevant agencies in addressing the COVID-19 situation.

In fulfilling its role and mission to defend Brunei Darussalam's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and uphold the Constitution and the Malay Islamic Monarchy philosophy, the defence and military sector stand ready to contribute in defence in maximum capacity. While continuous efforts are done to build up its national capacity to ensure peace and prosperity are maintained, the defence and military sector looks to three important pillars: deterrence and response, defence diplomacy and holistic defence in addressing its security challenges.

Defence expenditure

For the fiscal year 2020/2021, the Ministry of Defence Brunei Darussalam's defence budget is BND \$606, 027, 220.00 (approximately USD \$452,259,119 @1.34), which is an increase of about 0.27 percent from the previous financial year.

III. National Contributions to Regional Security

Brunei Darussalam remains steadfast and is cognisant on the importance of cooperation and engagements in the region to protect its interests and play its part as a responsible member of the international community. Its participation in various multilateral regional platforms including the ARF, ADMM and ADMM-Plus, as well as the ASEAN Chiefs of Defence Forces Meeting (ACDFM) present opportunities for Brunei Darussalam to continue to engage constructively in dialogue and work together on common security challenges.

The ADMM and ADMM-Plus have provided added value to strengthen Brunei Darussalam's defence and military capacity and capability development. With a view to contribute to regional security, Brunei Darussalam initiated three proposals of cooperation during its ADMM Chairmanship in 2013, which have progressed at various stages.

Logistics Support Framework (LSF) intending to strengthen logistics cooperation that will enable the military forces in the ASEAN region to address non-traditional security challenges, to include but not limited to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Search and Rescue (SAR), Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and anti-piracy in a coordinated and effective manner. Upon the validation and verification of LSF in a Table-Top Exercise (TTX) by all ASEAN member states in January 2016, the LSF was endorsed by the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting (ADSOM). In

moving forward, Brunei Darussalam looks to the possibility of integrating the framework into the work on ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (AMRG).

In recognising the importance of developing an ASEAN early warning system to prevent the occurrence and/or escalation of conflicts, the ADMM has adopted the concept of establishing and maintaining the ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI). ADI sets to provide a permanent, rapid, reliable and confidential means by which any two ASEAN Defence Ministers may communicate with each other at mutual decisions in handling incidences or emergency situations. This platform of communications aims at preventing or defusing misunderstandings and misinterpretations, and therefore prevent escalation and promote quick response cooperation in emergency situations.

The ADI is launched in phases. The first phase, which is in the form of IP-based mechanism, was launched on 24 October 2017, after the ADMM-Plus Meeting in Clark, Pampanga, Philippines. An ADI Exercise was conducted on 21 February 2019 that tested the functionality of the system successfully and operationalise the SOP itself. The second phase is currently under deliberation amongst the ASEAN member states that would be co-chaired together by Brunei Darussalam and Philippines. In addition to this, the concept paper to expand the initiative to Plus countries has been agreed by the ADSOM in April 2019. This is anticipated to further promote open communications amongst the member states, and enhance regional and wider confidence and security building measure.

Underlying the practical cooperation, Brunei Darussalam views interactions among its defence and military officials as an important aspect to ensure enduring relations amongst ASEAN's future leaders. The essence of the ASEAN Defence Interaction Programme is in building trust and understanding, developing mutual respect and instilling the habit of mutual cooperation. Thus far, Brunei Darussalam initiated one activity under the programme in 2013 and another was taken up in 2018 by Malaysia.

Within the ADMM-Plus, Brunei Darussalam is strongly encouraged by the progress of the seven ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups in the areas of HADR, Military Medicine, Maritime Security, Counter Terrorism, Peacekeeping Operations, Humanitarian Mine Action and Cyber Security. Brunei Darussalam is fully committed and supportive of ADMM-Plus endeavours and has worked alongside with the Plus partners. This includes hosting the inaugural multinational ADMM-Plus HADR and MM Exercise in 2013 together with China, Vietnam, Singapore and Japan. Brunei Darussalam also co-chaired the EWG on Maritime Security with New Zealand from 2014 to 2017 that culminated to the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security and Counter Terrorism Exercise that took place in Brunei Darussalam and Singapore in 2016, and a Maritime Security Field Training Exercise in New Zealand also in the same year. For the 2020-2023 cycle, Brunei Darussalam and Australia are co-chairs of the EWG on Military Medicine.

The work of the EWGs have garnered understanding, promoted capacity building and interoperability in all Member States. More importantly, these have contributed towards deeper trust and fostering

stronger military-to-military relations amongst the armed forces of the ADMM-Plus. Further to this, the practical cooperation in the EWGs contributes to ASEAN's collective response to addressing non-traditional security challenges particularly HADR where greater integration in the broader ASEAN disaster response mechanism with closer coordination between military and civilian responders are seen.

Brunei Darussalam also continues to support and participate in the various initiatives related to regional defence cooperation including in the Information Fusion Centre (IFC), Changi Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (RHCC) and the ASEAN Military Medicine Centre (AMMC).

Peacekeeping and peace monitoring initiatives

Brunei Darussalam also remains committed in participating in peacekeeping and peace support operations. Since 2008, the RBAF has been involved in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in which a total of 315 RBAF personnel have been deployed to UNIFIL, and embedded under the Malaysian Armed Forces. The first contingent of the RBAF in 2008 comprised five (05) personnel and has increased over the years totalling to thirty (30) personnel in 2020. Throughout the twelve years of RBAF's involvement in the UNIFIL, there has been six female members of the RBAF that served in the peacekeeping operation.

It has also deployed personnel for the International Monitoring Team (IMT) since 2004 and in 2019-2020 peacekeeping mission, there are eight (08) RBAF personnel and one (01) Royal Brunei Police Force. Further to this, Brunei Darussalam also contributes to the Mindanao peace process as a member of the Independent Decommissioning Body (IDB) alongside Turkey and Norway since 2014. Currently, four (04) RBAF officers are serving in the IDB Verification, Monitoring and Assistance Team (IDB VMAT) in Mindanao.

At the operational theatre level, such initiatives provide exposure and knowledge in operation in conflict environments for the personnel involved. The interactions and engagements of RBAF with its foreign counterparts and organisations further contributes to Brunei Darussalam's defence diplomacy. At the same time, these initiatives showcase the RBAF image as a professional force that is able to contribute meaningfully and for Brunei Darussalam, this reflects as significant support towards regional and global efforts to bring about peace and stability.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

While the initial response to disasters and the primary responsibility for the protection of life, property and the environment in emergencies rests with the the Natural Disaster Management Centre (NDMC), the RBAF has always served a supporting role in a multi-agency collaboration along with the Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF), the Fire and Rescue Department (FRD) as well as others in curbing natural calamities. It has demonstrated its adaptable nature and ability in a

number of domestic natural disaster relief efforts to respond to challenging and complex tasks even at short notice. This arrangement has enabled the RBAF to better contribute in saving lives, alleviate suffering and prevent loss of life or property. As well as this, in addressing COVID-19, the RBAF had provided logistical and personnel support to the Ministry of Health as Brunei Darussalam continued to carry out its containment initiatives as well as testing.

Not only at the national level, the RBAF also provided assistance during the aftermath of the tsunami in Aceh in 2004 and Typhoon Haiyan in Tacloban, Philippines in 2013. Apart from that, RBAF also delivered assistance to Nepal, where it sent one (01) RBAF medical officer, four (04) RBAF Paramedics and three (03) Gurkha reserve Unit Personnel to join the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) personnel under RHCC for “Operation Kukri” in support of the HADR efforts after a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck in April 2015.

The rapid response is a result of the maturity of the RBAF in providing assistance in areas hit by natural disasters. RBAF’s relief efforts were greatly aided by interoperability, a key component that continues to be emphasised in many of the military cooperation undertaken by Brunei Darussalam with its counterparts whether it is a bilateral or multilateral level.

In view of this, Brunei Darussalam has actively supported humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts around the region. Through the various ASEAN’s platforms and mechanisms, there has been improvements in national disaster-response coordination and capabilities derived from the sharing of best practices among member states as well as regional cooperation, when required. There has also been better integration and coordination on HADR in the broader ASEAN disaster response mechanism with effort for closer coordination between military and civilian responders.

Non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament

Brunei Darussalam sees the importance of adhering to non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, and arms control and disarmament effort. As a signatory to various multilateral and global non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament agreements, notably those concerning anti-personnel mines and weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), Brunei Darussalam will continue to support these instruments in its commitment to global peace and stability. Brunei Darussalam actively participated in regional effort for non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament such as through ASEAN and ARF, and in the international arena in United Nations and its associating bodies.

IV. Role of the ARF

The ARF as the first Asia-Pacific wide forum on peace and security issues continues to be an important security dialogue for the region. In line with its stated goals for confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, the ARF complements the work undertaken by the

East Asia Summit and the ADMM-Plus. Alongside the official ARF processes, the ARF has also recognised the value of informal layer of exchanges through the ARF-Experts Eminent Persons (ARF EEPs) system that brings together recognised professionals and experts on specific domain issues. It has been envisaged for the EEPs to provide innovative ideas and recommendations on its three stated goals.

Further to this, the ARF-related platforms in the defence sectoral has given way to deepen understanding on the different perspectives on regional security concerns of its members. Defence Officials Dialogue (DOD) and ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC) have long provided an avenue for defence and military officials to establish networks, build confidence and promote mutual trust amongst one another. The ARF Heads of Defence Universities, Colleges and Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM) has been valuable in promoting military education best practices and exchanges of research on security issues.

These various levels of engagements within the ARF underscore the inclusiveness and ongoing efforts in fostering dialogue and consultations. Brunei Darussalam remains committed to the ARF processes in promoting mutual understanding and working together to address the wide range of regional security challenges. In an ever increasingly uncertain regional security environment, engagements through dialogue, collaboration and cooperation at bilateral and multilateral levels are a necessity in order to manage future risks in a comprehensive manner. Against this landscape, efforts to enhance complementarity and synergy between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus is a positive step towards ensuring cooperative endeavours contribute to the implementation of the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC) Blueprint 2025.

CAMBODIA

1. Assessment of the Regional Security Environment

Most recently, the countries in the region are witnessing the Major power strategy shift in the Asia-Pacific namely the “**Indo-Pacific Strategy**”, “**Belt and Road Initiative**”, and “**India’s Act East Policy**”, which are all announced to ensure peace, stability and cooperation in the region. However, it is plainly obvious that local politics and the shift in relative strengths of global or regional powers are in fact changing the rules of the international order previously entrenched.

The influence of defense-security issues on international relations has been on the rise. The new revolution in military affairs has been greatly changing the defense and military strategies of all countries. The military power competition around the world could possibly lead to the risk of arms races, especially at sea, and in space. Many major powers have adjusted their military strategies, increased their defense budgets, speeded up the armed forces modernization, and developed advanced weapons and equipment, and military technologies. These developments have affected not only the relations among major powers but also the national defense strategy of all countries.

Against this backdrop, the Asia-Pacific region is making progress in confidence-building through common security cooperation both at bilateral and multilateral level such as ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus, East Asia Summit... etc.

2. Cambodia’s National Security and Defense Policy

The Ministry of National Defense of Cambodia has been formulating another strategic document since mid 2017 known as the Defense Whiter Paper 2020 (DWP2020) in order to response to evolving national, regional, and global security environments. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 pandemic, the outbreak of the disease has substantially impacted the formulating process of DWP2020. Initially, the DWP2020 is planned to be finalized and launched by 2020 while currently the process has been paused for the time being. Based on this unforeseen interruption, the Ministry of National Defense has committed to resume the finalization of the DWP2020 by 2021 and this significant strategic document is going to be the Defense White Paper 2021.

The ultimate goal of this upcoming strategic document is to reshape Cambodia’s national defense objectives towards 2030 through a carefully defined strategy of safeguarding peace, protecting national interests, and strengthening international cooperation and engagement. Cambodia’s defense policy intends to promote a stable, secure, and rules-based order approach by pivoting on five key defense priorities which consist of border defense; internal security; military reform; international cooperation and engagement; and military professionalism.

Border defense still stands as the top defense priorities. This consideration is based on several factors. While the process of border demarcation with our neighbor nations is making progress, we continue to face hurdles in misperception or even tensions that could occur at any time as we have experienced in the recent pasts. Overlapping maritime claims are unlikely to be resolved in the near future and Cambodia must be subtle in avoiding any kind of violent tensions. Crossborder illegal activities are of a concern including narcotics, arms and human trafficking, and other trans-boundary crimes. In response to these challenges, we trust that the effort of maintaining political and security dialogues through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms is vital to ensure peaceful, stable, and developing borders.

Over the years, the Royal Government of Cambodia has taken effective measures to repel threats posed to domestic security. The attempt to ruin peace and stability through an organized color revolution has occurred over the past few years. A possible threat from cybercrime is also emerging. Fortunately, Cambodia has not encountered any significant threats in the form of international terrorism. Despite this fact, the return of foreign fighters of ISIS in the region, the spread of ideological extremism and radicalization, and the use of sophisticated technology such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and bio-technology have posed serious concerns not only to regional and global security but also to domestic security of Cambodia.

Moving beyond our borders, Cambodia is strongly committed to collaborating with our regional and international security partners to promote peace, security, and stability of the region. We are firm in our support of existing regional security architectures namely ADMM, ADMM Plus, and ASEAN ARF among others. Plus, we will continue to build strong partnerships with regional nations in the form of human resource development, capacity building, and exchange of expertise.

Over the next 10 years, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces will continue its reform process aiming at restructuring defense and military institutions, improving personnel management, simplifying bureaucracy, and upgrading capabilities in key areas such as military hardware modernization, land border and maritime defense, air defense, and training.

3. Cambodia's Contributions to Regional Security

i. Counter-Terrorism (CT)

As the fight against terrorism continues throughout different regions of the world, the Kingdom of Cambodia continues to commit its resources and dedication to ensure the safety and prosperity of its people and the region. The Kingdom of Cambodia, in conjunction with our regional partners, has improved significantly in steps to suppress and combat any terrorist activities. Tasked by the Royal Cambodian Government, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces are still the leading front in counter terrorism. Since the enactment of Counter Terrorism Law in 2007 which creates the National Counter Terrorism Committee (NCTC) and the National Headquarter of Counter Terrorism Special

Forces, Cambodia has been partaking in operations throughout our country as well as sharing our experiences through trainings, workshops, and seminars throughout the region.

The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces continue to improve in capability during this time of peace and prosperity in order to deter, prevent, and contain any threats within its territory. Through bilateral and multilateral engagements, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces have:

- Extended our engagements with all ASEAN member countries bilaterally and multilaterally.
- Participated in multiple counter terrorism exercises held within its territory or abroad.
- Enhanced our Counter Terrorism components within our National Committee for Maritime Security.
- Cooperated internationally to further improve border security through information sharing and intelligent gathering by monitoring and tracking terrorist activities and resources.

Furthermore, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces have extended its engagement with key nations such as the Commonwealth of Australia, the United States of America, the People Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, and Japan in order to achieve mutual understanding for a safer region. Our engagements ranging from workshops, seminars, Counter Terrorism Field exercises, and many other officer training programs.

Through the leadership of the Royal Cambodian Government, Cambodia was able to achieve complete peace and stability for its people, free from discrimination. Citizens of all ethnicity, race, and color are able to benefit from the same rights and protections. Samdach Hun Sen, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, frequently participate in many different cultural and religious events throughout the Kingdom to promote inclusiveness and acceptance. With the commitment of the Kingdom as a whole, Cambodia will continue to improve and succeed in its counter terrorism programs.

ii. Non-Proliferation, Counter Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

The Kingdom of Cambodia has committed to a range of capability for non-proliferation regime based on national laws, regional and international agreements on disarmament and nonproliferation of the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to respond the illicit trafficking of the WMD materials. Cambodia has been actively engaging in various diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) materials.

At the national level, significant legal frameworks were passed and have been implemented, including: Law on the Management of Weapons, Explosives and Ammunition, Law on the Prohibition of Chemical Radiological Biological and Nuclear (CBRN) Weapons, and Sub Decree on Chemical Substances involved in the Production of CBRN Weapons.

National Action Plan Operational Principle for CBRN First Response Team Lead by National Authority for Prohibition of CBRN (NACW) Acting as Field Commander Operation.

- **Strategy Co-ordinating Group:** The NACW has overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of the emergency and establishing the policy and strategic framework within which lower and high levels of command and coordinating groups will operate.
- **NACW Acting as Strategic Commander:** The Strategic Commander is the command lead for the incident for each of the organizations involved in the CBRNe response.
- **Tactical Co-ordinating Group:** The TCG is a multi-agency group of commanders responsible for interpreting the strategic direction (where strategic level command is instigated). They will determine, co-ordinate and support the delivery of a tactical response to an emergency.
- **NACW Acting as Tactical Commander:** Military / police Tactical Commander will lead the TCG. The Ministry of Health and ambulance service representatives of this group may be National Inter-agency Liaison Officers (NILO) or other suitably qualified officers.
- **Multi-agency On-Scene Command:** The collective name given to the Military and police, MoH and ambulance service commanders (and any other organizations present) that have come together at the forward command post to command, control and co-ordinate the delivery of the on scene tactical plan.
- **On-Scene Commander:** An appointed Military/police, First Response Team or ambulance service commander at the scene, who by applying the National Action Plan principles is responsible for joint decision making to develop and deliver the on-scene element of the tactical plan.
- **Operational Command:** Operational command of IOR and SOR transition will be reliant upon front-line Operational Commanders from all three services, using the National Action Plan principles, to deliver the response. Operational Commanders will be required to implement direction provided by their On-Scene or Tactical Commander.
- **Forward Command Post (FCP):** The location from which the on-scene command operates.
- **Geographical and Functional Roles:** Geographical and functional roles will be assigned by the Operational Commanders to deliver the joint tactical plan
- **Joint Understanding of Risk:** The process by which commanders work towards a common understanding of the threats, hazards and risks in order to inform decisions on deployments and the control measures required to mitigate any identified risks to an acceptable level.
- **Hot zone:** The area where the initial release occurs or disperses to. It will be the area which may pose an immediate threat to the health and safety of all those located within it and is the area of greatest risk.
- **Warm zone:** An area uncontaminated by the initial release of a substance, which becomes contaminated by the movement of people or vehicles. The warm zone will be extended to include the area of decontamination activity. These areas cannot be guaranteed as free from contamination

- **Cold zone:** The uncontaminated area between the inner cordon and the outer cordon where it has been assessed that there is no immediate threat to life.
- **Limits of Exploitation:** The furthest points to which emergency responders will operate in warm or hot zones. Limits of exploitation will be jointly agreed amongst On-Scene Commanders/Incident Officers as part of an ongoing joint assessment of risk.
- **Snatch rescue:** A tactical option focused on the immediate extrication of patients to an area of relative safety (such as the Casualty Collection Point) where triage and treatment can be Conducted
- **Emergency Co-ordination of Scientific Advice Group (ECOSAS):** ECOSA is the mechanism, accessed via the National CBRN Centre and coordinated by Ministry of Health Cambodian, through which commanders can secure early coordinated scientific advice to inform decision making until such time as established.
- **Casualty Collection Point (CCP):** A staging point that enables life-saving interventions to be undertaken before removal to the Casualty Clearing Station.
- **Casualty Clearing Station (CCS):** Entity set up at the scene of an emergency by the ambulance service in liaison with the medical incident advisor to assess, triage and treat casualties and direct their onward removal.
- **Ambulance Loading Point (ALP):** An area in close proximity to the Casualty Clearing Station, where ambulances can be maneuvered and patients placed in ambulances for transfer to hospital.
- **Tactical Considerations:** Interoperable considerations detailed within service specific and joint doctrine, developed to deliver a multi-agency coordinated response across a wide range of CBRN(e) incidents.
- **Tactical Options:** Commanders have a number of interoperable options available in their tactical or deployment plans. They should take a flexible approach to the options they use, e.g. assessed against threat and risk. They should adapt and mix and match options, depending on the circumstances and resource availability. Examples of the tactical considerations and options can be found in the National Acting Plan Cambodian for CBRN.

iii. Transnational Crime in ASEAN region

Transnational crime is a common concern and poses a complicated challenge in the SouthEast Asia region including Cambodia. Up to date, Transitional crime has not yet been decreased. Transnational crime poses a threat to stability, security, economic development and public order of every country in the region. Although there has been cooperation between the countries in the region to suppress and prevent the crime, it is still evolving along each country's borders. Furthermore, the criminal groups have well-organized structures and networks. In addition, the globalization and regional integration have made the movement along the national border; the flow of human, finance and technology from one country to another becoming free and much easier. Moreover, the rapid development of the information and technology is also a factor that eases those criminals' communication and their activities.

There are various types of transnational crime but the below description are just some examples:

- a. **Cybercrime:** is a crime in information technology era which includes fake news about the legitimate government and hacking to steal important data from the state institutions and private companies which causes significant loss of finance. Currently, this crime is becoming the heated topic and dangerous worldwide.
- b. **Illegal Arms Smuggling:** is also a concern that needs to be closely monitored especially during the time when terrorism and movement against the government in the region are increasing. Terrorist groups have used the weapons that they got from illegal trade (so far, we have not yet discovered the clear source of this illegal trade) to attack on government forces, for example, the attack in Marawi city; Philippines and other regions.
- c. **Drug trafficking:** is still a challenge that needs to be highly cautious in particular in the regions along Mekong River due to the fact that the flow of drugs is from Golden Triangle Region (borders between Thailand, Myanmar and Laos). The authority in the region has forfeited the narcotics that were planned to sell outside the region such as Australia, Japan and New Zealand... etc., and the number of the forfeited narcotics is higher than previous years.
- d. **Human Trafficking: of Women and Children:** is still a challenge in the region. Tens of thousands of the victims were trafficked along the borders and deceived by the broker to work without payment. Some women were forced to be sexual labor and work overtime.
- e. **Money laundering and Terrorism financing:** is a concern in the region and the globe including Cambodia because gangster, criminal and terrorist groups always operate their money laundering through transferring, trading and doing business from a bank of one country to another bank of the other country.

Measures and cooperation to suppress the Transnational Crime

- a. **Cyber Crime:** Government of Cambodia has both legal and institutional mechanisms such as:
 - Law on Anti-Cybercrime (drafted version).
 - Establish a Department of Anti-Cybercrime under the General Department of National Police, Ministry of Interior to suppress all offences related to the cybercrime.
 - Establish a Bureau of quick response to the catastrophe under the Department of Information Security, Ministry of Post and Telecommunication for official intervention task as an institution for external operations and to prevent and raise awareness of technological sector.
 - Increasing of paying more attention to Information Security and continue to reform this sector as well as to prepare a common policy for Cambodia in digital era and master plan for Cambodia's technology in 2030 ...etc.

b. Illegal Arms Smuggling

- Strictly enforce in checking and monitoring all flows of goods in all targeted zones and border check points in the country and along the borders.
- Increase cooperation in the region to share information related to any case or individual suspected of arms smuggling and ammunition.
- Improve effectiveness in implementing the Law on Arms Control, Explosive Substance and Ammunition.

c. Drug Trafficking

- Enforce the capability of checking and finding narcotic substance with providing modern equipment for legal implementing institutions.
- All countries shall strictly enforce the law and punish the criminals.
- Raise awareness and educate the population especially youths about the risk and harmful impact of consuming drugs.

d. Human Trafficking

- Raise awareness and educate the population to understand the laws and regulations related to the Labor Law in the country and abroad, Law on Immigration, Law on Marriage with Foreign Nationals and explain about the risk of immigration so that they can prevent themselves from some bad people.
- Enforce the Law on Immigration by the implementing authority and strictly punish the criminals in accordance with the law.

e. Combating against Money Laundering and Arms Smuggling

In relation to the combat against the money laundering and arms smuggling, the government has drafted two laws on 16 May 2020: Draft Law on Anti-Money Laundering (AML), and the Draft Law on Control Terrorism Financing (CFT). These two laws will submit to the National Assembly for adoption so that it will pave the way for effective implementation in combating against illegal activities caused by gangster, criminal and terrorist groups.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)

Non-traditional threats of both man-made and natural disasters have continued to present many changes and greater challenges to the global system which eventually influences the world's social, political, economic, and security stability the region and the world. Complexities from these changes and challenges have brought about greater problems for the global environment. Man-made disasters such as transnational drugs smuggling, traffic accidents, and the pandemic diseases, in particular the Corona Virus Diseases-19 (Covid- 19), have negatively-impacted the livelihood

of people, security of many nation states, and economy of many countries throughout the world. Compounded with the Covid-19 problematic issues, natural disasters such as typhoons, cyclones, storms, landslides, earthquakes, drought, and forest fires that derive from climate changes have also continued to post greater problems for the world. Furthermore, with the increasing vulnerability, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) in the global environment; the movements of all nation states all over the world must cooperatively, and closely work together in order to quickly and effectively respond to these global crises.

Undoubtedly, in order to tackle these global problematic issues, the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia has been working cooperatively, and closely with its ASEAN member states, civil societies, local and international non governmental organizations to establish and ratify new concepts, procedures, guidelines, regulations, and laws on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operation emergency responses. Additionally, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) and the Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie (RCG) have been carrying out exercise activities on disaster management and disaster relief operations with neighboring countries, regional partners, and the ASEAN militaries as well as other foreign militaries in line with the ASEAN charters, agreements, protocols and other existing mechanisms; and fully committed to support all defense cooperative activities conduct by the ASEAN militaries.

The whole of government approaches in disaster preparedness and readiness is the key strategic blueprint for the ASEAN Community, and regional partners to hedge against the vulnerability, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity (VUCA) as well as the key strategy to promote a successful outcome in turning global vision into reality. With the continuation of such efforts of the governments from all nation states all over the world, the cooperative working relationships and a closer practical cooperation in all fields while implementing more frequent pragmatic defense cooperative activities, and practical exercises on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations among the ASEAN militaries, and regional partners will, undoubtedly build trust, confidence, professionalism and partnership. Additionally, our ASEAN militaries, and regional partners will possess the capabilities, skill sets, and intellectual knowledge to respond to these challenges while anticipating and preparing for those of tomorrow. To succeed, we must harness and integrate all aspects of our capabilities, intellectual knowledge, and work closely with allies, friends, and partners.

Therefore, to contribute the world's social, political, economic, and security stability, the Royal Cambodian Government, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, and the Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie have been carrying out measures and implementing mechanisms to counter these global issues through the implementation of national legislation, and national policy; as well as through the establishment of National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM). Additionally, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and the Royal Cambodian Gendarmerie is willingly to increase its participation and implementation various cooperative exercises in both bilateral and multilateral defense cooperative activities; particularly in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Operations (HA/DR).

v. Maritime Security

Regionally, Maritime development has been highly regarded as ASEAN's growth center, fishery, forest, oil and natural gas and mineral resources. Sea is the gateway for trade, tourist as well as peace and stability. Along with these developments, ASEAN faces a variety of challenges to include piracy, sea robberies, IUU Fishing, transactional crime, human and drug trafficking, smuggling, terrorism, environmental destruction, climate change, and other non-traditional threats. Cambodia has actively taken part in a number of initiatives to develop the world maritime policy. In particular, Cambodia is a party to the four 1958 Geneva Conventions on the Law of the Sea, a party to the Optional Protocol concerning the Compulsory Settlement of Disputes in 1970, a signatory to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1983 and a member of the Southeast Asia Maritime Law Enforcement Initiative (SEAMLEI) that was changed from the Gulf of Thailand Initiatives (GOTI).

In respond to maritime threats, The Royal Cambodian Government established the National Committee for Maritime Security (NCMS), which put into place overarching constitutional provisions, national strategy and vision for Maritime Security. NCMS is a national inter-agency mechanism responsible for leading two primary missions: (1) defending the country's maritime sovereignty and (2) managing cohesive maritime law enforcement for the Kingdom of Cambodia. Identifying that Maritime Security requires operations from all agencies of the government beyond defense, NCMS facilitates and provides cohesions for national cooperation strategically and tactically. NCMS organizes a small-scale national training exercise named MOHAROU-EL every 2 years since 2017, aimed at strengthening collaboration and inter-agencies skills. In respond to maritime threats the 2nd MOHAROU-EL was conducted on April 2019.

The Royal Cambodia Navy (RCN) plays a pivotal role in defense Cambodia's maritime coastline, islands and maritime sovereignty, monitoring the security of its main deep-water ports and major waterways. Moreover, the RCN has been carrying out its international missions under the framework of ASEAN Charter, ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC) and spirit of ACDFM, ADMM and ADMM-Plus, as a compass and an integrated approach in maintaining peace security and stability in the region and the world. As a result, The RCN has been enhancing its capabilities internally and internationally through exercising, training, experiencing and joining patrol best practices in order to upgrade human resources capability for interoperability and harmony. Especially, the 1st ASEAN Multilateral Naval Exercise (AMNEX/1) and the International Fleet Review (IFR) on the auspicious accession of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the ASEAN in the year 2017 hosted by Kingdom of Thailand. Recently, in 2019 the RCN participated in ASEAN-CHINA Maritime Exercise (ACMEX) and ASEAN-US Maritime Exercise (AUMX). In addition, in 2019 the RCN hosted the 13th ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting (ANCM) with the theme of "Enhancing Cooperation for Sustainable Security at Sea" and also participated in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and other international activities. In 2020 for upcoming events the RCN will conduct the annual Dragon Sea Exercise with the theme of "Search and Rescue at Sea for Disaster Relief"

and the RCN will host the 9th ASEAN Naval Young Officers' Interaction (ANYOI) Program.

Cambodia has developed maritime security policy and Cambodia has taken part in number of initiatives to develop the world maritime policy. In particular, the NCMS and RCN express its fullest commitment and support to any efforts or initiatives with the objectives to promote cooperation within ASEAN Community and maintaining regional maritime peace, security, stability, prosperity and sustainable development to the region.

vi. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) Security

Today, we are more interconnected than ever before and overall reliance on the Internet continues to increase. Unfortunately, in this environment, ICT security threats occur rapidly and spread across the globe in minutes regardless to borders, geography, or national jurisdictions. ARF participating countries are not an exception to this kind of ICT security incident. Response to the need for regional cooperation and coordination on ICT Security, Cambodia has been actively participating and contributing to various ICT Security cooperation platforms as below:

- Since the establishment of ARF Open-Ended Study Group (OESG) on Confidence Building Measures (CBM) to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) platform and ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ARF ISM on ICTs Security), Cambodia has attended and provided valuable inputs and comments to various CBM initiatives in order to help reduce the risk of ICT incident from escalating to cyber conflict.
- On 14th January 2020, Cambodia co-chaired with Singapore and China hosted a Workshop on "Awareness Raising and Information Sharing on Emergency Responses to Security Incidents in the Use of ICTs" in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. There were 45 participants from ARF participating countries and agreed that more capacity/training on ICTs should be further developed and delivered to the less ARF developed countries to narrow the gap in the field of ICTs Security.
- For the last 12 years, Cambodia has contributed to the success of the ASEAN-JAPAN cybersecurity program which composed of several initiatives including joint awareness program, cyber-exercise, table-top exercise (TTX), critical information infrastructure protection (CIIP), capacity building, and online community.
- To improve the ICT security readiness in order to respond to any regional ICT security incident, Cambodia committed itself to strengthen local human capacity through regional and bilateral cooperation. Cambodia participated in the first ACSC-ASEAN Capture the Flag exercise, hosted by the Australian Signals Directorate's ACSC. Cambodia, regularly, participated in ASEAN Cyber SEA Game, the regional capture the flag competition with the cooperation from Japan.
- To test cyber incident response readiness and the crisis management capabilities of chief information officers or the officials in charge of IT in each ministry, an annual cyber exercise

codenamed Cyber Angkor has been conducted since 2017. The objective of this exercise is to simulate a cyberattack in order to familiarize response officers with good incident processes and procedures, as well as cyber crisis management and recovery.

- Attracting young talent to the ICT Security profession is really important for Cambodia to secure its cyber-infrastructure and online services countrywide in order to stay connect regionally. Cambodia organizes an annual cyber competition for university students and the general public under 30 years old code name “Cambodia Cyber Contest”.

4. Role of ASEAN Regional Forum

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is a first region wide Asia-Pacific multilateral forum for official consultations on peace and security issues. An outgrowth of the annual ARF activities, with the participation from 10 ASEAN member states plus 17 dialogues partners, the ARF provides a setting for discussion and diplomacy and the development of cooperative responses to regional Security issues. The principle and modalities of dialogue and cooperation fostered by the ARF, such as mutual respect, dialogue on an equal footing, non-interference in each other’s internal affairs together with the cooperative security concept, are increasingly accepted by country in the region.

The uniqueness of the ARF is that the forum serves as an effective platform where regular collaboration and meeting between military and civil elements in the region take place. The ARF continues to be the most comprehensive multilateral security forum in the region. As a an active and responsible ARF member, Cambodia is contributing to regional peace and stability and supporting the development of a more robust, rules based regional order, while upholding the central role of ASEAN in any ASEAN-led forums, Cambodia will also continue to make valuable contribution to the forum through its continuous active participation, contributing ideas and initiatives in many ARF activities, including co-charing various ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting with other ARF member states.

CANADA

After 43 years as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner, and as a founding member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Canada is firmly committed to the principle of ASEAN centrality. As a Pacific country, Canada is deeply committed to the region's security, prosperity, and peaceful development. Canada's active engagement within the ARF is central to Canada's efforts in the region.

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Greater economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region is creating prosperity and new opportunities for development, but also competition and uncertainty with respect to international norms underpinning the rules-based international order and the architecture that will support peace and prosperity well into the 21st century.

The Asia-Pacific region, with a strong ASEAN at its core, is important to Canada; we are a maritime nation and we deeply value a free and open region that allows for peaceful interactions and trade with our Asian partners. Canada's economic and people-to-people ties with Asia run deep, and the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) now in force and a potential Canada-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement currently being discussed will strengthen those ties and make our societies stronger. As such, it is in our collective interest to ensure the safety, security and free flow of lawful commerce in the maritime domain. Canada places great importance on respect for international law and internationally accepted rules, standards and norms of behaviour—including those outlined in UNCLOS. Canada recognizes the need to bolster regional connectivity through infrastructure development and supports efforts to boost connectivity in a way that is transparent, makes use of responsible debt financing practices, respects the environment and ensures respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and rule of law.

Korean Peninsula

Canada firmly believes that North Korea must avoid any further provocations that could undermine ongoing diplomatic engagement and military confidence building measures on the Peninsula. North Korea's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missile programs remain one of the most critical threats to regional and international peace and security. North Korea's resumption of ballistic missile testing in early May 2019, after a hiatus of almost 18 months, was an unwelcome and concerning development, and contrary to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

Canada is gravely concerned that North Korea has yet to take any actions which would materially degrade the capabilities of its WMD programs despite its stated intention to denuclearize. As evidenced in part by North Korea's ballistic missile testing this year, North Korea is continuing to advance the capabilities of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. Given the significant implications of this threat for all ARF members, Canada believes that this issue should be a central focus of the ARF's work, including at all relevant intersessional meetings.

Canada calls on North Korea to resume adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, respect its comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and continue on the path of dialogue and diplomacy toward an enduring peace.

Furthermore, Canada firmly believes that dialogue and diplomacy represent the only path to security, stability and economic prosperity for the North Korean people. The international community needs to increase its efforts to ensure effective implementation of the UNSC's sanctions regime against North Korea to support diplomacy, including through submitting implementation reports to the UNSC. Canada is committed to working with ARF members and the broader international community to ensure effective and coordinated implementation of sanctions against North Korea.

Canada is participating in a multinational effort to curb sanctions evasion activities at sea, particularly illegal ship-to-ship transfers, with the deployment of Canadian Armed Forces ships, aircraft and personnel.

Canada has also imposed comprehensive autonomous sanctions under the Special Economic Measures Act, which includes a ban on all trade with North Korea, with limited humanitarian exemptions. Canada is making every effort to expedite the approval process of sanctions exemptions permits to Canadian NGOs working in the DPRK, and support measures related to the prevention, containment, and response to COVID-19 on a case-by-case basis. More broadly, Canada supports the efforts at the UN Security Council to expedite granting exemptions for humanitarian assistance.

Canada is deeply concerned by the ongoing humanitarian crisis in North Korea, particularly the impact it is having on vulnerable populations, especially women and girls. Since 2005, Canada has provided over \$38.9 million in humanitarian assistance funding to address urgent needs in North Korea. In 2020, Canada provided \$1.25 million to address high levels of under-nutrition and food insecurity in North Korea, via the World Food Program and UNICEF. Canada remains deeply concerned by North Korea's human rights violations and the basic denial of freedoms of vulnerable populations in the country.

A strong and visible presence in the United Nations Command (UNC) is an important multinational component of Canada's commitment to security on the Korean peninsula and the region. Canada's enduring presence in the United Nations Command (UNC), which supervises the armistice between the two Koreas advances Canada's foreign policy priority of supporting diplomacy and peaceful outcomes on the Korean peninsula. Canada's current contribution to the UNC consists of 13 Canadian Armed Forces personnel in South Korea and one in Japan.

As an active member of the UNC, Canada plays a key role in supervising and maintaining the Armistice, which helps reduce the risk of unintended escalation on the Korean Peninsula. This decision is also aligned with Canada's defence policy, 'Strong, Secure, Engaged', which reaffirms Canada's commitment to sustained participation in the Asia-Pacific security architecture, to effectively address regional security challenges through consistent engagement and strong partnerships. It is also a demonstration of Canada's resolve in standing with key Canadian allies and partners, including the Republic of Korea.

Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Terrorism and violent extremism affect all of us. Violent extremism is a global and a collective challenge that requires a whole of society effort to prevent and counter, including the direct engagement of civil society.

Canada believes that effective and sustainable counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism measures require a global approach, combining domestic and international efforts. These efforts must be guided by the principles of respect for human rights and the rule of law, and be driven by partnerships. Such approaches should also be evidence-based and build on local strengths and capabilities to foster resilience to violent extremism among those affected.

Canada continues to support the Global Coalition against Da'esh in its military and civilian-led efforts. While the Coalition has succeeded in forcing Da'esh to retreat from its territory in Iraq and Syria, Da'esh has resumed its insurgent attacks.

In addition, the return flow of Southeast Asian terrorists who travelled to fight in the Middle East is reinvigorating regional violent extremist groups and is a concern for all ARF members. Canada will continue to work with ARF members to address the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, including supporting regional and national efforts to manage returns of skilled combatants and key operators. Canada will also continue to build on its partnerships domestically and internationally to address the underlying conditions conducive to violent extremism and terrorism which are essential for effective combat efforts.

South China Sea

With over \$5 trillion of the world's trade passing through the SCS annually, tensions threaten regional stability and security, with the potential to disrupt the global economy. The SCS is also rich in fish stocks and oil and gas reserves, fuelling competition over fishing rights and offshore energy exploration. Canada opposes unilateral actions that escalate tensions and undermine stability and the rules-based international order, such as the threat or use of force, large-scale land reclamation and building of outposts on disputed features, as well as their use for military purposes. Canada places great importance on lawful maritime navigation and overflight rights in accordance with international law, while recognizing the rights and jurisdiction of coastal states. Respect for rule of law in the SCS is a fundamental facilitator of trade and commerce in the region. Canada stands ready to contribute to initiatives that build confidence and help restore trust in the region. Canada is also concerned that tensions have impeded regional cooperation in protection of the marine environment in the SCS.

Canada continues to urge that China and ASEAN members make concerted efforts to implement the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). Canada recognizes efforts made by ASEAN members and China to develop a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea. We encourage transparency in the negotiations. Canada is of the view that such a Code should be in the spirit of what was agreed to in the DOC and be binding, consistent with international law, and

without prejudice to the rights of third parties. Despite diplomatic negotiations on a COC, Canada notes a deterioration of the security situation in recent years, caused by increasing militarization of disputed features in the Spratlys and the Paracels. Canada urges all sides to take steps to de-escalate by removing military assets from disputed features and engaging in good-faith negotiations with a view to managing or resolving disputes in accordance with international law.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Canada is committed to strengthening peace and security and to enhancing its defence relations and engagement in the Asia-Pacific. In June 2017, the Government of Canada released its defence policy, “Strong, Secure, Engaged.” Through this policy, the Government of Canada directs the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to deepen engagement with the Asia-Pacific region and ASEAN. In particular, “Strong, Secure, Engaged” directs DND and the CAF to have a more consistent and predictable presence in the region, including through increased participation in ARF events, and to seek membership in the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting – Plus (ADMM+).

Since then, Canada has taken steps consistent with this direction, including increased contributions to the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula, through United Nations Command, and consistent participation in regional humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief efforts. Canada has also taken concrete steps to strengthen defence relations and cooperation with partners in the Asia-Pacific, including by expanding its network of defence attachés, establishing a more enduring regional naval presence, and increasing its regional military contributions, notably through Operation NEON, which supports international monitoring of North Korean sanctions evasion activities. Canada has also increased its participation in regional military exercises and high-level defence forums, such as the Shangri-La Dialogue, Fullerton Forum, and ASEAN Regional Forum.

Canada’s defence policy also reaffirms our commitment to capacity building projects and mutual education, training and assistance. The Military Training and Cooperation Program (MTCP) supports cooperative training and military professional development projects across the region that enhance interoperability, expand and reinforce Canadian bilateral defence relations, and promote Canadian democratic principles, the rule of law and the protection of human rights. In 2019-2020, DND contributed approximately CAD\$1.01 million to MTCP activities in the Asia-Pacific and trained 330 personnel. DND will continue using the MTCP to build and reinforce partnerships with Asia-Pacific countries and support Canada’s engagement objectives across the region.

In Canada’s 2018-2019 fiscal year, Canadian federal government departments, including the Department of National Defence, incurred a total of CA\$29,025 million in defence-related expenditures.

Detailed information on Canada’s military expenditure return is available below. Figures are reported in millions of Canadian dollars (CA\$).

Table 1. Canada's 2018-2019 military expenditure in millions of Canadian dollars (CA\$)

Resource costs	Strategic forces	Land	Navy	Air Force	Other military forces	Central support administration and command	UN peace keeping	Military assistance and cooperation	Emergency aid to civilians	Undistributed	Total
1. Personnel	-	4,160.2	1,689.3	2,263.0	615.2	5,061.1	14.3	1.8	-	-	13,804.9
1.1 Conscripts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1.2 Active military personnel	-	2,359.6	839.3	1,371.0	348.5	1,862.7	11.4	-	-	-	6,792.5
1.3 Reserves	-	343.5	77.7	85.5	19.1	218.3	2.9	-	-	-	746.9
1.4 Civilian personnel	-	307.5	363.3	138.6	74.9	2,072.7	-	1.8	-	-	2,958.8
1.5 Military pensions	-	1,149.5	408.9	667.9	172.8	907.5	-	-	-	-	3,306.7
2. Operations and maintenance	-	1,945.5	1,596.0	2,463.2	550.1	3,731.3	70.9	11.5	-	-	10,368.6
2.1 Materials for current use	-	670.4	525.8	626.9	154.0	295.7	19.9	0.0	-	-	2,292.7
2.2 Maintenance and repair	-	199.7	310.4	890.8	2.1	244.7	0.1	-	-	-	1,647.7
2.3 Purchased services	-	741.1	543.7	772.1	269.3	1,245.6	27.5	2.2	-	-	3,601.5
2.4 Other	-	334.3	216.1	173.4	124.7	1,945.3	23.5	9.3	-	-	2,826.6
3. Procurement and construction (investments)	-	1,322.8	1,171.4	911.9	55.6	1,202.8	-	-	-	-	4,664.5
3.1 Procurement	-	1,078.5	1,072.5	797.5	53.4	851.2	-	-	-	-	3,853.1
3.1.1 Aircraft and engines	-	-	-	652.4	-	15.0	-	-	-	-	667.4
3.1.2 Missiles, including conventional warheads	-	-	23.3	-	-	15.4	-	-	-	-	38.7
3.1.3 Nuclear warheads and bombs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

3.1.4 Ships and boats	-	-	942.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	942.8
3.1.5 Armoured vehicles	-	393.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	393.3
3.1.6 Artillery	-	20.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20.5
3.1.7 Other ordnance and ground force weapons	-	162.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	162.1
3.1.8 Ammunition	-	102.9	29.2	62.9	30.8	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	225.9
3.1.9 Electronics and communications	-	70.2	7.0	19.4	-	145.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	242.4
3.1.10 Non-armoured vehicles	-	208.9	-	2.2	3.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	214.3
3.1.11 Other	-	120.6	70.3	60.6	19.6	674.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	945.7
3.2 Construction	-	244.3	98.9	114.4	2.2	351.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	811.5
3.2.1 Air bases, airfields	-	-	-	93.0	-	22.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	115.6
3.2.2 Naval bases and facilities	-	-	97.9	-	-	23.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	121.7
3.2.3 Electronics facilities	-	-	-	1.1	-	57.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	58.2
3.2.4 Personnel facilities	-	0.2	-	-	-	67.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	67.2
3.2.5 Training facilities	-	10.7	0.5	-	-	4.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.4
3.2.6 Other	-	233.5	0.5	20.3	2.2	176.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	433.4
4. Research and development	-	1.6	0.2	0.8	7.9	176.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	186.9
4.1 Basic and applied research	-	0.0	0.1	0.4	0.1	4.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.6
4.2 Development, testing and evaluation	-	1.5	0.1	0.4	7.9	172.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	182.3
5. Total (1+2+3+4)	-	7,430.0	4,456.9	5,638.8	1,228.9	10,171.7	85.2	13.3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29,025.0

III. National Contributions to Regional Security

a. Counterterrorism

The global terrorist threat is diverse and complex. It demands a comprehensive and coordinated international response based on common goals, values and institutions. It also demands a response that is consistent with international legal obligations, including international human rights and humanitarian law. Canada's multi-pronged approach to counter violent extremism and terrorism includes diplomacy, intelligence, security and law enforcement, customs and immigration, transportation, justice and finance expertise.

Canada is of the view that global counter-terrorism efforts must put more emphasis on preventing and countering the spread of violent extremism, rather than only reacting to the actions of terrorists. The UN Secretary-General is seeking to drive forward the international community through his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Canada supports this initiative both domestically and internationally.

In June 2017, Canada launched the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (Canada Centre). As a centre of excellence, the Canada Centre provides national policy leadership, supports local level initiatives, and coordinates action-oriented research on countering radicalization to violence. Its mandate is to support the prevention of radicalization to violence of all kinds, regardless of where it originates. To support this work, the Canada Centre is engaging broadly with communities, municipalities, provinces, law enforcement, non-governmental organization, and other stakeholders across Canada to: develop relationships built on trust; increase the overall understanding of radicalization to violence; encourage open and transparent discussions; and inform programming, research and policy priorities.

The security of the Asia-Pacific region is inextricably linked to that of ARF partner countries, and Canada is committed to working with those partners to counter terrorist activity. Southeast Asia therefore continues to be a priority region for Canada's Counter-Terrorism Capacity Building Program (CTCBP). Since 2005, the CTCBP has supported a number of counter-terrorism capacity building projects in Southeast Asia totalling close to CAD\$29 million.

CTCBP programming has focused on regional efforts throughout Southeast Asia, with a particular emphasis on advancing regional security cooperation amongst ASEAN member states. CTCBP efforts throughout this region advance: maritime, land border, and aviation security, countering the financing of terrorism, counter-terrorism legislation and judicial support, countering violent extremism (CVE) and foreign terrorist fighters, and strengthening law enforcement and intelligence agencies ability to more effectively address terrorist threats.

For example, the CTCBP is funding the UNODC to develop legislation to combat the movement of foreign terrorist fighters and enhance national counter-terrorism legislation to conform to international human rights principles, norms and standards. This work also supports the implementation of UNSCR 2178 on fighting terrorism.

The International Organisation for Migration is continuing to work in Cambodia to implement the “Strengthening Border Security to Combat Trans-Border Crimes and Extreme Violence in Cambodia” project that seeks to minimize vulnerability to transnational threats posed by international crime and/or terrorism in remote land and maritime border areas of Cambodia through regular training programs to increase and strengthen national and sub-national immigration and border police units to minimize, track and respond to any type of unlawful movement.

Multilaterally, the CTCBP also supported a number of initiatives, including INTERPOL Special Notices training, as well as investigation, forensic collection skills building, and identifying and tracking foreign fighters moving to/from conflict areas. As a key example, CTCBP’s supported INTERPOL’s Project Sunbird to enhance the capacity of enforcement agencies across ASEAN through targeted border and counter-terrorism training. SUNBIRD activities to prevent and counter terrorism threats have been a successful collaboration among policing professionals from a wide range of specialties across ASEAN member countries. To date, the project has reached approximately 400 law enforcement professionals across ASEAN. A total of 13 weeks of training on the use of INTERPOL’s Policing Capabilities was delivered, including 207 law enforcement officials, of which 57 (28%) were female. The nature and extent of training has contributed to increased capabilities of ASEAN law enforcement officers to detect persons of interest and respond to threats when employing INTERPOL tools. For example, a Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) training course was delivered in direct response to a request made by the Royal Thai Police (RTP). Separate training was also initiated for other ASEAN countries. These combined activities saw 54 officers in the region trained on INTERPOL international standards in DVI. In line with Project SUNBIRD’s women in policing objectives, nearly 40% of the officers trained were female. Forensic monitoring visits to all ten ASEAN member states were conducted over a ten-month period. The purpose of these visits was to encourage units in using and populating INTERPOL Forensic Databases. This has resulted in increased fingerprint submissions by countries into INTERPOL databases. Additionally, an updated Forensics Capabilities Report for the ASEAN region (3rd Edition) will be disseminated to the ASEAN countries in early 2020. Two training activities were also dedicated to enhance the leadership competencies of women in law enforcement, reaching over 40 female officers across ASEAN law enforcement. The project’s Operational Component contributed to ASEAN countries developing their border-management security through INTERPOL, with all ASEAN countries now having some form of integration with INTERPOL databases.

Recognizing the terrorist threats posed in the maritime domain, the CTCBP also supported maritime-focused counter-terrorism efforts in four ARF member states: Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Implemented by INTERPOL, these regional efforts targeted national law enforcement agencies in charge of port and maritime security in order to strengthen institutional capacity to combat terrorism, piracy and armed robbery, and reduce the vulnerability of ships and port facilities to security risks.

In the area of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism, Canada is working with the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), the institute for Legal Support and Technical Assistance (ILSTA), RCMP, UNODC and the World Bank. CTCBP projects aim to strengthen the

legislative frameworks of beneficiary countries, strengthen the supervisory capacity of financial sector supervisors and increase the capacity of law enforcement agents to strengthen money laundering and terrorism financing investigation, prosecution, and conviction.

Aviation security also remains a priority for Canada given the direct air links to the region. Through the CTCBP, Canada supported global aviation projects with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). These efforts enhanced air cargo security, improving airport screening methods, and targeted training of airport officials and regulators on countering terrorism in civil aviation.

Noting the importance of combatting violent extremism, the CTCBP is also supporting countering violent extremism (CVE) efforts at the regional, national, and local levels through Southeast Asia. These efforts include examining the push and pull factor affecting at risk refugee communities towards violent extremist groups, such as Islamic State, advancing countries' capacity to prevent radicalisation in prisons, and enhancing evidenced-based policy-making and strategy formulation in countering terrorism and violent extremism. For example, CTCBP is working in the Philippines with Big Bad Boo Studios Inc. (a Canadian company) on implementing the 1001 Nights Life Skills Civic Education Program (LSCE). It is a multi-platform educational entertainment program that uses cartoons to teach 6 to 12-year old children life skills and civic values, including non-violence, human rights, democracy, gender equality and the rule of law, in formal and informal learning environments. The project will be: (1) making youth more resilient to extremist narratives; (2) providing the Department of Education (DepEd) with a powerful and effective program that can be scaled for preventing violent extremism (PVE) - directly responding to the National Commission on CT's Peace Education priorities; (3) providing teachers and the DepEd with increased capacity to teach and inculcate values that have a proven track record of reducing vulnerability; and (4) providing the DepEd with Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) instruments that will be used during the program, and can be used thereafter, to identify communities and schools that have high degrees of vulnerability. BBB and partners will provide 1001 Nights materials for 100,000 students, 3,500 teachers and 100 schools (school kits and audiovisual equipment). As well, 30 master trainers and 3,500 teachers are trained on the 1001 Nights Civic and Peace Education Program (including teaching pedagogies that promote inclusion and gender equality) with the program is implemented in 100 schools.

Many of the CTCBP funded efforts, particularly those implemented by RCMP, are delivered at the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC). This unique regional training hub supports ARF member states to collaborate and develop skills to effectively counter terrorist threats throughout the region, and beyond.

In addition to supporting the ARF, Canada works actively within a number of international arenas addressing new and emerging challenges and developing best practices and international standards to combat terrorism. These include the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC); the G7; the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF), where Canada co-chairs with Algeria the Capacity-building in the West Africa Region Working Group; the Organization of American States (OAS), where Canada chaired the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism from 2014-2015; the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO); and the United Nations. Canada also has strong bilateral relationships with a number of key partners to address critical issues related to terrorism.

b. Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation and Arms Control

Canada's approach to non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament is grounded in its steadfast commitment to the rules-based international order. International peace and security is a priority for Canada, as a means to provide stability and prosperity for all, and will as such continue to defend and promote non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and arms control, including in the ASEAN region.

Canada is an active State Party to all major international non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament (NACD) treaties and will continue to work with ARF partners to promote the universalisation and full and effective implementation of such treaties and instruments. These include: The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, The Arms Trade Treaty, The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, the IAEA safeguards system, the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and other arrangements such as The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, and the Missile Technology Control Regime. In addition, Canada continues to be a strong proponent of measures to prevent non-state actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, including UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and its successor resolution (UNSCR 1540), and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Canada also continues to advocate for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT).

In pursuit of these NACD priorities, Canada's feminist foreign policy recognises that maintaining international peace and security requires an inclusive approach that considers the perspectives of all persons and that gender balance and gender considerations have a positive impact on the achievement of the shared goals across the international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. As a strong proponent of gender equality and women's leadership in peace and security, Canada is a champion of Action Item 36 of the United Nations Secretary-General's Implementation Plan for the Agenda for Disarmament on the full and equal participation of women in decision-making processes.

Canada promotes these priorities with partners through its Weapons Threat Reduction Program (WTRP), which implements Canada's commitments to the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The WTRP's programming is closely coordinated with the ASEAN Secretariat and its member states to enhance the security of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons and related materials in the region, including through the ASEAN Regional Forum. The ASEAN region is vulnerable to CBRN trafficking owing, inter alia, to its geography, role as a transportation nexus, lack of advanced export controls in certain nations, extremist groups active in the region, and the presence of improperly secured radioactive sources as well as endemic diseases, both with potential to be weaponized.

Since 2011, the WTRP has delivered approximately \$45M in programming in the ASEAN region focused on strengthening biological security, biological safety and disease surveillance capabilities; providing physical protection security upgrades and related training to facilities housing nuclear material; improving radiological security through the introduction of new technologies to store Disused Sealed Radioactive Sources; and building the competencies of nuclear security personnel in the region by establishing and enhancing Nuclear Security Support Centres to provide capacity building training and equipment for hands-on learning experiences.

The health-security capacity that Canada has helped to build in the ASEAN region has meaningfully strengthened capabilities to fight the current COVID-19 pandemic, as acknowledged by the ASEAN Secretary General and leaders of ASEAN Member States (including in the 14 April 2020 Joint Statement of the Special ASEAN Plus Three Summit on COVID-19). This includes the ASEAN Emergency Operations Center Network (led by the Malaysia), which is facilitating the sharing of timely information on the current outbreak among ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Plus Three Laboratory Network; and the ASEAN BioDiaspora Virtual Centre (led by the Philippines with support from Singapore), which combines artificial intelligence, public health and medical expertise and advanced data analytics to assess the risks of importation and spread of COVID-19, and to develop national mitigation, preparedness and response measures. Building on this longstanding partnership, Canada's WTRP has provided additional support to ASEAN partners to combat the COVID pandemic, including funding for the Institut Pasteur de Laos to acquire personal protective equipment (PPE) and other critical supplies, further support for the BioDiaspora Virtual Centre and an in-kind contribution of 690,00 items of PPE to 6 ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat.

Canada considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. As we approach the upcoming NPT Review Conference, which will take place in 2021, Canada remains committed to reinforcing and strengthening the NPT and its review process, including in collaboration with ARF partners Australia, Japan, the Philippines and other members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPD).

In addition, Canada supports the contribution of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs), such as the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ), to regional security and nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Canada welcomes efforts aimed at securing the signatures of P5 States to the SEANWFZ Protocol.

Canada continues to make concrete contributions to strengthen nuclear and radiological security worldwide, including in Southeast Asia. At the 10-14 February 2020 International Conference on Nuclear Security, convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Canada made a CAD\$24 million contribution from its WTRP to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund to help strengthen nuclear security and sustain the IAEA's long-term nuclear security efforts. Canada provides financial contributions (~\$30M/year) to support international efforts to prevent the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological material, to secure radioactive material in use, storage or transport, to enhance

the physical security of nuclear facilities and also support legal frameworks and enhance domestic nuclear security regimes including through contributions to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund.

Canada is pleased to have been the inaugural chair of the Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSCG), which aims to implement nuclear security commitments, identify ways of addressing new and emerging threats, and maintain momentum on enhancing global nuclear security. The NSCG currently includes a number of ASEAN members, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam. Hungary succeeded Jordan as the Convener in September 2018, and continues to lead the NSCG. The NSCG welcomes new members to the Contact Group to enhance geographic representation, including in the Southeast Asian region.

Acknowledging the role of nuclear technology to meet the increasing energy demands of states and in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Canada supports the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in a safe and secure manner, notably through full cooperation with the IAEA. Canada strongly believes that implementation of the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol constitute the current safeguards verification standard. Through signing and ratifying the Additional Protocol, ARF members and Dialogue Partners can support transparency and confidence in the peaceful nature of their nuclear applications. Canada has consistently supported efforts to assist states to build capacity to fully implement the Additional Protocol and believes that the ARF can also work to promote its universal implementation in the Asia-Pacific region.

c. Transnational Crime

Canada is committed to working with Asia-Pacific partners, including through the ARF, the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOM-TC), and the Bali Process, to counter threats to governance and stability arising from the activities of transnational crime groups in the region, including cybercrime. Frequently linked to organized crimes are trafficking networks, including trafficking in persons, illicit drugs and/or firearms, migrant smuggling, money laundering, and wildlife trafficking, which underscore the transnational dimension of these challenges. Through the Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program (ACCBP) Canada has dispersed over \$14M initiatives in the region since 2015.

Migrant Smuggling is a particular area of concern. Through the ACCBP, Canada works with regional partners to address this issue, often in coordination with global organizations like the UNODC, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and INTERPOL. Canada is currently an observer nation to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Organised Crime with a particular interest in the people smuggling element of its mandate. The Human Smuggling envelope has a funding envelope of CAD\$8.5 million per year to deliver capacity-building support. The majority of this support has focused on strengthening the capacity of authorities to prevent, deter and respond to human smuggling networks in Southeast Asia. This includes assisting countries in the region to strengthen border security through enhancing the capacity of front line officials to identify fraudulent travel documentation, as well as to improve regional collaboration on border management and human smuggling investigations.

Canada is also a regular contributor to the annual International Narcotics Control Board Conference on Precursor Chemicals and New Psychoactive Substances (NPS). This conference is focused on practical measures countries can take to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals and trafficking of NPS. The Conference is held annually in Thailand, which recognizes the specific challenges faced by the region with respect to NPS trafficking and precursor diversion.

Finally, ACCBP has been reviewing potential cybercrime and cybersecurity projects in the region and is currently supporting one cyber project being implemented by the Royal Institute of International Affairs that seeks to improve cyber resilience in the ASEAN countries through increased understanding of the measures needed to fighting cybercrime, as well as develop informal networks between ASEAN stakeholders.

d. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters underscores the importance of strengthening practical cooperation among Asia-Pacific partners on disaster preparedness and response. Canada continues to be an active contributor to humanitarian relief efforts in the region, by providing timely, effective, coordinated and needs-based assistance, and working closely with partners in the region to enhance cooperation, coordination, and awareness. Ongoing discussions on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) issues can serve to improve the delivery of such capabilities in the future, particularly in a region which will likely see ARF members respond to the same disaster.

Reiterating the importance of enhancing our response mechanisms through close collaboration and exchange of best practices, Canada is co-chairing the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ARF ISM-DR), together with Lao PDR and China, until 2021. Canada continues to reiterate the importance of finding synergies between the numerous disaster relief initiatives in the region, and to underline the importance of adopting a gender-sensitive approach in all aspects of disaster management, from preparedness through responses and recovery. Likewise, Canada encourages all ARF members to adopt a more proactive approach to collaboration, communications, planning and execution for the effective and strategic delivery of disaster relief assistance.

Moreover, Canada is pleased to be a member of the Regional Consultative Group (RCG) on Humanitarian Civil-Military Coordination for Asia-Pacific and considers that the Group represents a valuable forum to share best practices on civilian-military cooperation in disaster response and to improve predictability and interoperability in the region.

Canada recognizes the leadership that countries in the region are demonstrating in undertaking significant disaster risk reduction efforts. These efforts are enhancing preparedness and strengthening capacity to respond when disasters strike. Canada supports the ASEAN's efforts to provide a forum for the advancement of regional initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of natural hazards on populations in the area.

With the number of engagements related to disaster response in the region, Canada looks forward to working with ARF partners to better assess opportunities for synergies between the ARF and other mechanisms, including the RCG, EAS, and ADMM+, that strengthen ASEAN capabilities and advance local approaches to disaster response and risk reduction.

e. **Maritime Security**

Canada strongly supports continued ARF engagement on maritime security, including with respect to countering WMD proliferation and illicit trafficking. ARF cooperation on maritime security issues will continue to support the region's security and prosperity objectives by ensuring the efficient and secure movement of goods and people through strategic corridors.

Since the identification of maritime security as one of ARF's four key areas, ARF members, including Canada, have developed projects focused on enhanced information sharing and best practices, confidence building measures based on international and regional legal frameworks, and capacity building support to regional maritime law enforcement agencies. Canada regularly participates in the US-hosted multinational Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercises that take place biennially.

Canada views the Western Pacific Naval Symposium's (WPNS) "Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea" (CUES) as a means by which navies may develop mutually rewarding international cooperation and transparency, and provide leadership and broad-based involvement in establishing international standards in relation to the use of the sea. Canada was pleased to be involved in the development of this code.

Operation ARTEMIS is Canada's contribution to Combined Task Force 150 (CTF-150), a multinational effort to combat terrorism in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. It demonstrates Canada's solidarity with partners and allies that are working for peace and security in the maritime environment of the greater Middle East region. Canada took command of CTF 150 in December 2018 and was replaced by Pakistan in April 2019. Under Canadian leadership and with Australia's support, CTF 150 conducted drug seizures in the Arabian Sea totaling 33,000 kg of illicit drugs.

More broadly, Canada is committed to working with international organizations to meet the security challenges of a complex maritime environment and recognizes the importance of broadening international consensus when addressing these challenges. We are actively engaged in a number of international forums, including the International Maritime Organization and the North Pacific Coast Guard Forum – which brings together experts from maritime safety and security agencies in Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Russia, and the United States. The North Pacific Coast Guard Forum fosters multilateral cooperation and best practices through information sharing on matters related to fisheries enforcement, maritime security, illegal migration, illegal drug trafficking and combined operations.

Civil society and Track II initiatives can also make a useful contribution to developing informed options for regional partners in areas such as regional connectivity and preparedness to address

incidents at sea. Canada will continue to support initiatives to organize workshops and seminars in ARF countries on these themes, and will encourage civil society, academics and others to contribute to the discussion by submitting constructive, original and non-zero-sum proposals that can advance solutions for peaceful resolution.

As mentioned under the Terrorism section above, Canada, through the CTCBP is also supporting maritime counterterrorism efforts in four ARF member states (Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam). This regional maritime security project targets national law enforcement agencies in charge of port and maritime security in order to strengthen institutional capacity to combat terrorism, piracy and armed robbery, and reduce the vulnerability of ships and port facilities to security risks.

f. Cyber (ICT)

The ARF region is susceptible to cyber threats emanating from both state and non-state actors, whether through the theft of intellectual property and sensitive information, the compromise of systems and critical infrastructure, the theft of money, and other malicious activity. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the threat of malicious activity against the health sector, where cyber threats to hospitals and other health care providers have increased, in addition to cyber means being used to spread misinformation related to the pandemic. The pandemic has also highlighted concerns relating to how states seek to censor, control and partition the Internet under the pretext of cyber security and the misuse of cyberspace by criminals.

The ARF first addressed cyber-security issues in 2006 and has been steadily increasing its engagement ever since. The establishment of an Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) in 2016 was undertaken to support the process specifically on ICT (cyber) issues. Canada thanks Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan for their leadership of the ISM.

The ARF has also put in place an Open Ended Study Group (OESG) on CBMs to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs. The ARF's work on cyber CBMs, including the Establishment of ARF Points of Contact Directory of Security of and in the Use of ICTs, and the Protection of Critical Infrastructures and Consultations Mechanism has been particularly useful.

As part of the ARF Confidence Building Measures, Singapore and Canada organised a two-day cybersecurity capacity building workshop in Singapore in June 2019, focused on the principles of building security in the use of ICT in the national context. More than 30 senior officials representing ASEAN, Australia, China, Korea, Russia, Timor Leste and the United States attended the workshop. The workshop provided an overview of current trends regarding cybersecurity threats along with the approach to developing a holistic cybersecurity strategy.

Canada believes that peace and stability in cyberspace is grounded on the acceptance of the applicability of existing international law, the adoption of norms for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, and the implementation of CBMs. Canada welcomes the efforts undertaken by the ARF to develop and implement CBMs that will enhance transparency and dialogue while reducing the risk of misunderstanding, miscalculation and conflict in cyberspace.

Internationally, Canada collaborates with close allies and a wider coalition of countries that share our vision for a free, open and secure cyberspace that in order to promote can be a vehicle for political, social and economic development, and to counter efforts of repressive regimes to control the Internet and its content. Canada is continuously working with friends and partners, including the ARF and its participating countries, to enhance cyber security by identifying cyber threats and vulnerabilities, and by preparing to respond to a broad range of cyber incidents.

Canada has also supported regional capacity-building efforts aimed at bolstering the ability of states to respond to and mitigate cyber threats. For instance, Canada is contributing \$CAD 1.5 million to a Chatham House led project to increase cyber resilience in the ASEAN countries through increased understanding of the measures needed to fight cybercrime as well as through building informal networks between ASEAN stakeholders.

In addition, this work includes promoting gender equality, as Canada did when it co-hosted with Singapore a “Women in Cyber” event at the Singapore International Cyber Week in October 2019. This was the first time the gender aspect of cybersecurity was featured at this influential regional forum.

Canada is committed to continuing the collaboration developed within the ARF to support regional confidence-building and help support collective efforts to maintain a free, open, and secure cyberspace.

g. Women Peace and Security and Peace and Stabilization Operations Program in Asia

Canada recognizes that while everyone is affected, women and men, girls and boys, experience conflict differently. They bring different perspectives to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Women broaden the agenda beyond that of the warring parties, and the link between their meaningful participation and durable peace agreements has been established. Yet, women are often excluded from formal peace processes. In recognition of this, Canada has been a strong supporter of the Women, Peace and Security agenda from its inception and co-sponsored SCR 1325 as a non-permanent member of the body in 2000.

Canada is committed to increasing its engagement on WPS in the Asia-Pacific. In August 2019, Canada led the adoption of the ARF's first Ministerial “Joint Statement on promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda at the ASEAN Regional Forum”. In 2021, Canada, Thailand and Indonesia will be co-chairing the ARF's first workshop on Women, Peace and Security in Bangkok, Thailand. A workshop on WPS will enable the ARF to strengthen existing regional coordination mechanisms and mainstream WPS agenda into its activities and be forward looking in how players in the Southeast Asia region can advance the WPS agenda. Canada will continue to deepen its engagement in Asia on all fronts, making sure to embed the WPS agenda into all its processes.

Canada's Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPs) is designed to prevent and respond to conflict and crisis abroad. PSOP's approach to stabilization includes targeted efforts to anticipate, prevent and respond to violent conflict and promote long-term stability. PSOPs provides a strong Canadian voice through policy leadership and advocacy, coordinates a whole-of-government response to various conflicts and crises, and provides visible and concrete assistance through targeted programming and expert deployments. PSOPs current engagement in Southeast Asia totals over \$15 million focuses on peace and stability programming to protect and promote human rights, implement peace agreements, and advance the role of women and youth in the participation and promotion of peace and security.

For example, through the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, Canada is supporting the empowerment of Bangladeshi and Burmese women so they are equipped to lead and participate in community-based peacebuilding and decision-making at local, national, and regional levels. The GNWP has also begun outreach to representatives of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), to discuss collaboration on a regional roundtable to solicit and strengthen the commitment of Member States to further the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security agendas. GNWP plans to implement the first national consultation on the National Action Plan to integrate issues confronted by Rohingya refugee and host community women and girls and advocate for their participation in the implementation in November or December 2020.

In addition, through UNDP's N-Peace project, Canada is supporting small grants to women's organizations in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka to support women peacebuilders, increasing dialogue at the community level to resolve conflicts and to shift the narrative of women as victims to agents of change. Through funding to the Nobel Women's Initiative, Canada is supporting the Women's Peacebuilder Network, which works with grassroots women's organizations and peacebuilders in the Korean Peninsula, and in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, Canadian support to the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) sustains and strengthens the impact of women peacebuilders and organizations. In Afghanistan, with Canadian support, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom works to strengthen alliances by mobilizing men to work with women for peace and to implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

In March 2019, UN Women, alongside the UN Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Department of Peace Operations, announced the launch of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations. Canada has contributed a total of \$17.5 million to the Fund, and with UN Women currently sits as a co-chair on the Steering Committee. Other donor countries include: Australia, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. The Elsie Initiative Fund is designed to use collective resources to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations, with a focus on police and military roles. It provides flexible funding to countries that contribute troops and police to UN peace operations to increase their deployment

of trained and qualified uniformed women. The Fund also includes the provision of the innovative 'Gender Strong Unit Premium,' which is a results-based payment for the deployment of military contingents and Formed Police Units that include the substantial representation of women across all units and functions, and which meet criteria to ensure an adequate work environment. The first programming cycle of the Fund is currently underway. Canada encourages all troop and police contributing countries in the ASEAN region to consider submitting a letter of interest in the upcoming programming cycle, which is expected to launch later in 2020.

IV. Role of ARF

a. National Contributions to the ARF

The ARF is a key security forum within the Asia-Pacific region and an important component of Canada's engagement in the region's security dialogue. We will continue to engage constructively with our partners to build capacity and ensure that the ARF continues to contribute to security and stability in the region as per the action lines of the 2010 Hanoi Plan of Action and the principles of the 2009 ARF Vision Statement.

Canada has expanded its diplomatic presence across the region and since 2015 has a resident diplomatic presence in all 10 ASEAN member states. In 2020, it will upgrade its defence representative in Malaysia to full defence attaché and open a defence attaché office in Vietnam. Further, Canada's appointment of its first dedicated ASEAN Ambassador in 2016, as well as the expansion of its mission to ASEAN the year before, demonstrate our strong commitment to ASEAN and engagement with the ARF and our partners in the region.

In the 2019-2020 inter-sessional year, Canada continued to participate in and make significant contributions in a wide range of ARF events and regional security and disaster relief programs despite the constraints to this year's program of events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Canada is currently co-chairing the 18th ARF Intersessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR). Canada also co-chaired the ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to Address Emerging Maritime Issues held in November 2019, in Vietnam.

b. The Future of the ARF

The regularity of exchange facilitated through the ARF is increasingly important to sustaining an atmosphere of cooperation in a region of global strategic importance. In this respect, Canada encourages a pragmatic and cooperative approach to the ARF's work. By delivering concrete initiatives, we can demonstrate the constructive role played by the ARF in the Asia-Pacific regional security architecture.

Like many of our partners, Canada believes that it is important to build on the ARF's existing work in order to bring greater focus to addressing the region's security challenges. The development of

a dedicated Intersessional Meeting (ISM) on cyber security is a positive development that reflects the ARF's ongoing evolution. In that spirit, the ARF could consider streamlining the agenda of the Intersessional Support Group (ISG) to ensure more time is spent on substance by senior officials rather than procedural matters and on the eve of its 25th anniversary determine if the ARF framework should be reinvigorated.

As a mature organization and in the spirit of preventive diplomacy, the ARF can continue to provide a forum for active discussion of issues and perspectives without jeopardizing the activities and exchanges that members support. The ARF has been most successful in bringing together policy practitioners and experts to address specialized security issues that require interagency cooperation across borders. Its inclusive membership highlights the importance of the Asia-Pacific region and the interconnected nature of the global security environment. As such, future activities should take heed of other relevant regional and global efforts.

The ARF's success as a convener of security dialogue and cooperation among interagency communities of practitioners, experts and policy makers, is complementary to the roles of newer bodies like the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+). These forums offer positive opportunities for complementary regional dialogue and cooperation, in keeping with the spirit of ASEAN-centrality, which Canada continues to support. In order for Canada to better contribute to advancing common approaches to shared policy concerns, Canada remains keenly interested in joining the East Asia Summit. Canada also continues to explore ways to increase its contributions to regional defence and security, including as an Observer in the ADMM+ Expert Working Groups on maritime security and HADR. In the longer term, Canada remains interested in membership in the ADMM+ itself.

Since its inception in 1994, the ARF has become a cornerstone of a burgeoning security community that works together to protect the region's vitality and continued economic growth. In line with the consistent efforts of other ARF members, Canada is committed to playing a positive and constructive role in the continuing evolution of the ARF.

CHINA

I. Security Situation in the Asia-Pacific Region

Since the beginning of 2019, the Asia-Pacific region has maintained overall stability and sound development momentum, with active interactions among countries and hotspot issues basically under control. Regional integration had picked up speed, and 15 participating countries of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) had concluded all text negotiations and essentially all market access negotiations. Sub-regional cooperation continued to develop. In response to COVID-19, countries in the region have come together in the spirit of mutual assistance and cooperation, and worked for the stability of the industrial and supply chains. To contain COVID-19, ensure economic stability and promote peace have been the consensus of all regional countries.

However, uncertainties and destabilizing factors remain prominent in the Asia-Pacific. With rising unilateralism, protectionism and anti-globalization sentiments, geopolitical risks have increased. On the one hand, COVID-19 has brought enormous challenges to public health security and economic development in the region. Terrorism, natural disasters, climate change, cybersecurity issues and other non-traditional security threats are also on the rise. Maintaining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and promoting regional development and prosperity remains an arduous task that requires greater efforts of all parties.

II. China's National Defense Policy and Multilateral Military Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific Region

i. China's national defense policy and vision on security

China is committed to peaceful development, and pursues an independent foreign policy of peace and a national defense policy which is defensive in nature. The fundamental goal of China's national defense in the new era is to resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests. China never seeks hegemony, expansion or spheres of influence. China follows the military strategic guidelines of "defense, self-defense and post-strike response" and practices "active defense".

In pursuit of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and of greater good and shared interests, China's military has actively participated in the reform of the global security governance system, deepened bilateral and multilateral security cooperation, and promoted coordinated, inclusive and complementary cooperation among various security mechanisms in a bid to contribute to a security architecture featuring equality, mutual trust, fairness, justice, joint contribution and shared benefits.

ii. Military spending, budget and composition of the armed forces

China places equal importance on development and security, and has taken coordinated measures to build both a prosperous nation and a strong army. Following the principle of developing national defense in tandem with the economy and building the armed forces through diligence and thrift, China takes into consideration the development of the economy and the demands of national defense, decides on the appropriate scale and composition of defense expenditure, and manages and applies these funds in accordance with law.

In terms of usage, China's defense expenditure is assigned to three sectors – personnel, training and sustainment, and equipment. The expenditure is open and transparent, and the spending is reasonable and appropriate. Compared with other major countries, China's share of defense expenditure in GDP and government expenditure, as well as its per capita defense spending are at a relatively low level. Going forward, China's defense expenditure will maintain a moderate and steady growth commensurate with the level of economic development.

iii. Military diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region

As a staunch force for world peace, Chinese armed forces have faithfully acted on the call for building a community with a shared future for mankind. Being the military force of a major country, it has actively fulfilled the international obligations, comprehensively promoted international military cooperation in the new era, striving for a better world of lasting peace and common security.

In 2019, Chinese armed forces actively developed constructive relationships with their foreign counterparts, pursuing all-dimensional, wide-ranging and multi-tiered military diplomacy. The mil-to-mil relations between China and Russia continued to develop at a high level. Military relations with the US was handled in an active and proper manner. China has deepened its military partnerships with neighboring countries, by establishing new defense and security consultations and working mechanisms, conducting joint exercises and training programs on counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, search and rescue, and multi-service tactical skills, and carrying out extensive exchanges and practical cooperation on border and coastal defense, academic institutions, think tanks, education, training, medical science, medical service, and equipment and technology.

China's military continued to work for the building of regional security cooperation architecture. It facilitated further security cooperation within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), actively supported the institutional development of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), and contributed to the launch of the Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism (QCCM) among Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and Tajikistan. China's military has taken an active part in the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Shangri-La Dialogue, the Jakarta International Defense Dialogue and the Western Pacific Naval Forum and other multilateral dialogues and cooperation mechanisms. In addition, it has held regular China-ASEAN Defense Ministers' Informal Meetings and proposed constructive initiatives to strengthen regional defense cooperation.

In 2019, China held multinational naval events celebrating the 70th anniversary of the PLA Navy and launched the major initiative of jointly building a maritime community with a shared future. The China-ASEAN Joint Maritime Drill 2019 was held, demonstrating the confidence and determination of China and ASEAN countries in maintaining regional peace and stability. In addition, the ninth Beijing Xiangshan Forum was held, which played an active role in promoting security dialogue, mutual trust and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

III. China's Efforts to Promote Security in the Asia-Pacific Region

Since 2019, China has actively participated in regional security cooperation and strengthened dialogue and cooperation with regional countries in an effort to jointly tackle all kinds of security challenges and cross-border threats, and worked relentlessly to uphold peace, stability, development and prosperity in the region.

i. Relations with other major countries

China-US relations

China and the United States have maintained exchanges at the highest and other levels since 2019. On 29 June, President Xi Jinping met with US President Donald Trump in Osaka, Japan. The two presidents exchanged views on fundamental issues concerning the growth of bilateral relations, bilateral trade and international and regional issues of mutual interest, and agreed to promote bilateral relations on the basis of coordination, cooperation and stability. The two presidents also had multiple phone calls and exchanges of correspondence. New progress was made in the cooperation and exchanges in the fields of mil-to-mil relations, drug control, law enforcement and culture, and at the sub-national level. The two sides maintained communication and coordination on major regional and international issues such as the Korean Peninsula, the Iranian nuclear issue, the Middle East and Afghanistan. On the other hand, however, the United States had taken a series of erroneous actions on issues related to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, Tibet, economy and trade, science and technology, people-to-people exchanges, maritime affairs, human rights and religion, which had interfered in China's internal affairs and jeopardized China's interests. Some US political figures kept smearing China's COVID-19 response efforts and stigmatizing China, and even clamored to hold China accountable and made it pay for COVID-19. China expresses its firm opposition to such moves.

China and the US stayed in communication on Asia-Pacific affairs via bilateral and multilateral channels, and conducted exchanges at the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum and other regional multilateral mechanisms.

China-Russia relations

China and Russia are each other's biggest neighboring country, comprehensive strategic partner of coordination and priority in diplomacy. China-Russia relations maintained a positive momentum of growth at a high level and delivered fruitful outcomes.

President Xi Jinping and President Vladimir Putin met five times in 2019. During President Xi's state visit to Russia in June, the two heads of state signed and issued the **Joint Statement by the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Developing Comprehensive Partnership and Strategic Interaction Entering a New Era**, and the **Joint Statement on Strengthening Global Stability in the Modern Age**, ushering a new era in bilateral relations. China and Russia will continue to follow the spirit of the **Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendship and Cooperation** and other documents guiding bilateral relations. With their vision and strength, the two sides will work for the revitalization of both countries, and uphold world peace and stability through further alignment between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Eurasian Economic Union, enhanced people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and closer coordination on international affairs.

China and Russia are committed to upholding the purposes and principles of the *UN Charter* and widely recognized norms governing international relations, and to defending the outcomes of World War II and international fairness and justice. The two countries have maintained good cooperation on Asia-Pacific affairs, and worked together for the political settlement of regional hotspot issues, contributing to peace, stability, development and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region.

China-Japan relations

Since 2019, thanks to the joint efforts of both sides, China-Japan relations, on the basis of getting back on normal track, have maintained a momentum of improvement and growth.

In April, Premier Li Keqiang met with Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Kono and some other cabinet members who attended the fifth China-Japan High-level Economic Dialogue. In June, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had a successful meeting in Osaka, and reached important consensus on building China-Japan relations that fit the needs of the new era. In October, Vice President Wang Qishan, as special envoy of President Xi Jinping, attended the enthronement ceremony of Japanese Emperor Naruhito and paid a goodwill visit to Japan.

In November, Premier Li Keqiang met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during the Leaders' Meetings on East Asia Cooperation. In the same month, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Nagoya, Japan, paid an official visit to Japan, and co-hosted with Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi the first meeting of the High-level Consultation Mechanism on People-to-People Exchanges between China and Japan. In December, Vice President Wang Qishan met with head of Japan's National Security Council Shigeru Kitamura. Yang Jiechi, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, co-chaired with Mr. Shigeru Kitamura the seventh High-level Political Dialogue between China and Japan. In the same month, President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang met respectively with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe who visited China for the eighth Trilateral Summit Meeting of China, Japan and the ROK. The two sides reached new consensus on working for continuous improvement and development of the bilateral relations.

Economic and trade cooperation between the two countries has enjoyed steady growth. Japan is China's fourth largest trading partner while China is Japan's largest trading partner. Bilateral trade

volume reached US\$315 billion in 2019. Personnel interflow continued to expand and there had been 256 pairs of friendship cities by the end of 2019.

China-India relations

Since 2019, China-India relations have enjoyed a sound momentum of steady growth, with smooth progress in exchanges and cooperation at all levels and in various fields.

In June, President Xi Jinping had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. In the same month, President Xi Jinping had an informal meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin on the margins of the G20 Summit in Osaka, Japan. In November, President Xi Jinping met with Prime Minister Modi on the margins of the BRICS Summit in Brasilia. The two countries have seen deepening cooperation in various fields, fruitful people-to-people exchanges, and maintained communication and coordination under the UN, BRICS, G20, the SCO, the China-Russia-India trilateral mechanism, and other multilateral frameworks.

ii. Regional Cooperation

China-ASEAN Cooperation

China has along seen ASEAN as a priority in its neighborhood diplomacy, and firmly supports the building of ASEAN Community, supports ASEAN's centrality in East Asian regional cooperation and supports ASEAN in playing a bigger role in regional and international affairs.

China-ASEAN relations have maintained sound and steady development since 2019. In February 2019, the opening ceremony of the China-ASEAN Year of Media Exchanges was held in Beijing, China. President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha of Thailand, the rotating chair of ASEAN, sent congratulatory messages to the event respectively. In April, leaders of the 10 ASEAN countries and Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr. Aladdin D. Rillo attended the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in China. In July, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended the China-ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, and announced, together with foreign ministers of ASEAN countries, that the first reading of the single draft negotiating text of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea was completed ahead of schedule. Before the meeting, the launching ceremony of the China-ASEAN Young Leaders Scholarship was held. In November, Premier Li Keqiang attended the 22nd China-ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. At the Summit, the year 2020 was designated as the China-ASEAN Year of Digital Economy Cooperation and several statements were released, including the **China-ASEAN Joint Statement on Synergising the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**, **China-ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Smart City Cooperation Initiative**, and **Joint Statement on Strengthening Media Exchanges and Cooperation Between China and ASEAN**. In June 2020, the China-ASEAN Year of Digital Economy Cooperation was launched via video link. Premier Li Keqiang and Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc of Vietnam, the rotating chair of ASEAN, sent congratulatory messages to the event respectively.

In 2019, two-way trade between China and ASEAN reached US\$641.46 billion, up by 9.2% year-on-year. In the first five months of 2020, bilateral trade volume reached RMB1.7 trillion, marking a year-on-year growth of 4.2%, making ASEAN the largest trading partner of China. Cooperation in various fields has made steady progress. The two sides held the 16th China-ASEAN Expo, the 12th China-ASEAN Education Cooperation Week, China-ASEAN Health Ministers' Meeting, Meeting of China-ASEAN Heads of Intellectual Property Offices, AEM-MOFCOM Consultations, China-ASEAN Prosecutors-General Conference, China-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime, China-ASEAN Defense Ministers' Informal Meeting, and High Level Conference on China-ASEAN Media Cooperation.

Since the start of COVID-19, China and ASEAN have come together for mutual assistance, setting a good example for international cooperation. In February 2020, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and foreign ministers of ASEAN countries attended the Special China-ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Coronavirus Disease in Vientiane, Laos. They had in-depth exchanges of views and reached important consensus on working together to combat COVID-19, improve regional public health governance and restore growth. Health authorities and medical experts from both sides have held video conferences on multiple occasions. The Chinese government and people from all sectors of society have provided a large quantity of supplies to ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat.

ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation

ASEAN Plus Three (APT) has been the main channel of East Asian cooperation. Since 2019, APT cooperation has made new progress thanks to the concerted efforts of all sides. Fifteen participating countries of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) concluded text-based negotiations and essentially all their market access issues, and worked towards the signing of the agreement in 2020. The **Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization (CMIM) Agreement** concluded the first Periodic Review. All sides reckoned that ASEAN, China, Japan and the ROK need to play a leading role in strengthening the cooperation on connectivity and finance, trade and investment, smart cities, people-to-people exchanges, climate change and disaster management, thus contributing to regional stability and prosperity. In face of COVID-19, APT should keep to the tradition of cooperation, show solidarity and meet challenges together.

In November 2019, Premier Li Keqiang attended the 22nd APT Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. He stressed that as the world is seeing profound and complex changes, APT countries are duty-bound to strengthen unity and collaboration, firmly stand for the multilateral trading regime, and firmly pursue open and inclusive development with win-win cooperation. Premier Li called on APT countries to bring economic integration to a higher level, support regional connectivity, enhance regional financial cooperation, promote sustainable development and deepen people-to-people exchanges. His proposal was well received and supported by the leaders attending the Summit. In April 2020, Premier Li Keqiang attended the Special APT Summit on COVID-19 via video link. He underscored that APT countries need to build greater awareness of a community with a shared future and send a message of partnership, solidarity and mutual assistance to secure an early victory against COVID-19 in East Asia. He called on APT countries to enhance all-round cooperation

against epidemics, build up public health capacity, revitalize economic growth, deepen regional economic integration, and intensify policy coordination to weather all kinds of risks and challenges. In the same month, the Special Video Conference of APT Health Ministers in Enhancing Cooperation on COVID-19 was held. In June, the Special APT Economic Ministers' Virtual Conference was held and the ministers issued the *ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers' Joint Statement on Mitigating The Economic Impact of The COVID-19 Pandemic*.

China actively promotes APT practical cooperation in various areas. It hosted activities under the East Asia Cooperation Initiative on Poverty Reduction, APT Village Leaders Exchange Program, APT Training Program on Understanding China, Workshop on Cooperation for Cultural Human Resource Development, Seminar on APT Food Security Cooperation, APT Media Cooperation Forum, Young Entrepreneurs Forum on economic and trade cooperation, and workshops on SMEs and intellectual property rights.

China-Japan-ROK Cooperation

The year of 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the trilateral cooperation between China, Japan and the ROK. In December 2019, Premier Li Keqiang hosted the 8th China-Japan-ROK leaders' meeting in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Leaders of the three countries reached consensus on strengthening political trust, deepening cooperation on the environment, health, science and technology and people-to-people exchanges, upholding free trade and multilateralism and safeguarding regional peace and stability. The meeting injected positive energy into the development and prosperity in the region and beyond. Outcome documents released at the meeting included the *Trilateral Cooperation Vision for the Next Decade* and the Trilateral+X Cooperation Early Harvest Projects. In August, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi hosted the ninth China-Japan-ROK foreign ministers' meeting in Beijing, and the Concept Paper on "Trilateral+X" Cooperation was adopted at the meeting. The three countries also held a new round of ministerial meetings in such areas as finance and central banks, the environment, foreign affairs, culture, tourism, personnel, disaster management, health, economy and trade. Other meetings and activities held among the three countries included the 15th and 16th rounds of negotiations on a China-Japan-ROK FTA, Seminar Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of China-ROK-Japan Cooperation, the China-Japan-ROK Security Cooperation, Consultation on Latin American Affairs, Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic, Trilateral Top Regulators Meeting on Nuclear Safety, Environmental Policy Dialogues, Trilateral Youth Summit, Industries Expo, and Cultural Content Industry Forum. China's Yangzhou, Japan's Kitakyushu and the ROK's Suncheon were selected as Culture Cities of East Asia 2020.

In March 2020, China, Japan and the ROK held the Special Foreign Ministers' Video Conference on COVID-19. The foreign ministers had in-depth exchange of views on making joint COVID-19 response and maintaining trilateral practical cooperation. In May, the health ministers of the three countries held a video conference and issued a joint statement.

East Asia Summit (EAS)

The East Asia Summit is a “leaders-led strategic forum”. In November 2019, Premier Li Keqiang attended the 14th East Asia Summit in Bangkok, Thailand, where he underscored the need for all parties to promote win-win cooperation and build an open world economy, put development first and seek common prosperity, boost innovation to foster new drivers of growth, and advance cooperation in non-traditional security fields to preserve common security. Outcome documents of the meeting include the *East Asia Summit Leaders’ Statement on Partnership for Sustainability* jointly proposed by countries including China and Thailand.

China has actively participated in the cooperation in EAS priority areas. In 2019, China hosted the Fourth Clean Energy Forum, New Energy Forum, Seminar on Estuary Harnessing, Protection and Management, Joint Drill on Counter-Terrorism, and the Third Track-Two Seminar on Regional Security Architecture. China funded the Eighth Earthquake Emergency Exercise conducted by the United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group in Thailand.

The Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC)

The LMC is the first new-type sub-regional cooperation mechanism launched by the six countries along the Lancang-Mekong River featuring wide consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. China, as a close neighbor of the other five countries, hopes that the LMC can be leveraged to promote common development, narrow regional development gap, facilitate the community-building of ASEAN and regional integration, and contribute to South-South cooperation and the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In over four years since its launch, the LMC has continually seen its institutional building improving, areas of cooperation expanding, and energy for self-driven development strengthening. With increasing popular support, the LMC has given a strong boost to the relations between Lancang-Mekong countries and brought tangible benefits to the people in the sub-region.

In February 2020, the Fifth Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Foreign Ministers’ Meeting was held in Vientiane, Laos. Foreign ministers from the six countries agreed unanimously to synergize the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor and the Lancang-Mekong Economic Development Belt, advance cooperation in public health, water resources, agriculture, people’s livelihood and non-traditional security, and promote coordinated development of sub-regional mechanisms. The meeting adopted the *Joint Press Communiqué of the Fifth Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Foreign Ministers’ Meeting*, and issued the *Progress Report of the Year 2019 on Implementing the LMC Five-Year Plan of Action, Recommendations for Jointly Building the Lancang-Mekong Economic Development Belt*, list of projects to be supported by LMC Special Fund in 2020, and Matrix of Follow-ups to the Outcomes of the Projects Supported by LMC Special Fund in 2018.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

Thanks to the joint efforts of all member states throughout the past 19 years since its launch, the SCO has maintained its momentum of sound and steady development. It keeps delivering new cooperation outcomes in the political, security, economic, cultural and people-to-people fields, with rising international status and influence.

In June 2019, President Xi Jinping attended the 19th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. At the meeting, the leaders signed and issued the Bishkek Declaration, released a press communiqué and reached 22 outcome documents concerning the development of the organization, anti-narcotics, sub-national cooperation, digitization, information and communication technology, etc.

In November 2019, Premier Li Keqiang attended the 18th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the SCO in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. At the meeting, the leaders signed and issued a joint communiqué and reached 14 outcome documents on economy and trade, railway, customs, etc. In May 2020, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi attended a video conference of SCO foreign ministers. The conference issued the *Statement by the SCO Foreign Ministers Concerning the Spread of the COVID-19*.

Other SCO events held in 2019 include meetings of national security advisors, presidents of supreme courts and procurators-general; meetings of ministers of foreign affairs, national defense, economy and trade, science and technology, culture and environmental protection; meetings of heads of border defense, drug prohibition, railway and emergency response departments; meetings of sub-national leaders; the SCO Forum, the Women's Forum and the Media Forum. These activities have deepened and expanded SCO cooperation in various fields. China has taken an active part and worked for new progress in SCO cooperation.

iii. Non-Traditional Security Cooperation

Cooperation on disaster relief

Since 2019, China has actively promoted international cooperation on disaster prevention and mitigation in the Asia-Pacific. China co-hosted the 18th ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ARF ISM on DR) as the co-chair. China continued to implement the China-ASEAN Earthquake-Generated Tsunami Warning System project, and held the ARF Enhancement Training on Urban Search and Rescue Capacity Building, the first "Flame Blue" International Technical Exchange and Games on Fire and Rescue, the second China-ROK Cooperation Meeting on Disaster Management, and the Workshop on Technical Exchanges of Rescue Dogs for Emergency Management Authorities of SCO Member States. China attended the 34th meeting of ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and China-ASEAN High-Level Video Symposium on Disaster Management held in Mandalay, Myanmar, the Regional Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Tajikistan, the 13th Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum and 15th Meeting of the APEC Emergency Preparedness Working Group held in Chile, the 10th meeting of Heads of Departments of Disaster Prevention of SCO Member States held in India, and the sixth China-Japan-ROK Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management held in ROK. China was elected co-chair of the APEC Emergency Preparedness Working Group and participated in the SCO Joint Exercise on Urban Earthquake Search and Rescue, expanding the depth and breadth of cooperation with regional countries.

Cooperation on maritime security

Since 2019, China has taken an active part in Asia-Pacific maritime security cooperation. China has actively explored maritime security cooperation with ASEAN countries and hosted the first Seminar on Military Mutual Trust in the South China Sea under the framework of implementing the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). China hosted the China-ASEAN Senior Training Course on Maritime Search and Rescue, Seminar on Smart Maritime Supervision and Service in the Malacca and Singapore Straits, International Symposium on Maritime Cooperation and Policy Coordination: The Path to Security Cooperation in the South China Sea, and the third ARF Workshop on Ferry Safety. China has carried out bilateral maritime law enforcement cooperation with the ROK, Japan, the Philippines and Viet Nam, and organized the 24th High-Level Meeting on Maritime Search and Rescue Operations with Japan, the ROK and Russia. China has maintained communication with the ROK, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh on maritime security cooperation and other issues through relevant maritime dialogue mechanisms.

China continues to actively implement the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), and supports the capacity building and development of its Information Sharing Center (ISC). The South China Sea Tsunami Alert Center undertaken by China was officially put into operation to provide all-weather earthquake and tsunami monitoring and early warning services for countries around the South China Sea. The Marine Environment Forecast and Support System along the Maritime Silk Road started pilot operation in 2019, providing forecast and support services for maritime transport, escort and disaster prevention in the Asia-Pacific.

As of April 2020, China has sent 35 batches of over 100 ship services and over 17,000 military personnel to the Gulf of Aden and Somali waters in regularized escort operations, providing protection for over 6,700 Chinese and foreign ships as well as rescue, escort or relief services to 70 ships in distress.

Counter-terrorism cooperation

China has taken an active part in Asia-Pacific counter-terrorism cooperation and worked to promote new progress in the region's fight against terrorism, contributing significantly to maintaining regional and international security and stability. Since 2019, China has actively carried out policy discussion and practical cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries on counter-terrorism. China hosted the fifth Counter-Terrorism Exchange Meeting with neighboring countries, participated in the counter-terrorism cooperation under multilateral mechanisms such as the UN, BRICS, the SCO, APEC, the ARF and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) in depth, and signed counter-terrorism cooperation agreements between law enforcement and security agencies with several ARF participants. In December 2019, China hosted the Joint Online Counter-Terrorism Exercise of SCO Member States in Xiamen. China has carried out active bilateral and multilateral practical cooperation with the counter-terrorism departments of countries and regions in the Asia-Pacific through mutual visits, intelligence and information sharing, and verification of leads on terrorist cases, contributing to the security and stability in the region and beyond.

Cooperation in combating transnational crimes

China attaches high importance to combating transnational crimes and has actively participated in international cooperation against transnational crimes.

Since 2019, China has hosted 57 seminars of various forms and trained more than 1,000 law enforcement officers from ASEAN countries. China and ASEAN countries have conducted cooperation against transnational crimes such as online gambling, telecommunications fraud and human trafficking, resulting in the arrest of 1,107 suspects of online gambling and 3,630 suspects of telecommunications fraud in Southeast Asian countries. China has signed agreements on fighting human trafficking with Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam and arrested 1,130 suspects in 2019. China established bilateral anti-narcotics mechanisms with Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and Brunei, solved over 3,000 narcotics-related cases, arrested more than 3,200 suspects, and seized 38 tons of drugs and precursor chemicals in 2019. In March 2019, the launching ceremony of the Year of Law Enforcement Cooperation between China and Cambodia was held in Beijing. The two countries agreed on conducting cooperation against telecommunications fraud, online gambling, and gang crimes. In September, China's first coordination office for law enforcement cooperation abroad was set up in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In November, China attended the 13th ASEAN Meeting on Transnational Crime and 10th APT Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime held in Thailand.

Cooperation on cybersecurity

China has always been a builder, promoter and contributor to global cybersecurity. Guided by the principles of peace, sovereignty, joint governance and inclusiveness, China has actively promoted the global governance of cyberspace, committed to the building of a peaceful and secure cyberspace featuring openness, cooperation and order, and worked for a community with a shared future in cyberspace.

Since 2019, China has actively engaged in dialogue and cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries on cyber affairs. China hosted the 6th World Internet Conference, and side events such as "International Rules of Cyberspace" and "Technology Development and International Cooperation of Cyberspace", to mobilize joint efforts in maintaining peace and security in cyberspace. China has played a constructive role in cybersecurity cooperation under the framework of the ARF. China co-organized with Singapore and Cambodia the "Workshop on Awareness-Raising and Information Sharing on Emergency Responses to Security Incidents in the Use of ICTs", and put forward the *Initiative on Awareness-Raising and Information Sharing on Emergency Responses to Security Incidents in the Use of ICTs*. China promoted cooperation with the ARF participants on cybersecurity by collaborating with the INTERPOL Innovation Center, carried out dialogues with Russia, the European Union, Japan, and the ROK on cyber affairs, and deeply engaged in the meeting of the SCO Expert Group on International Information Security and the meeting of the BRICS Expert Group on Cybersecurity. All these are China's efforts to further expand cybersecurity exchanges with ASEAN countries and to actively promote practical cooperation on cyber affairs.

Cooperation on non-proliferation and disarmament

China adheres to multilateralism, firmly upholds the international arms control and disarmament system, and actively supports and participates in international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. China attaches great importance to the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), firmly upholds its validity, authority and universality, and actively participates in the review of the Treaty. In April 2019, China attended the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in New York, and worked actively for progress in the review.

China has worked actively for strengthening the cooperation mechanism among the five nuclear-weapon states (P5). The P5 Beijing Conference was successfully held on January 30, 2019. On March 10, 2020, China, together with the other four nuclear-weapon countries, issued a foreign ministers' joint statement to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT, promising to continue to safeguard the validity, authority and universality of the Treaty. Within the P5 framework, China has taken the lead to resume consultations with the ASEAN countries on the Protocol to the *Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty* (SEANWFZ). China is also leading the Second Phase of the P5 Working Group on Nuclear Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms, and actively participates in P5 discussions on negotiations of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), nuclear policy, and nuclear risk reduction, etc.

China has always strictly fulfilled its obligations under the *Biological Weapons Convention* (BWC) and firmly supported its purposes and goals. China holds the view that reaching a legally-binding verification protocol through negotiation is the best way to improve the effectiveness of the BWC. China firmly supports the authority and effectiveness of the *Chemical Weapons Convention* (CWC), and strives to realize the goal of a world without chemical weapons.

In October 2019, China, the 1540 Committee and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) co-organized the third Training Course for the 1540 Points of Contact in the Asia-Pacific Region. China has been actively promoting exchanges and cooperation on non-proliferation and disarmament with Asia-Pacific countries, and is committed to enhancing bilateral exchanges on arms control with countries in the region. In 2019, China had arms control and non-proliferation consultations with the ROK, Japan, Pakistan and India respectively, held humanitarian demining training course for Cambodia and donated demining devices to it. China, as a routine, donated US\$50,000 to the United Nations Asia-Pacific Disarmament Center to support its work.

Cooperation on outer space security

China has all along called for the peaceful uses of outer space, opposed weaponization of and arms race in outer space, and championed a joint effort by the international community to safeguard enduring peace and security in outer space.

China has actively promoted the negotiation and conclusion of an international legal instrument on arms control in outer space. With the joint efforts of China, Russia and other countries, the Group of

Governmental Experts on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space was established under the UN framework, and convened two meetings in August 2018 and March 2019.

China has taken a constructive part in the work of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and has actively promoted international cooperation in this field. China signed more than 100 space cooperation agreements or MOUs with nearly 40 countries and international organizations including those in the Asia-Pacific region, provided satellite launch services for over 10 countries, and promoted international application of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System. In 2019, China and the UN jointly announced in Vienna that nine projects from 23 entities in 17 countries were listed as the first batch of science experiment projects to be carried out in China's space station. In May 2020, the maiden flight mission for the on-orbit construction of the Chinese space station was successfully completed.

China and ASEAN countries, guided by a shared commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space and opposition to the weaponization of and arms race in outer space, have engaged in sound cooperation on outer space affairs, including jointly holding several ARF workshops on outer space security. China is ready to strengthen coordination and cooperation with ASEAN and other parties in the Asia-Pacific to jointly contribute to security and sustainable development in outer space.

Cooperation on combating illicit small arms and light weapons

China exercises strict control domestically over small arms and light weapons (SALW) in accordance with law. China issued and implemented The Law on Firearms-Control, and revised Regulations on Governing Export Control of Military Goods. China has improved inter-agency cooperation and set up a Gun Control Information System to ensure the whole-of-the-process administration of SALW.

China has been actively involved in the SALW-related multilateral process under the UN framework and has made important contribution to the negotiated conclusion of the *UN Programme of Action on Small Arms (POA) and Light Weapons and International Tracing Instrument*. China attended every review conference and biennial meeting of the PoA, intergovernmental working group meetings on the *Firearms Protocol* and UNSC open debates on small arms and light weapons, and submitted on time the national report on the implementation of PoA. China actively provides assistance to relevant countries and organizations under multilateral frameworks such as the UN, Organization of American States (OAS), Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

China supports efforts to regulate international arms trade to prevent illegal transfer of conventional weapons, especially SALW. China actively engaged in the negotiations of the *Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)* and played a constructive role in facilitating its conclusion. China attended every conference of the states parties to the ATT as an observer. In September 2019, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi announced at the 74th UN General Assembly that China has initiated relevant domestic legal procedures for its accession to the ATT. In June 2020, the NPC Standing Committee voted to adopt a decision on joining the Arms Trade Treaty. China will submit the instrument of

accession through diplomatic channels as soon as possible, which shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

China takes seriously ASEAN countries' concerns over the illicit transfer of SALW, actively supports relevant efforts within the region and has participated in a number of ARF workshops on the transfer of SALW and other conventional weapons.

IV. China's Observations on the Future Development of the ASEAN Regional Forum

i. Promote dialogue and communication and deepen political mutual trust. The Asia-Pacific region is undergoing complex and profound changes. While peace, development, and mutually beneficial cooperation remain the shared aspiration of all parties, unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise and trust between regional countries are under severe challenge. The ARF needs to uphold dialogue rather than confrontation and mutual benefit rather than zero-sum mentality. It needs to promote respect for each other's core interests and major concerns, constructive approach to manage differences, and mutual understanding and trust between parties.

ii. Enhance non-traditional security cooperation and safeguard common interests. The outbreak and spread of COVID-19 highlight the importance of cooperation on public health and other non-traditional security areas. The ARF needs to focus on shared concerns of regional countries, promote closer cooperation on public health, disaster relief, counter-terrorism, combating transnational crimes and cybersecurity, and foster sound environment for common development and prosperity. It needs to adhere to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security to build a security architecture that reflects the reality of the region and serves the interests of all parties.

iii. Enhance institutional building and uplift the role of the ARF. The ARF needs to adhere to valid principles of ASEAN centrality, seeking consensus through consultation and accommodating each other's comfort levels, promote constructive dialogue and cooperation, enhance efficiency, and synergize with other regional cooperation mechanisms. It needs to seize the opportunity of the updating of the *HANOI PLAN OF ACTION to Implement the ASEAN Regional Forum Vision Statement* to promote more confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy carried out in a step-by-step manner based on extensive consensus, with a view to laying a solid foundation for enduring stability in the region.

EUROPEAN UNION

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

- General observations of contemporary regional security environment according to each country's security perspective

1. In Asia, in the last twelve months, both ongoing and novel threats have influenced the overall security landscape and posed challenges to the maintenance of regional and global peace. Ongoing regional tensions and ongoing national-level instability continue to pose a risk to regional stability. While emerging issues (such as COVID-19) and escalating issues (such as the growing impact of disinformation campaigns and fake news) have complicated cooperation – within Asia and between Asia and the rest of the world – and have the potential to undermine regional and global security.

2. Those who believe in a collective, multilateral global order have an interest and a duty to join forces. Europe and Asia can together be the engine of a more cooperative approach to world politics. The EU remains firmly committed to security and stability in Asia, to its bilateral relationships with Asian countries, and to region-to-region engagement between the EU, ASEAN, with the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). This commitment is partly a reflection of EU values, and partly a recognition that security and stability in Asia is intrinsically linked to European and global security and stability. The EU cannot expect to address seriously any of the major global challenges it faces – from climate change to terrorism – without strong cooperation with its Asian partners.

3. EU engagement in Asia is comprehensive – ranging from political dialogues to cooperation on global challenges, from a two-way exchange of expertise to the provision of humanitarian and development assistance. The EU continues to engage closely with its current strategic partners in Asia (China, India, Japan, South Korea), whilst also seeking to deepen co-operation with other partners, including ASEAN and its Member States. In addition, the EU seeks to build on existing and future partnerships by establishing tailor-made security cooperation solutions with individual Asian countries.

4. In 2019, the EU launched an initiative to enhance security cooperation in and with Asia, promoting concrete and operational peer-to-peer cooperation with partners in the region. This pilot experience includes five countries (**India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea and Vietnam**), grouping together EU security-related efforts in particular in four areas: **maritime, counter terrorism, crisis management and cyber security**. Joint activities with two or more of the countries in scope will be promoted, including in an ASEAN/ARF context.

- 5.** Existing and future security dialogues will be complemented by concrete activities, such as training, targeted capacity building, confidence building, technical assistance peer-to-peer cooperation, table-top exercises; practitioner exchanges and development of networks, summer schools, and internships.
- 6.** The EU is keenly aware that COVID-19 – in addition to being a global health and economic disaster – also poses significant risks to the protection of human rights and the maintenance of peace and security. The outbreak of COVID-19 clearly demonstrates that global challenges require collective responses. The EU supports international cooperation and multilateral solutions to this crisis. The EU is coordinating efforts closely with the United Nations (UN), the G20, the G7, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organization and the international financial institutions.
- 7.** In expressing its full support for UN Secretary-General Guterres' call for a global ceasefire in light of the coronavirus pandemic, the EU also expressed its deep concern: that the pandemic risks exacerbating existing conflict; that conflict is diverting resources from global efforts to halt the virus; and that sanctions should not impede the delivery of essential equipment and supplies necessary to fight the coronavirus and limit its spread worldwide.
- 8.** The EU has already taken a series of quick, concrete actions to support the global COVID-19 response. The EU's response follows a 'Team Europe' approach. It draws contributions from all EU institutions and combines the resources mobilised by the EU, its Member States and financial institutions (the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development). Working together, Team Europe can muster a critical mass that few others can match. In total, under the Team Europe COVID-19 banner, the EU has established a financial package worth €15.6 billion to support partner countries' response and recovery efforts.
- 9.** The EU recognises that the impact of COVID-19 on the ASEAN region has been unprecedented. While COVID case numbers have been (relatively) lower than in other regions, the economic downturn has hit hard. The EU is responding in a variety of ways, including through the Team Europe package –over €350 million has been allocated for the ASEAN region. The EU will also look for new ways to deepen cooperation with ASEAN, and other Asian partners, in order to help both regions recover and to build greater resilience into our collective economic, health, security and logistics systems.

2. National Security and Defence Policy

a. Overview of national security and defence policy

- Identify and briefly discuss national security and defence orientation, doctrine, and/or strategy

10. Europeans today face a security landscape in flux, impacted by evolving threats as well as other factors including climate change, demographic trends and political instability beyond our borders. Globalisation, free movement and the digital transformation continue to bring prosperity, make our lives easier, and spur innovation and growth. But alongside these benefits come inherent risks and costs. They can be manipulated by terrorism, organised crime, the drugs trade and human trafficking, all direct threats to citizens and our European way of life. Cyber-attacks and cybercrime continue to rise. Security threats are also becoming more complex: they feed on the ability to work cross-border and on inter-connectivity; they exploit the blurring of the boundaries between the physical and digital world; they exploit vulnerable groups, social and economic divergences. Attacks can come at a moment's notice and may leave little or no trace; both state and non-state actors can deploy a variety of hybrid threats¹; and what happens outside the EU can have a critical impact on security inside the EU.

11. The COVID-19 crisis has also reshaped our notion of safety and security threats and corresponding policies. It has highlighted the need to guarantee security both in the physical and digital environments. It has underlined the importance of open strategic autonomy for our supply chains in terms of critical products, services, infrastructures and technologies. It has reinforced the need to engage every sector and every individual in a common effort to ensure that the EU is more prepared and resilient in the first place and has better tools to respond when needed. The EU can bring a multidisciplinary and integrated response, helping security actors in Member States with the tools and the information they need. The EU can also ensure that security policy remains grounded in our common European values – respecting and upholding the rule of law, equality and fundamental rights and guaranteeing transparency, accountability and democratic control – to give policies the right foundation of trust.

12. The work must also go beyond the EU's boundaries. Protecting the Union and its citizens is no longer only about ensuring security within the EU borders, but also about addressing the external dimension of security. The EU's approach to external security within the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) will remain an essential component of efforts to enhance security within the EU.

13. In 2019 the EU continued, under the CSDP, to carry out civilian and defence missions, in diverse contexts, across Europe and Africa. These missions enable the EU to take a leading role in peacekeeping operations, conflict prevention and the strengthening of international security. They are an integral part of the EU's comprehensive approach towards crisis management, drawing on both civilian and military assets. As at March 2019, the EU maintained seventeen ongoing CSDP operations(6 military missions and 11 civilian missions).

key regional and multilateral partners (such as the UN, NATO, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the Financial Action Task Force), and with other regional organisations (including the OSCE, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the League of Arab States).

17. Eighteen non-EU countries are now able to join EU operations for peace and security, thanks to permanent 'Framework Participation Agreements' (FPA) with the EU. These include a number with ARF members (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the United States and Vietnam). Throughout 2019, Vietnam and the EU negotiated and concluded an FPA, which entered into force on 1 May 2020. The FPA will facilitate Vietnam's participation in and contribution to the EU's CSDP missions and operations. This FPA confirms the EU's and Vietnam's shared commitment to contribute to peace and security in their neighbourhoods and the wider world, as well as to safeguarding the rules-based, multilateral order.

18. The EU is an active participant of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and a contributor to the UN Peacebuilding Fund. In 2020, the EU supported the review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture with particular focus on the importance of: multilateral action to address current challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic; the UN peacebuilding architecture's central role in operationalising the conflict prevention agenda; coherent, inclusive and participatory peacebuilding and sustaining peace; and ensuring predictable, reliable and flexible funding to meet the increasing demands for peacebuilding activities.

19. The EU has put in place a robust EU policy framework on Women, Peace and Security with the adoption of a new Strategic Approach (December 2018) and an Action Plan (July 2019). The Action Plan focuses on six overarching objectives: (i) participation; (ii) gender mainstreaming; (iii) 'leading by example'; (iv) prevention; (v) protection and (vi) 'relief and recovery. The EU also puts great emphasis on the regional aspects of the implementation of the WPS agenda. In October 2019 together with NATO, AU, UN Women and the OSCE as observer, the Regional Acceleration Resolution (RAR) 1325 was launched to create a forum to collectively strengthen the implementation of WPS and to share best practices and lessons learned.

20. Internationally, in 2019, the EU continued to use the breadth of tools at our disposal to play a leading role on the international scene and press for resolution on intractable security problems. Of particular note, the EU was engaged in:

- preservation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) (as an integral part of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture)
- identifying a political solution to the conflict in and around Ukraine and to the conflicts in Syria and Yemen
- pursuing mediation in Venezuela, and
- supporting stabilisation in the Sahel, Libya and Afghanistan.

21. The EU remains convinced that only a political solution, grounded on the full implementation of UNSC Resolution (UNSCR) 2254 and the Geneva Communiqué, will enable lasting stability and peace in Syria. Lasting peace is critical to the return of refugees and preventing a resurgence of radicalism. In March 2019, the EU and the UN co-chaired the third Brussels Conference on ‘Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region’. This Conference reaffirmed the international community’s support for UN-led efforts towards achieving sustainable peace. It also succeeded in mobilising additional aid for the Syrian people and for neighbouring countries and communities hosting Syrian refugees.

22. In **Libya**, following the Berlin Conference on Libya in February 2020 endorsed by the subsequent UN Security Council Resolution 2510 (2020), the EU has engaged to support the UN-led Berlin process that aims at restoring peace and stability across Libya. In line with the commitments made by participants to the Berlin Conference, the EU has repeatedly called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and urged all the relevant Libyan parties and international actors to refrain from military action that could further exacerbate the conflict. The EU has also repeatedly called on all the Libyan parties to return to political negotiations under the UN-led 5+5 military talks to agree on a total ceasefire and resume the UN-facilitated intra-Libyan dialogue and pave the way to complete the Libyan transition. The EU has also supported various mediation and stabilisation actions through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace.

23. The EU has contributed through concrete actions to the implementation of the Berlin Conference conclusions by launching the new CSDP military operation in the Mediterranean EUNAVFOR Med Operation ‘IRINI’ that aims to enforce the UN arms embargo. IRINI will have as its core task implementation of the UN arms embargo through the use of aerial, satellite and maritime assets. In particular, the mission will inspect vessels on the high seas off the coast of Libya suspected to be carrying arms or related material to and from Libya in accordance with UNSCR 2292. IRINI will also: i) monitor and gather information on illicit exports from Libya of petroleum, crude oil and refined petroleum products; ii) contribute to the capacity building and training of the Libyan Coast Guard and Navy in law enforcement tasks at sea, and iii) contribute to the disruption of the business model of human smuggling and trafficking networks through information gathering and patrolling by planes.

24. The EU continues to develop strong partnerships in Central and South-East Asia, and is actively involved in regional diplomacy and consensus building for peace in **Afghanistan**, particularly through the work of the EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan. The EU continues to engage in bilateral dialogue with Afghanistan’s neighbours – China, India, Pakistan, the Central Asian countries – and with international stakeholders, including the US. The EU remains committed to support an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. In addition to political support to the start of an intra-Afghan Negotiation process, the EU is helping to alleviate the current humanitarian crisis, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, providing over €250 million of assistance since 2014. By supporting three core functions of the Afghan State (security and democracy, economic growth and jobs, basic social services) EU development cooperation contributes to building the necessary future foundation for a stable, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan.

25. The EU and its Member States are continuing to intensify efforts to establish an effective, humanitarian and safe European migration policy. The EU has established a comprehensive migration policy and put forward a substantial number of measures to improve the management of migration in the different areas, be it to tackle irregular migration, improve border management, establish a functional asylum policy ensuring protection of those in need or improving legal migration frameworks.

26. In recent years, the EU has developed a holistic approach to the external dimensions of migration, and has fully embedded migration issues within overall relations with third countries, based on the principles of solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility. The EU's overall aim is to save lives and to promote regular and well-managed migration. The EU is committed to protecting the vulnerable and to providing assistance to refugees, migrants and internally displaced in need. We are also supporting legal migration pathways, in order to reduce irregular and dangerous journeys. The EU is working to help migrants and refugees stay closer to home by supporting the development of third countries and seeking to address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement. We are working with partner countries on resilience and stability and on creating jobs and opportunities for migrants, refugees and host communities.

27. The EU's approach to migration is based on genuine and tailor-made partnerships to address the challenges of migration, make the best of its opportunities and maximise its benefits. The EU has made considerable progress towards strengthening cooperation with third countries on migration, and there has been increasing political engagement from the EU's partners. EU cooperation on migration management continues to increase at both bilateral and regional levels. Migration issues form an important part of the EU's dialogues and partnerships with its near neighbours, with the Balkan states, with the African Union, with MENA region countries, and with the broader international community. The EU continues to strongly advocate for global responsibility sharing.

3. National Contributions to Regional Security

Participation in cooperative arrangements in/germane to Asia-Pacific

- Identify and briefly discuss national cum regional responses to the following security issues as per their enclosed sub-categories. If necessary include additional categories and discuss responses.

28. The EU has continued to pursue an ambitious international security agenda, both in multilateral fora, as well as in cooperation with partners. The fight against terrorism, leadership in the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, maritime security and disaster management are key areas of EU engagement. This work is directly relevant to the most pressing security issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

i. Counter-Terrorism

29. The fight against terrorism continued to take centre stage in the work of the EU during 2019. The EU's key objectives at global level remain to deepen the international consensus and to enhance international efforts to combat terrorism. The EU has worked to strengthen the strategic and policy continuum between its internal and external security in order to enhance the effectiveness of its counter-terrorism actions across the board, in line with the 2017 'EU Council Conclusions on EU External Action on Counter-Terrorism.'

30. The challenge of foreign terrorist fighters is emblematic of the link between internal and external security. Cooperation on counterterrorism and preventing and countering radicalisation and violent extremism is central to security inside the EU. In particular, further efforts should be made to support partner countries' capacity to identify and locate foreign terrorist fighters. The EU will also continue to promote multilateral cooperation, working with the leading global actors in this field, such as the United Nations, NATO, the Council of Europe, Interpol and the OSCE. It will also engage with the Global Counterterrorism Forum and the Global Coalition against Da'esh, as well as relevant civil society actors. The Union's external policy instruments, including development and cooperation, play also an important role when working with third countries to prevent terrorism and piracy. International cooperation is also essential to cut off all sources of terrorism financing, for example through the Financial Action Task Force.

31. The EU actively promotes a criminal law approach to counterterrorism, based on respect for the rule of law and human rights. The EU encourages law enforcement and judicial cooperation, works to address conditions conducive to terrorism, strives to block terrorist financing, and seeks to counter-radicalisation and recruitment by extremist and terrorist organisations.

32. The EU remains actively involved with ASEAN on Counter-Terrorism through capacity building efforts and political dialogues. The EU holds regular bilateral security dialogues and consultations with ASEAN and its Member States on these issues. Countering radicalisation and violent extremism are priority areas in the EU-ASEAN Plan of Action 2018-2022 and in the ASEAN-EU Work Plan to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime 2018-2021. Our policy dialogues continue to address issues of common concern, such as violent extremism and foreign terrorist fighters, as well as exploring venues for further cooperation, including in the UN Global Counter Terrorism Forum and ARF frameworks.

33. The EU is currently a Co-Chair of the ASEAN ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, along with New Zealand and Malaysia. As part of this role, the EU had been due to co-chair the ISM in March 2020. However, these events were postponed due to COVID-19. The EU considers that counterterrorism and transnational crime issues continue to represent some of the most pressing and potentially useful areas for cooperation in the ARF region. In this context, the EU looks forward to continuing to work on these issues, including through a revised ISM.

34. Anti-money-laundering, and countering the financing of terrorism, is also a rapidly increasing priority for the EU. Countering financing is undoubtedly a key element of the fight against terrorism. The EU is intensifying its efforts to tackle terrorism financing, both within the EU and through cooperation with partner countries and international organisations. The European Commission is a founding member of and strongly supports the Financial Action Task Force, the international standard setter in this field.

ii. Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Actions taken in adherence to ARF Statements e.g.:

- **Supporting National Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540**
 - Identify/discuss actions and measures each country has taken, is taking, and/or will be taking in fulfilment of commitment to UNSC Resolution 1540.

- **Non-Proliferation**
 - Identify/discuss actions and measures each country has taken, is taking, and/or will be taking in fulfilment of commitment in this regard.

35. Addressing non-proliferation and disarmament continued to be an integral EU foreign policy priority in 2019. The EU continues to reaffirm its commitment to preserve the South-East Asian region free of nuclear weapons, and all other weapons of mass destruction (Bangkok Treaty), and to promoting relevant international instruments.

36. The EU believes that a multilateral approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international peace and security. The EU continues to support universal accession to, and the full and effective implementation of, all relevant international Treaties and instruments. The EU remains a strong supporter of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapon Convention (CWC), the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention (BTWC), the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (the Ottawa Convention) and the Convention on certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The EU is actively supporting the universalisation and implementation of these Treaties and Conventions by means of dedicated outreach projects. In 2019 alone, the EU committed 47 million EURO to this objective by means of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) Decisions adopted by the Council.

37. We welcomed ratification of the CTBT by Thailand in 2018. The EU promotes consistently the benefits and the contribution of the Treaty to peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation, including in its civil applications. In 2019, the EU was pleased to work with Malaysia on the NPT-related projects, in its capacity as Chair of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. This included the organisation by

UNODA with EU funding of a regional seminar in Bangkok on 3-4 December in preparation for the NPT Review Conference. The EU looks forward to continuing this cooperation in 2021 at the NPT Review Conference, when Malaysia will chair the Main Committee I on Nuclear Disarmament. The NPT Review Conference is also appropriately focusing attention (of both the non-proliferation and the broader security community) on the importance of nuclear security, as an end itself and as an enabler of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

38. The EU is a natural partner in the responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in line with the highest-safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. The EU has substantial experience in nuclear safety and is willing to share this expertise within the ARF framework. The EU promotes the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) and the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (ACPPNM) as fundamental elements of the global nuclear security and anti-terrorism architecture. The EU is aware that accession to and implementation of these instruments may require capacity building. The EU is ready to provide such capacity building assistance, including through the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

39. *The Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative* (the Initiative) is a flagship activity, implemented by the EU with the support of the UN and other international partners. The Initiative, which contributes to implementation of UNSCR 1540, now has 61 partner countries including all ASEAN member states. Employing an all-hazard approach, the Initiative has provided a useful platform, at the regional level, to assess threats, to enhance cooperation with international and regional organisations, and to build national capacity in the field of CBRN risk mitigation. Furthermore, in 2019 the implementation by UNODA of projects under Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/809 in support of the implementation of UNSCR 1540 (2004) continued.

40. National CBRN Action Plans (NAPs) for risk mitigation, are one of the main elements of the Initiative's methodology, and have proven to be useful coordination instruments at the country level and efficient tools to channel donor support in this field. Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines have now developed officially approved NAPs with the support of the Initiative. The total funding through the Initiative in South-East Asia has surpassed more than €26 million. Coordination on CBRN related issues with other key regional actors (i.e. the US, Canada, Australia, Japan) has also proved essential, and should continue. Like-minded coordination and sharing information helps avoid duplication and strengthens the position of the Initiative's network of 'national focal points'.

41. In March 2020, the South-East Asian Regional Secretariat for the CBRN CoE launched Project 81 *BIOSEC - Enhanced Biosecurity in South-East Asia*. The project aims at raising awareness on biosecurity and biosecurity risk management, working on legal issues and their enforcement, supporting partner countries in building/strengthening their inventories of high-risk biological materials, improving laboratory capacity for accurate identification of disease-causing agents and improving physical and information security.

42. The EU will maintain its policies aiming at strengthening the global disarmament architecture and multilateral non-proliferation regimes. This includes continued diplomatic efforts towards the goal of achieving a 'Zone Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East'. The EU is a global top assistance donor in addressing the threats posed by mines and explosive remnants of war. The threat from illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) will continue to be addressed through international cooperation and supported by the EU through projects in third countries. In 2019, the Council of the EU adopted a Decision in support of an Africa-China-Europe dialogue and cooperation in preventing the diversion of arms and ammunition in Africa. The EU will also support international efforts to enhance outer space security.

iii. Transnational Crime

Actions taken in adherence to ARF Statements, e.g.:

- **Information Sharing and Intelligence Exchange and Document Integrity and Security in Enhancing Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crimes**
 - Identify/discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation, regular or intermittent, institutionalized or ad hoc, with other ARF states in this regard.
- **Promoting Collaboration on the Prevention of Diversion of Precursors into Illicit Drug Manufacture**
 - Identify/discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation, regular or intermittent, institutionalized or ad hoc, with other ARF states in this regard.
- **Strengthening Transport Security Against International Terrorism**
 - Identify/discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation, regular or intermittent, institutionalized or ad hoc, with other ARF states in this regard.

43. More than one third of the organised crime groups active in the EU are involved in the production, trafficking or distribution of drugs. Drugs addiction led to over eight thousand overdose deaths in the EU in 2019. The bulk of drug trafficking operates across borders with many of the profits infiltrating the legal economy. A new 'EU Agenda on Drugs' will strengthen the efforts of the EU and Member States in the areas of drug demand and supply reduction, defining joint actions addressing a common problem and reinforcing the dialogue and cooperation between the EU and external partners on drug issues.

44. Criminal organisations treat migrants and people in need of international protection as a commodity. 90% of the irregular migrants arriving in the EU are facilitated by a criminal network. Migrant smuggling is also often intertwined with other forms of organised crime, in particular trafficking in human beings. Apart from the huge human cost of trafficking, Europol estimates that

globally the generated annual profit for all forms of exploitation from human trafficking amounts to €29.4 billion. This is a transnational crime feeding on illegal demands from within and outside the EU and impacting us all. The poor record in identifying, prosecuting and convicting these crimes requires a new approach to step up action. A new comprehensive approach to trafficking in human beings will draw together the threads of action. In addition, the European Commission will present a new EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling for 2021-2025. Both strands will focus on combatting criminal networks, boosting cooperation and support the work of law enforcement.

45. Organised crime groups – as well as terrorists – also seek opportunities in other fields, especially those generating high profits at a low detection risk, such as environmental crime. Illicit hunting and trading of wildlife, illegal mining, logging, and illegal waste disposal and shipments, have become the fourth largest criminal business around the world. Trafficking in cultural goods has also become one of the most lucrative criminal activities, a source of funding for terrorists as well as organised crime and it is on the rise. In its July 2020 policy paper on the EU Security Union Strategy, the European Commission suggested steps be explored to improve the online and offline traceability of cultural goods and cooperation with third countries where cultural goods are looted.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Actions taken in adherence to ARF Statement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Assistance, etc.

- Identify/discuss actions and measures each country has taken, is taking, and/or will be taking, at the national, bilateral and/or multilateral levels, in fulfilment of commitment in this regard.

46. Cooperation, by ASEAN Member States, on disaster management makes a positive contribution to the strategic aims of ASEAN, to sustainable development and to the broader regional integration process. However, the EU stands ready to provide humanitarian assistance to ASEAN when disasters strike and national or regional response capacities are overwhelmed. The EU disaster preparedness strategy for South-East Asia incorporates both natural hazards, and social and economic vulnerability created by conflict or structural poverty. Our strategy pursues a broad-based approach to risk mitigation, which takes into account man-made vulnerabilities and ensuring conflict-sensitive actions. The EU's strategy involves testing and developing models for risk, forecast-based early actions (including scientific predictions), as well as identifying new ways to respond earlier and differently to risks.

47. Bearing in mind the relative predictability of shocks in a number of countries in the ASEAN region, and the existence of services and social protection systems in those states, the EU's strategy also aims to embed humanitarian response into existing local systems and to develop their ability to scale-up to accommodate new needs. Humanitarian principles and the needs of affected populations must be at the core of EU-ASEAN cooperation on disaster preparedness and emergency response strategy. Risk-informed investment, the inclusion of community knowledge and local solutions in

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) planning, public-private partnerships, and identifying innovative solutions are also essential.

48. In 2019, the EU's, humanitarian aid operations in the ASEAN region focused chiefly on the Rohingya crisis (in Myanmar and also Bangladesh), as well as on the consequences of conflict in Mindanao (Philippines), while maintaining the potential to also respond to new disasters in the region as they emerged.

49. The EU, through the European Commission's 'European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations Department' (ECHO), has been active in **Myanmar** since 1994. ECHO has funded emergency relief programmes that assist victims of both conflict and natural disasters, with total funding in excess of €253 million. In 2019, the EU initially allocated €9 million in humanitarian aid to address the immediate needs of displaced and conflict-affected communities in Myanmar. In December 2019, a further €10 million was allocated to address the crucial needs of the Rohingya people and host communities in both Myanmar and Bangladesh. In Rakhine state, particularly in the northern townships, the EU works with trusted humanitarian partners to address protection, food, nutrition, water and sanitation, and health needs. The EU also provides humanitarian aid to people affected or displaced by conflict in Kachin and northern Shan states. In addition to providing food, healthcare, water and sanitation support to people living in camps, the EU has also contributed to raising awareness of landmines, protection, and supports 'education in emergencies' programming to assist to conflict-affected children to resume their education in safe spaces. (Since 2013, the €4.65 million has been provided for emergency education, including €2 million in 2019 alone.)

50. The EU is also a major humanitarian donor to **Bangladesh**. In 2019, two years passed since the massive influx of approximately 750,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar to Bangladesh. The EU and its Member States were the second biggest contributors to the UN Joint Response Plan in 2019, providing humanitarian and development support to the Rohingya and the host communities in Bangladesh. The EU worked to keep the crisis on the international agenda, including at the UN (42nd session of the Human Rights Council, 74th UNGA). In 2019, the EU provided close to €35 million in humanitarian aid for vulnerable Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshis in Cox's Bazar and other parts of the country. This includes €29 million for humanitarian food assistance, nutritional support, clean water and sanitation facilities, access to healthcare services, as well as increased protection for the most vulnerable groups. Another €5 million is helping to scare-up preparedness for natural hazards in Bangladesh, especially during the rainy season, which could trigger floods, landslides, cyclones and tidal surges in what is currently the most densely populated refugee camp in the world. EU funding is also strengthening preparedness for future earthquakes in urban areas, particularly in Dhaka, as well as early action in flood prone areas of Bangladesh. In response to the devastating flooding caused by a monsoon rains that hit Bangladesh in July 2019, a further €800,000 was allocated.

51. In the **Philippines**, the EU (through ECHO) provided €0.9 million worth of humanitarian response to the current COVID-19 pandemic situation. This has been used to provide cash and food assistance and hygiene kits to poor families whose livelihoods have stopped since the start of the

lockdown. The assistance also includes provision of hand washing facilities, temporary hospital spaces, PPEs to front liners, and risk awareness raising. In January 2020, the EU released €0.75 million in response to the Taal volcano eruption to provide shelter, access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation infrastructure, child protection and psychological support to effected communities. This is in addition to the €2.51 million released in early 2020, €1.51 of which is to continue the humanitarian response in the conflict-affected areas in Mindanao and €1.0 million is for disaster preparedness.

52. In 2019, the EU provided €6.7 million in financial assistance for the country's most vulnerable populations. Of the 2019 amount, €1 million contributed to DRR and resilience building initiatives and to strengthening public authorities' existing platforms and social safety nets. The remaining €5.7 million was devoted to humanitarian aid for both the victims of the Mindanao conflict and those affected by natural hazards. This includes food and nutrition assistance, health care, water and sanitation facilities as well as access to safe, equitable and quality education.

53. In response to Typhoon Kammuri (December 2019), the EU provided €1 million of essential aid to those in greatest need. The EU also released €1.3 million in emergency aid after an earthquake swarm in the Mindanao region (October 2019). In this instance, EU funds assisted the most affected families in the hardest hit provinces of Davao del Sur and Cotabato. In both cases, EU funding primarily provided emergency shelter, food, clean water, psychosocial support and other forms of crucial assistance to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including households led by women, people with disabilities and indigenous populations.

54. In 2019, the EU (through ECHO) also supported DRR efforts in Bangladesh, Philippines, Nepal and across South-East Asia. The EU systematically mainstreams disaster preparedness into its humanitarian assistance, as appropriate in each context. ECHO's *Disaster Preparedness Strategy* contributes to the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, and to the priorities established by the *ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)* and its work programmes for 2016-2020.

55. ECHO support in South-East Asia aims to improve regional systems and capacities, ensure these are responsive and inclusive to community priorities, and fills gaps when local systems are overwhelmed. ECHO has been working on Disaster Preparedness (DP)/DRR in ASEAN countries since 1995, under the banner of its Disaster Preparedness Programme 'DIPECHO'. DIPECHO targets vulnerable people living in the main disaster-prone regions of the world. Its objective is to reduce the impact of natural disasters by strengthening local physical and human resources in high-risk areas. The first DIPECHO action plan launched in 1998. Since then, the EU has invested almost €81 million DP/DRR in this region. The EU provides financial support for the *Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre)* and for ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms.

56. The coronavirus pandemic has created a humanitarian crisis of unprecedented proportions, but the EU has been at the forefront providing humanitarian assistance in response. On this, as with all other humanitarian issues, the EU works in full solidarity with effected countries. The EU was

quick to respond at the outset of the coronavirus outbreak in China. The European Commission acted swiftly and in cooperation with China, coordinating and co-financing the delivery of emergency medical supplies through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. Over 56 tonnes of personal protective equipment (protective clothing, disinfectant and medical masks) were delivered to China, provided by France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Estonia, Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia. China has since reciprocated on this support, by delivering critical medical equipment to the hardest-hit EU Member States. On 6 April 2020, a donation of protective equipment from China to the European Union arrived in Rome, following an agreement reached by President von der Leyen and Premier Li Keqiang. The distribution of 2 million surgical masks, 200,000 N95 masks and 50,000 testing kits delivered to Italy was coordinated by the EU's Emergency Response Coordination Centre.

v. Maritime Security

Actions taken in adherence to ARF Statement on Cooperation Against Piracy and Other Threats to Maritime Security, e.g.

- Identify/discuss all actions and measures each country has taken, is taking, and/or will be taking in fulfilment of commitment.

57. The EU is strongly committed to a rules-based international maritime order and to the principles of international law as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The EU is committed to maritime security cooperation, freedom of navigation and overflight, and the peaceful and sustainable use of the seas in the interest of all states.

58. The EU is an active promoter of maritime security and safety, globally and in Asia. EU maritime security policy has increasingly gained a momentum since June 2017, when the European Council adopted its 'Council Conclusions on Global Maritime Security'. Our progress was again boosted through revision of the EU's *Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan* in June 2018, which increased our focus on civil military cooperation, information sharing and addressing global challenges to EU sea basins and all oceans through regional responses. In line with the EUGS, the revised *Maritime Security Strategy Action Plan* reaffirmed the role of the EU as a global maritime security provider. The EU is using this momentum to enhance regional approaches to key maritime issues – including through the ARF's ISM on Maritime Security (which the EU co-chairs with Australia and Vietnam).

59. At the international level, and in particular through the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the EU and its Member States are willing to intensify their cooperation with ASEAN countries to enhance maritime security and safety issues. The EU is willing work towards adoption of new common rules in many important areas such as: the deployment of armed guards on-board vessels transiting high-risk areas to deter piracy; counter-terrorism; or other politically and economically sensitive issues such as illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

60. Piracy attacks have significantly decreased over recent years, although challenges remain. The EU is proud of the contribution it has made to increasing maritime safety, particularly through its CSDP mission Operation ATALANTA. This mission – in combination with the wider international

response, implementation of best practices (designed in international platforms such as CGPCS) by commercial ships, and the provision of private armed guards on-board ships – has made a considerable contribution to reducing the number of attacks at sea in the Western-Indian Ocean region. Yet, the number of piracy incidents remains a subject of international concern.

4. Role of ARF

a. National contributions to enhancing the ARF and regional security

- Identify/discuss efforts aimed at strengthening ARF capabilities in regional security management.

b. Future of ARF

- Identify/discuss views about future challenges and prospects for the ARF, and your contributions to improving the ARF's ability to manage those and progress towards its express objectives in preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution.

61. The EU's contribution to the ARF is a tangible demonstration of its willingness to support ASEAN-led security architecture in South-East Asia. It is also evidence of the EU's commitment to regional peace and stability, and to the development of a more robust, rules-based regional security order.

62. The ARF continues to be the most comprehensive multilateral security forum in the ASEAN region. The ARF offers a valuable platform for partners to engage on a broad range of issues. Building on the ARF's comprehensive approach to security issues, the EU has engaged actively with ARF partners at various levels and on a range of critical issues.

63. In line with *ARF Ministerial Guidance*, the EU is keen to make the ARF more "action oriented". The EU acknowledges the importance of strengthening the organisational and institutional structures of the ARF, including the ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat. The EU respects and promotes the central role of ASEAN in the emerging regional architecture and believes in the need to ensure transparency and synergy between ARF and other regional fora such as the ADDM+ and the East Asia Summit.

INDIA

1. Overview of Regional Security Environment

1. Global and regional security environment remains complex, posing challenges to international peace and security. In some regions of the world, security situation deteriorated, leading to apprehensions of escalation beyond the regional theatres. The role of State and non-State actors in compounding inter-state conflicts and adding to the complexity of regional security environment remains a huge challenge. In addition, challenges posed by the new and emerging technologies continue to impact regional as well as global security environment.

2. The Indo-Pacific region confronts numerous traditional and non-traditional security threats. India has strengthened its cooperative engagements in the Indo-Pacific based on converging vision and values for promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the region. India's Act East Policy (AEP) remains a cornerstone of its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.

3. The concepts of "vasudhaiva kutumbakam" – 'the whole world is one family' and "sarve bhavantu sukhinah" – 'all be at peace' are at the core of our civilization. The principles underlining these concepts, inclusivity, equality and openness guide India's Indo-Pacific vision. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, delivered a keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in 2018 during which he articulated India's vision for the Indo-Pacific region, which is pursuit of "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR) in an inclusive Indo-Pacific framework.

4. India calls for a free, open and inclusive order in the Indo-Pacific, based upon respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and adherence to international rules and laws. India supports freedom of navigation and over flight, for all in the international waters. Premised upon the centrality of ASEAN, India supports utilisation of ASEAN-led mechanisms as primary platforms for implementation of our shared vision for the Indo-Pacific. A common rules-based order for the region must equally apply to all countries as well as to the global commons. India's approach is based on cooperation and collaboration, given the need for shared responses to shared challenges in the region. India's concept of Indo-Pacific, recognises diversity of interests of the countries in the region as well as other countries with stakes in the region.

5. Maritime threats and the challenges faced at sea is another area of security concern to us. Oceans hold the key to peace and prosperity of Indo-Pacific region in a fast evolving global order. The South China Sea is an important international waterway, with over US\$ 5 trillion of world trade, and over 30% of international supplies of crude oil transiting through these waters. The Sea Lanes of Communications passing through the South China Sea are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indo-Pacific region. It is natural for the international community to have vital stakes in ensuring freedom of navigation and over flight, and unimpeded commerce in

these international waterways. We support the constructive role of the international community for achieving this objective. This commitment was also reflected in the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. We hope that all parties to that Declaration would strictly abide by it, in letter and spirit, and will not take any actions that would jeopardize peace and security in this region. Given the interests of the wider membership of this Group, India hopes that the Code of Conduct negotiations between ASEAN member states and China leads to an outcome that is in keeping with all relevant international laws, including UNCLOS, supporting our common objective of promoting freedom of navigation, over flight and lawful commerce in the South China Sea. We also hope that it does not prejudice the legitimate rights and interests of all nations according to international law.

6. In consonance with its policy of "neighbourhood first", India has continued to accord a high priority to its relations with countries in our immediate and extended neighbourhood. India has been actively engaged with countries in the region, including expanding defence and security cooperation with these countries and a credible partner in growth and development of the region as a whole.

7. Terrorism and radicalisation are the gravest threats to peace and security that the world is facing today. The challenge of terrorism has affected development and economic prosperity of Indo-Pacific region. Terrorism has grown more lethal and has expanded its reach. India shares global concerns about terrorism and believes that, in an era when networking amongst terrorists is reaching alarming proportions, only through collective cooperation can the terror organizations and their networks be fully disrupted, the perpetrators identified and held accountable, and strong measures be undertaken against those who encourage, support and finance terrorism and provide sanctuary to terrorists. India has reiterated, at various bilateral and multilateral platforms, its resolve to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

8. As a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), India is committed to combating financing of terrorism and proliferation. India strongly condemns direct or indirect financial assistance given to terrorist groups or individual members thereof, by States or their machineries, to pursue their activities, including in defending the criminal cases involving terrorist acts against them.

9. The global concerns regarding proliferation of weapons of mass destructions (WMDs) and their delivery systems continue to pose serious threats to international security. The use of WMD by terrorists will remain a potent threat as long as there are terrorists seeking access to WMD materials and technologies and using them for causing death and destruction on a massive scale. India has contributed to the implementation of UNSCR 1540 and continues to engage with the Nuclear Security Contact Group.

10. The situation in the Korean peninsula has been a cause of global and regional concern. India has been consistently supportive of efforts to bring about peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and diplomacy. India has welcomed the inter-Korean Summits and the Summit engagements between the US and DPRK. India supports such engagements and hopes

that these would help in reducing tensions and pave the way for lasting peace and reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula. India believes that any solution to the issue of the Korean Peninsula must take into account and address concerns about the proliferation linkages of DPRK's nuclear and missile programmes with India's neighbourhood.

11. The Iranian nuclear issue has been a factor that affects the regional security environment. India has maintained that Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved peacefully through dialogue and diplomacy by respecting Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as also the international community's strong interest in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. India believes that all parties should engage constructively to address and resolve issues that have arisen with respect to implementation of the JCPOA.

12. The world has witnessed disruption, economic as well as social, on an unprecedented scale due to COVID-19. It is the single greatest shock to the international system since World War II. The disruptive effect of the COVID-19 is still unfolding. It is believed that the world is on the verge of the largest economic downturn since the Great Depression. The challenge is therefore to make sure that the world economy moves on the path of recovery and when it gathers steam, to ensure that the recovery leaves no one behind. India reiterates its faith in the principle of effective multilateralism and collective endeavours.

13. In the light of the potential impact and scale of the pandemic, India took the lead to organize a meeting of Leaders of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and participated in several international meetings such as the G-20 Summit, NAM Contact Group Summit Meeting on COVID-19, and the virtual Global Vaccine Summit. India maintained regular contact and consultation with other countries to share experiences, preparedness and resilience to the pandemic. India facilitated the return of foreign nationals stranded amid the pandemic to return to their home countries. The Vande Bharat Mission, India's largest and most complex evacuation, has so far brought back over 900 thousand stranded Indians in over 2,000 Vande Bharat Mission flights; in addition to flights, repatriation of stranded Indians has also been arranged through naval ships. About 90,000 stranded Indians returned through the land border check posts. As a major producer of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, India has provided supplies to over 150 partner countries, proving our credentials as the 'pharmacy of the world' and has offered India's medical expertise to others. India pledged USD 15 million as India's contribution to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations and another USD 10 million for SAARC emergency fund for COVID-19.

14. New challenges such as Cyber threats loom large as demonstrated by incidents of ransomware, Wannacry attacks and crypto currency thefts. Being cross-cutting and trans-boundary in nature, they affect countries across regions and require credible cooperative measures to address this challenge.

15. Another major cross-cutting issue is that of climate change which poses an existential challenge to biological life on earth. India has played a pioneering role in addressing climate change and global warming issues at the national, regional and global levels.

16. India has an abiding interest in the Indo-Pacific and its engagements with partners and institutions in the region have deepened and expanded substantially in recent years. The year 2019 witnessed intensification of India's engagement with various Indo-Pacific frameworks including, inter alia, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), East Asia Summit (EAS), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC). India also agreed to join the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) as a Development Partner in July 2019. India has become an Observer at Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) in March 2020.

17. India is also a part of various other multilateral institutions, which deal with maritime security issues in the region including ADMM Plus, Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ship in Asia (ReCAAP) and Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF).

18. India's engagement with the South East Asian region, of which Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been its primary component, is based on its 'Act-East' Policy (AEP), announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November 2014 in Myanmar. Key elements of AEP are to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties and develop strategic relationships with countries in Indo-Pacific region through continuous engagement at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. India shares a deep connect with ASEAN and continued its active engagement in many areas contributing to regional peace and stability, particularly through ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as EAS, ARF, and ADMM-Plus. The India-ASEAN strategic partnership has been strengthened by virtue of flourishing cultural and civilizational links and enhanced people-to-people cooperation. India continues to attach importance to ASEAN centrality and unity in ensuring peace and stability in the region.

19. Prime Minister led Indian delegation attended the 16th ASEAN-India Summit in Bangkok on 3 November 2019. Earlier in July 2019, 1000 PhD scholarship were announced by India for ASEAN students. The 21st ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting was held on 12 April 2019 in New Delhi where Senior Officials from all ten ASEAN countries and India reviewed progress on various activities under the ASEAN-India Cooperation Framework.

20. There has been substantial progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and Shared Prosperity (2016-2020). In addition, work is underway for developing a new Plan of Action (2021-2025) that will help further strengthen the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership in the next five years. In this regard, due focus is being accorded to activities that would enhance India ASEAN connectivity, support ASEAN community building objectives and expand cooperation in maritime domain. India has reiterated its support to ASEAN's Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC)-2025, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III and agriculture development strategy.

21. Blue Economy is increasingly seen as a driver of inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development in the Indo-Pacific region. It is identified as a new pillar of economic activity in the coastal areas and linked hinterlands through sustainable tapping of oceanic resources. The

3rd ASEAN-India Workshop on Blue Economy was organized in Bangkok on 12 September 2019; experts from India and ASEAN Member States discussed developments in blue economy, sustainable harnessing of marine resources, maritime connectivity and maritime safety.

22. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on 04 November 2019, launched the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) at the East Asia Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand. As an open global initiative, the IPOI draws on the existing regional cooperation architecture and mechanisms to focus on central pillars conceived around Maritime Security; Maritime Ecology; Maritime Resources; Capacity Building and Resource Sharing; Disaster Risk Reduction and Management; Science, Technology and Academic Cooperation; and Trade Connectivity and Maritime Transport.

23. India's cooperation with East Asia Summit (EAS) has continued to grow. The 14th East Asia Summit was held in Bangkok on 4 November 2019; Indian delegation was led by Prime Minister. On February 6-7, 2020, India, in partnership with Australia and Indonesia, hosted the 4th East Asia Summit (EAS) Maritime Security Cooperation Conference in Chennai. The Conference focused on maritime security, maritime safety and Blue Economy among other topics, and brought together 18 participating countries of the EAS to deliberate on them.

24. India has continued to take steps towards strengthening regional cooperation under Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) in the area of counter-terrorism and transnational crime. India leads the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime under the BIMSTEC framework. The presence of BIMSTEC Leaders at the swearing-in ceremony of the Government in May 2019 reinforced the cooperative approach in and growing stature of BIMSTEC in the region. Third Meeting of the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs was held in Bangkok on 20-22 March 2019. Six National Security Officers of BIMSTEC Countries were trained in India on Cyber terrorism, Counter Terrorism, Cyber Security and countering transnational crimes. Meetings, including Track 1.5 meetings, were held on issues ranging from countering radicalisation and terrorism to regional security.

25. India considers Indian Ocean Regional Association (IORA) as a primary regional organisation for promoting cooperation and ensuring stability in the Indian Ocean region. India has been supportive of further invigoration of IORA activities, across a wide spectrum, ranging from renewable energy and Blue Economy to maritime safety and security. At the 19th Meeting of IORA Council of Ministers on 7 November, 2019, India launched the first edition of IORA HADR Guidelines Booklet. A contribution of USD 1 million was made by India to the IORA Special Fund.

26. Delhi Dialogue is an annual Track 1.5 forum for discussing politico-security, economic and socio-cultural issues between ASEAN and India. The 11th edition of Delhi Dialogue (DD XI) was organized consecutively with 6th Edition of Indian Ocean Dialogue on 13 and 14 December 2019. For the first time, these two Track 1.5 Dialogues - which are key elements of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the India-ASEAN calendars respectively - were held consecutively, and on similar Indo-Pacific themes. Emerging architecture in the Indo-Pacific construct and maritime connectivity were key themes of discussions at both events.

27. Conceived and organized by India, the inaugural Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) was held in February 2008. It offers a broad-based platform for developing operational synergies with the Navies in the region. IONS, presently has a participation from 24 member and 8 observer countries. In terms of the membership, it includes many members of IORA, APEC, ASEAN, GCC, SADC, SAARC, Arab League and WPNS. India has been proactively participating in all IONS related activities where all the lead maritime security agencies come together for seminars, workshops, table-tops and exercises along with the conclaves at the Apex level. India is a member of all three IONS Working Groups. The significance of IONS has been growing in the context of Indo-Pacific. France is taking over the Chair (2020-2022) of IONS this year from Iran.

28. India's relationship with Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) continued to grow based on India's longstanding cultural linkages as well as its vibrant modern day relations with the SCO Members. India actively took part in various SCO dialogue mechanisms. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, represented India at the meeting of Council of SCO Heads of States on 14 June 2019 in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan). Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, represented India at the 18th meeting of Council of SCO Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) held on 2 November 2019 in Tashkent (Uzbekistan). Minister of Home Affairs Amit Shah, chaired the 10th meeting of SCO Ministers dealing with the Prevention and Liquidation of Emergency Situations on 8 November 2019 in New Delhi.

2. National Contributions to Regional Security

i. Counterterrorism

29. India condemns in the strongest possible terms, heinous terrorist attacks in various parts of the world as it considers these to be attacks against entire humanity and a challenge for all established civilized institutions and entities. India strongly recommends addressing the menace of global terrorism based on a comprehensive approach which should include, but not be limited to, countering violent extremism, countering radicalisation and recruitment, disrupting terrorist movements, stopping all sources for financing of terrorism, stopping flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), dismantling terrorist infrastructure, and countering use of internet for terrorism purposes, including propoganda, recruitment, and raising finances.

30. India's resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction", which was first introduced in 2002, was again adopted in 2019 by consensus by the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The Resolution, which was co-sponsored by 90 countries, calls upon UN Member States to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and to support international efforts in this regard.

31. Countering terrorism requires a strong collective action by the global community. There is a need for increasing the effectiveness of UNSCR 1267. A strong legal framework also needs to be established in order to address this problem. In this context, nations must urgently consider

expediting finalization of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) under the UN umbrella mooted by India as early as 1996.

32. India is committed to combating terrorism in all forms and manifestations and to ensure that the perpetrators of terrorist acts, their masterminds and conspirators are brought to justice. The problem of terrorism in India is largely sponsored from across the border by providing the terrorists safe havens, material support, finance and other logistics to carry out terrorist attacks in India.

33. In its efforts to combat terrorism at the international level, India has been supportive of all ways and means, thereby playing a leading role in shaping international opinion and urging the international community to prioritize the fight against terror. India has consistently taken steps to intensify and strengthen international co-operation through a variety of means, including setting up of Joint Working Groups (JWGs) on counter-terrorism/ security matters with key countries to facilitate information exchange, cooperation on administrative and judicial matters and streamlining action against perpetrators. Similarly, bilateral initiatives on Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) in criminal matters to facilitate investigation, collection of evidence, transfer of witnesses, location and action against proceeds of crime etc. are also in place with key countries. Further, extradition treaties to facilitate transfer of fugitive offenders and suspected terrorists have also been signed. In addition to the above, cooperation on matters relating to terrorism is also effected through the mechanism of Interpol, of which India has been a member since 1946.

34. India is fully compliant with UNSCRs 2178, 1373 and 1624. India is a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an inter governmental organization which develops and promotes policies to protect the global financial system against money laundering, terrorist financing and the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. India's 'Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act' criminalized all aspects of FTF phenomenon as outlined in UNSCR 2178. In order to prevent radicalization, recruitment and facilitation of FTFs, the Government of India reviewed the security situation in the wake of Mumbai Terror Attack (26/11) and enacted measures to strengthen capabilities of law enforcement such as investigation, prosecution and immigration in concert with the intelligence agencies, to avoid recurrence of such incidents.

35. India, during its UNSC membership in 2021-22, seeks to prioritise responsible and inclusive solutions, concrete and result oriented action at the UNSC for an effective response to international terrorism, reformed multilateralism to reflect contemporary realities, a comprehensive approach to peace and security, and also hopes to help streamline UN peacekeeping, and technology with human touch.

ii. Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

36. The twin goals of containing proliferation and advancing a global agenda on disarmament continued to be accorded high priority by India. India has an unwavering commitment to global efforts for preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. As an original signatory to Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention

(BWC), India has been actively supporting institutional strengthening of these Conventions, including through their effective implementation.

37. India has participated actively in the ARF ISMs on Non Proliferation and Disarmament and related workshops and seminars. It has also participated in the meetings and conferences related to Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. India has a robust system of export controls and is a member of Missile Technology Control Regime, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group. It also subscribes to the Hague Code of Conduct.

38. India's nuclear doctrine is based on the principle of no-first-use of nuclear weapons and non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. India believes that nuclear disarmament can be achieved in a step by step manner endorsed by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory as outlined in India's Working Paper on Nuclear Disarmament to Conference on Disarmament (CD) in 2007. All states possessing nuclear weapons need to make a contribution by engaging in a meaningful dialogue to build trust and confidence which would reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. This is reflected in India's resolution on "Reducing Nuclear Danger", which is adopted annually by the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. Progressive steps, such as supporting multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, in all its aspects, are needed for complete elimination of nuclear weapons. This is emphasised in India's resolution on "Convention on the Prohibition of Use of Nuclear Weapons", which is adopted annually by the First Committee of the UNGA.

39. India's UNGA resolution on the "Role of Science and Technology in the context of International Security and Disarmament" encourages Member States to organize events such as conferences, seminars, workshops and exhibitions, at the national, regional and international levels. In line with decision in the Resolution, India together with Germany, Switzerland and Qatar supported the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), Geneva, to organise the first annual "Innovations Dialogue" by UNIDIR, on 19 August 2019. The theme of Innovations Dialogue was "Digital Technologies & International Security".

40. India attaches importance to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. It supports the commencement of FMCT negotiations in the CD as part of its Programme of Work in accordance with the Shannon Mandate. India has extended its support to various initiatives as well as reaching consensus on the CD's Programme of Work.

41. India also places great value on the role played by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in facilitating expansion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy to meet global energy needs in a clean and sustainable manner. All States have a right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with their obligations.

42. The global concerns regarding nuclear terrorism and clandestine proliferation, which continue to pose serious threats to international security, are shared by India. Nuclear terrorism

will remain a potent threat as long as there are terrorists seeking to gain access to nuclear material and technologies for malicious purposes. In this regard, India had contributed actively to the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process and continues to engage with partners in the Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSCG). In consonance with the security requirements perceived by India, the nuclear security architecture in the country has been fortified. India has also participated in various endeavours aimed at strengthening security architecture at the global level. India hosted the 2017 Implementation and Assessment Group Meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GCINT) in February 2017 in New Delhi.

43. India believes that the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 is a very important instrument to ensure that non-state actors do not gain access to nuclear material and technologies. Industry is an important stakeholder and partner in combating the proliferation of WMD. To help strengthen the architecture for export controls, India, in collaboration with the Government of Germany and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) hosted the India-Wiesbaden Conference 2018 on 16-17 April 2018, in New Delhi.

44. As part of India's commitment to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, and in order to equip the young diplomats with the necessary knowledge and skills, Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs, has been organising the Annual Disarmament and International Security Affairs Fellowship for training foreign diplomats. India's initiative fulfils the mandate of UNGA Resolution 71/57 "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education" and is in line with the focus on 'Disarmament Education' in UNSG's Disarmament Agenda 'to Secure our World and our Future'. The second Edition of the Disarmament Fellowship Programme was held on 13-31 January 2020 in New Delhi.

iii. Transnational Crime

45. With the advancement of technology, international terrorism, organized crime and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs have assumed transnational and global dimensions with wide ranging ramifications for the peace, security and stability of the country. The scale and complexity of these emerging threats make partnerships vital.

46. India has signed 41 Bilateral Agreements/ Memoranda of Understanding on Security, Drugs and Other relevant issues and Treaties/ Agreements on Mutual Legal Assistance in criminal matters are in force with 39 countries.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and Search & Rescue (SAR)

47. India's HADR and SAR efforts in the Indian Ocean have seen an enhancement in capability over the years. Building on its 2004 tsunami relief experience, India has since undertaken a wide range of HADR operations. Deployment of Indian Naval ships for major non-combatant evacuation operations in Libya, Iraq, Syria and Yemen have benefitted not just Indian citizens but nationals of several countries in the region and beyond. From bringing drinking water to Maldives in the wake of a major water crisis, to providing relief supplies by air to Fiji and Sri Lanka, India has been one of the

first to respond in times of distress in the immediate as well as extended neighbourhood of India. As the "first responder" to calls of assistance, India provided relief supplies and medical assistance to flood and cyclone victims of various friendly countries in the IOR.

48. India's notable HADR missions in the IOR since May 2014 include - 2015: Operation Rahat, Yemen; 2016: Cyclone Roanu (primarily Sri Lanka); 2017: Flood relief, Sri Lanka; 2017: Cyclone Mora (across countries); 2017: Rohingya crisis, Bangladesh; 2018: Earthquake, Indonesia; 2018-19: Cyclone Idai, Mozambique; January 2020: Cyclone Diane, Madagascar; and May 2020: Medical support, medicines and food items during COVID 19 crisis - Mission 'SAGAR' to Maldives, Mauritius, Madagascar, Comoros and Seychelles. India invited the disaster management experts from both IORA and ASEAN member states at its annual HADR exercise held in July 2019 in Chennai (Eight countries i.e, Australia, Kenya, Bangladesh, Seychelles, Somalia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Nepal & ASEAN Secretariat took part as Observers).

49. India is a founding member of Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM), a forum of 21 countries and ReCAAP-ISC as an associate member. The main objective of the forum, which was established in 2004, is to enhance capacity building through collaboration in the areas of Maritime Search & Rescue, Marine Pollution Response and Maritime Law Enforcement. India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the coast guards of seven Indo-Pacific countries for cooperation on relevant maritime issues including Maritime Search & Rescue and institutionalized high-level meetings and joint exercises are undertaken with these agencies.

50. Since 2003, India has also been conducting a biennial Search and Rescue Exercise to check maritime SAR preparedness towards maritime contingencies through simulation of real time scenario. The 9th exercise was conducted at Goa from 05-06 March 2020 with the theme 'HAMSAR: Harmonisation of Aeronautical and Maritime SAR Services'. 24 Observers from 19 Indo-Pacific countries participated in the exercise. From 2018 to mid 2020, over 1100 lives were saved with about 80 medical evacuations from sea.

51. India along with Myanmar, as co-chairs of the ADMM Plus Experts' Working Group on Military Medicine for the period 2017-2020, has undertaken various activities. The three important initiatives, organisation of ASEAN Military Medicine Conference, the conduct of standalone Field Training Exercise on medical operations in the event of an earthquake in densely populated region in March 2019 and publication of the ASEAN Handbook on Military Medicine are tangible outcomes of the India's Co-chairmanship of Military Medicine EWG.

52. India launched a new initiative to promote international cooperation in disaster relief, the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). It is a coalition of countries to promote and support capacity in handling post disaster infrastructure development. The founding members of CDRI are Australia, Bhutan, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka and the UK. India and the UK are the current co-Chairs of the Governing Council of CDRI. The CDRI aims to help countries affected by natural disaster in seeking requisite assistance from donor countries in a speedy and seamless manner.

v. Maritime Security

53. Maritime security is an issue of significant relevance to the growing economies of Indo-Pacific Region as economic growth of the region remains critically dependent on oceanic connectivity and stable maritime environment. Maritime security can be enhanced by transparency, dialogue and cooperation to augment confidence for coordinated response to non-traditional maritime security threats. Peaceful settlement of territorial and maritime disputes, while respecting sovereignty and the primacy of bilateral negotiations, should be a key guiding principle.

54. Maritime domain is the lifeline of the global economy, handling approximately 90% of the world's trade. The maritime security environment is evolving at a very fast pace. Recent developments have underlined numerous challenges in the maritime domain, such as maritime disputes, piracy, terrorism, illegal fishing, pollution, organised crime including drug trafficking and natural disasters, which pose a risk to global maritime security and safety.

55. India has witnessed continued two-way movement of goods and people throughout history. It is a region of high importance for India's economic and security interests. Our Prime Minister had articulated, at the Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore in June 2018, our vision for a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific that stands on the principles of respect for equality, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations, peaceful resolution of disputes, avoidance of use or threat of use of force and adherence to international laws, rules and regulations. Simply put, SAGAR or 'Security And Growth for All in the Region' is the key objective of our Indo-Pacific vision. Our Indo-Pacific vision may have points of convergence with that of other countries. Maritime Security is one of the seven pillars of India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) announced by the Prime Minister at the 14th East Asia Summit on November 04, 2019 at Bangkok.

56. India sees significant scope for collaboration in areas of maritime safety and security, Blue Economy, preservation of marine environment, and in building resilience to face natural disasters. In this context, India would like to develop the Indo-Pacific Ocean Initiative (IPOI) with all interested partners. Maritime security is an important dimension of India's bilateral relations with all Indian Ocean Littoral states as well as regional bodies that are either based in or border the Indian Ocean region - ranging from IORA, IONS, ARF, ADMM Plus, EAS, Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Head of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meetings (HACGAM), and the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP).

57. The Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) was established in response to UNSC resolution 1851 (2008) and 1918 (2010). India is one of the 60 countries and international organisations that is a part of the forum. India has participated in the Gulf of Aden Patrol since October 2008 and has maintained a ship in the region continuously. As an active participant, India attended the 22nd CGPCS Plenary meeting in Mauritius in June 2019 and has been contributing to the collective efforts in minimising the incidents of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia.

58. India has continuously deployed ships in the Gulf of Aden and Western Indian Ocean since 2008 for maritime security including anti-piracy along with ships from multinational task forces of NATO, EU, CTF (US led). These ships, in addition to their contribution to maritime security of the region, have also safely escorted ships of World Food Program, as and when requested.

59. India has been involved in capacity building, capability development and training of the maritime forces in the region. Defence Line of Credit (LOC) have been provided to various countries. India has provided patrol aircraft and helicopters, patrol vessels and boats to a number of IOR countries for surveillance of their vast EEZ. Training related to maritime security has been imparted to personnel from various countries from the IOR as well as ASEAN under various programmes and workshops. Mobile Training Teams were additionally deployed in various countries for enhancing their maritime security capacities. Hydrographic assistance has been another area of cooperation where India has provided training and support to various IOR countries.

60. A number of initiatives spearheaded by India have contributed to strengthening maritime cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. India is contributing to regional maritime security by ensuring safety and security of maritime traffic by helping its maritime neighbours in developing their capacity in shared Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). In this regard, India has also signed White Shipping Agreements with a number of countries, provided capacity building assistance and ensured capability enhancement by imparting MDA related training.

61. India launched the Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at Gurugram, India in December 2018. The IFC-IOR is a major regional initiative to put in place, a mechanism for Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and to ensure situational awareness of the maritime activities in the region. This Centre establishes linkages with national agencies and multinational constructs relevant to maritime safety and security. It collates, analyzes and disseminates information related to maritime safety and HADR requirements at Sea.

62. To facilitate sharing of best practices in maritime information sharing and better understanding of maritime security challenges, the Indian Navy hosted a Maritime Information sharing Workshop (MISW) from 12-13 June 2019 which saw the participation of 50 delegates from 30 Indo-Pacific countries and included interactive sessions with Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) from participating countries on issues such as maritime piracy, drug trafficking, illegal fishing, maritime governance, etc.

vi. Cyber Issues

63. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Cyber domain including Internet has emerged as an important catalyst for growth in India. India supports a multi-stakeholder approach on matters related to internet governance. In matters related to internet, our policy is guided by democratic values and support for a governance structure that is open, democratic and inclusive.

64. India has about 500 million active internet subscribers, one of the largest in the world in terms of internet users and the number is increasing continuously. India has launched an ambitious

programme called “Digital India” to bridge the digital divide, centered around three key areas: (i) Digital infrastructure as a core utility to every citizen; (ii) Governance and services on demand; and (iii) Digital empowerment of citizens.

65. There is growing inter-dependence between public and private, and other actors in the cyber space as well as growing dependence on critical infrastructure such as ports, airports, electricity grids, e-governance systems, and businesses. Protection of the critical infrastructure is imperative, given the threats to cyber space have multiplied over the years and emanate from a wide variety of sources – state as well as non-state actors. International cooperation on high end cyber R&D and skill building (creating cyber professionals) is important for addressing the current and emerging challenges in the ICT and cyber fields.

66. Data is increasingly becoming an important source of economic growth and we should enhance cooperation in promoting data security and data flow with trust, whilst at the same time, respecting privacy and ensuring data protection. Growing cyber threats have potential to disrupt national, regional and international security environment. Strengthening international and regional cooperation to enhance cyber security is critical for securing critical information infrastructure and to tackle growing incidents of cyber crime and cyber terrorism. Cooperation on countering terror propaganda on the internet, in removing such content, in alerting each other of such activities and in investigating terrorist attacks mounted through the use of ICTs could also be part of CBMs. We should enhance cooperation on ICT and digital connectivity for a peaceful and secure ICT environment globally.

67. India has been actively participating in and contributing to Cyber Conferences and Conventions to voice its views and shape global cyber policies with a view to strengthen our cyber security. In keeping with its commitment to a multi-stakeholder model of governance, India has been actively engaging with the private sector, civil society and academia, to shape and strategize cyber policy.

68. ICT, Cyberspace and Cyber security have become key emerging areas of major discussion in ASEAN and ARF. Amongst the ARF members, India has formal cyber dialogues with the EU, Australia, Japan, Korea, Russia and New Zealand, besides close cooperation within the ARF.

69. Delhi Declaration (January 25, 2018) of the ASEAN-India Commemorative Summit marked the 25th Anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations and agreed to strengthen cooperation between ASEAN and India on cyber-security related issues. These included capacity building and policy coordination on cyber-security, including through supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Cyber-security Cooperation Strategy, ARF Work Plan on security of and in the use of ICTs and the work of ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on security of and in the use of ICTs.

70. The first ASEAN-India Track 1.5 Dialogue on Cyber issues was organized in New Delhi on 14 October 2019 by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with Observer Research Foundation (ORF) with participation of government representatives and cyber experts from ASEAN Member States and India.

71. India participated in the 2nd ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies held at Singapore from 26-29 March, 2019. India also participated in various ARF Open-Ended Study Groups on CBMs to reduce the risk of conflict stemming from the use of ICTs during the period 2018 to 2019.

72. As a key member of the UN, India participated in discussions leading to adoption of two resolutions in December 2018 by the UN General Assembly which established the Sixth United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE) and a new Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on developments in the field of information security. These Groups are expected to delineate how international law applies to the use of information and communications technologies by States and regulate the norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour of States. India participated in the 5th meeting of UNODC Inter-Governmental Expert Group on Cybercrime (IEGC) in Vienna during the period 27-29 March 2019 which focused on building the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice stakeholders to combat cybercrime as an ongoing and continuous process.

vii. Outer Space

73. India is party to all the major international treaties relating to Outer Space. India has always believed that Outer Space should remain a peaceful domain for deployment and use of space technologies. This places responsibility on all space faring nations to contribute to international efforts to safeguard outer space as the common heritage of humankind and preserve and promote the benefits flowing from advances made in space technology and its applications for all. As a major space-faring nation, India has made significant strides in developing a range of space technologies that also benefit other countries, especially fellow developing countries. India has sizeable space assets which provide the critical backbone for the country's economic and social infrastructure. India remains opposed to the weaponisation of outer space and any kind of arms race in outer space. India remains committed to maintaining outer space as an ever-expanding frontier for cooperative endeavour.

3. Role of ARF

74. ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) plays a central role in the deliberations on evolution of a security architecture in the Indo-Pacific region. India views ASEAN as the driving force of the ARF and believes that the ASEAN way of "dialogue and consensus" should remain the ARF's guiding principle. ASEAN's centrality and unity has been an asset for the entire Asian continent and it has long functioned as an anchor of stability in the region. The criticality of ASEAN to the larger continental stability came to the fore, again, when it conceptualized and implemented the East Asia Summit (EAS) process. India is privileged to be one of its original members.

75. India views ARF as an important initiative towards carving a pluralistic cooperative security order in Asia, reflective of the unique diversity of the region. India believes that ARF should continue to evolve into a balanced, open and inclusive framework for Asian and non-Asian partners to interact

and cooperate in addressing traditional and non-traditional security challenges. The cooperative activities conducted under the ARF framework have contributed to confidence building and regional peace and stability over the years. The candid discussions on regional and international security issues in ARF have also contributed to greater understanding of the complex issues involved.

76. To ensure the relevance of this Forum, in the changing regional security landscape, ARF should enhance its role by further strengthening its work on Confidence Building Measures and explore and advance its overlap with Preventive Diplomacy. This forum should also continue to develop, in a balanced and inclusive manner, to address both traditional and non-traditional security challenges. India hopes that there would be a greater operational complementarity and synergy between the ARF and other forums such as EAS and ADMM Plus.

77. India's participation in ARF is in consonance with its "Act East" policy, and development of closer links with ASEAN as a full-dialogue partner. India actively participated in all the Inter-Sessional Meetings (ISMs) and the Senior Officials Meetings (SOMs) held under the aegis of ARF. India's External Affairs Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar attended the 26th ARF Ministers Meeting held at Bangkok, Thailand on 02 August 2019. India's regional engagements are strengthened by a broad range of bilateral defence and security relationships with members of ASEAN and the EAS.

INDONESIA

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

In enhancing the peace, security, and stability of the region, Indonesia highlights the principles conceived in the ASEAN Charter, the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). These valuable documents are practicable for the ASEAN Regional Forum to help promote mutual confidence and trust among its Participants and within its region.

Indonesia puts significant attention to all issues under the ambit of ARF areas of cooperation. As the widest archipelagic country in the world, maritime and marine issues are most vital to Indonesia's economy, trade, and transportation.

That is why Indonesia attaches great importance on the South China Sea issue, though we are not a claimant state in the ongoing territorial dispute. A safe interactions over the disputed waters would surely foster a fair prosperity for all of the interested parties. On the opposite, a prolonged conflict shall impede any potential maritime cooperation. Therefore, Indonesia urges all parties to refrain from any misconduct and also to expedite early conclusion of the COC.

On the field of non-proliferation and disarmament, Indonesia believes that Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) threatens the existence of every nation in the world, humanity, as well as peace, security and stability of the world at large. To safeguard the region from the threat, Indonesia has always been committed to intensify the ongoing efforts of the State Parties of the Treaty of the South East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty and the Nuclear Weapons States to resolve all outstanding issues pertaining to the early signing and ratifying of the Protocol to that Treaty, as reflected in the ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty.

On the issue of denuclearization of North Korea, Indonesia stresses the importance of a constructive dialogue as the main component of a peace process, which will ultimately be pivotal to the achievement of regional and international peace and security. In the near future, involvement of an independent and competent body (IAEA) in the verification process will certainly help to achieve the goal of a permanent denuclearization of the Peninsula.

Another spotlight of Indonesia's priority concern is the security of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). With more than 170 million internet users, or accounted to 65% of its total population, ICTs have provided opportunities for Indonesia that are vital to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, challenges in the cyberspace are also rising. In 2019 alone, Indonesia experienced more than 220 million cyber-attacks, hampering beneficial use of cyberspace.

Bearing this challenge in mind, Indonesia underlines the need for international legal principles in the use of cyber space, especially related to full respect for sovereignty, non-intervention, peaceful settlement of disputes, human rights, and the UN charter.

Finally, on this timely occasion, Indonesia puts more emphasis on the need for a global management against the Novel Corona Virus Disease (COVID) 19 which we currently are facing. As we are still finding the best measure to deal with such pandemic, it is also important to assist each other in the visible and available sector, for instance in information sharing and humanitarian assistance. Indonesia calls all states especially in the ARF to fight this global pandemic altogether.

2. National Security and Defence Policy

a. Overview of national security and defence policy

In securing its national interest, Indonesia implements a total system which binds together all its citizens, government and law enforcers, entrepreneur or the economic sectors, and all the available resources. This concept of national security and defence has been used by Indonesia for a long time. It proves to nurture the passion and ownership of each and every Indonesian nationals to support the achievement of the interest. It enables Indonesia to move forward as one strong nation.

After engrouping the domestic stakeholders, Indonesia embarks the international stage with its unique "free and independent" foreign policy. It sees all the neighboring countries as friends who shares the common purpose to uphold security and stability of the region. At the same time, Indonesia also avoids itself to be attached with one major power. Indonesia opens itself to every possible cooperation with any state.

Within the first layer of Indonesia's security and defence priority is the ASEAN. As for defence cooperation, Indonesia pours great attention to the work of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM-Plus in promoting regional peace and security through dialogue and cooperation. In 2019, Indonesia actively engaged in all level and work-stream of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus.

Indonesia has played an active role in promoting and enhancing cooperation among ASEAN peacekeeping forces, including by initiating an ASEAN Peacekeeping Centre Network (APCN). In the framework of ADMM-Plus, Indonesia co-chairs the Expert Working Group (EWG) on Peacekeeping Operation (PKO) with Australia for the period 2017 to 2020. In 2019-2020, ADMM-Plus EWG on PKO activities under Indonesia and Australia chairmanship are, among others:

- The Final Planning Conference (FPC) and the Site Survey of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus Experts' Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations (ADMM-Plus EWG on PKO) in Sentul, Jawa Barat, Indonesia, from 26-29 March 2019;

- ADMM-Plus EWG on PKO Field Training Exercise (FTX) in Sentul, Jawa Barat, Indonesia, 14 – 22 September 2019;
- 4th ADMM-Plus EWG on Peacekeeping Operations, Melbourne, Australia, 16-19 March 2020 (cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic).

Indonesia attaches great importance of multilateralism. It is reflected by Indonesia's active participation in the international organizations such as in the United Nations. Indonesia serves its role as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from January 2019 to December 2020.

Since 1957, Indonesia has been a proud contributor to UN peacekeepers. As of May 2020, Indonesia's contribution to UN peacekeeping amounted to 2,842, whom 159 of them are female peacekeepers. This number places Indonesia in the rank 8 out of 120 Troop/Police Contributing Countries (TPCCs). They are deployed in 8 missions out of 13 UN missions, namely UNIFIL (Lebanon), UNAMID (Darfur-Sudan), MONUSCO (Democratic Republic of the Congo), MINUSCA (Central African Republic), MINUSMA (Mali), UNMISS (South Sudan), MINURSO (Western Sahara), and UNISFA (Abyei-Sudan).

In line with its constitutional mandate, Indonesia attaches great importance to the spirit of multilateralism in the maintenance of international peace and security. This is greatly reflected in Indonesia's active and constructive role in various international organizations and ultimately the United Nations.

In 2019, Indonesia, for the fourth time since joining the UN, was elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the 2019-2020 period. As the largest Troop and Police Contributing Country in the Security Council, during its Presidency in May 2020 Indonesia specifically raised the issue of the safety and security of peacekeepers through training and capacity building.

Consistent in its commitment to further the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and as part of the effort in meeting the targets of the UN Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028, Indonesia have increased the number of its women peacekeepers from 105 in May 2019 to 159 as of May 2020 deployed with a wide range of tasks as troops, military staff, Formed Police Unit, Individual Police Officers, as well as doctors and nurses.

Moving forward, Indonesia is keen to strengthen its contribution and support initiatives that bolster UN Peacekeeping substantively for its ultimate aim that is to assist a nationally-owned and -led endeavor by the host country to build sustaining peace and development. Among others is by enhancing the capacity of the Indonesian Peacekeeping Center in Sentul, as an international hub for regional training, and marshalling the role of the country's civilian capacities, including women participation, into peacekeeping missions to help effective implementation of the contemporary multi-dimensional peacekeeping mandates.

b. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

i. Total defence expenditure on annual basis

1) Defence expenditure

Defence development is prioritized on the defence strength and increasing the professionalism of soldiers, supported by the availability weapon system capable of supporting preparedness and mobility.

2) Defence expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

In the year of 2018, the defence budget and expenditure amounts to 107.6 trillion Rupiah. This represents an increase in defence expenditure to 5% of Indonesia's GDP.

ii. Total number of active personnel in national armed forces is 800.000

3. National Contributions to Regional Security

i. Counter terrorism

Indonesia is a voluntary lead shepherd in counter-terrorism, namely under the SOMTC Working Group on Counter-Terrorism (WG on CT). In October 2018 in Myanmar, the 12th AMMTC has adopted the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2018-2025) which is known as the ASEAN PoA PCRVE 2018-2025. It consists of 4 (four) priority areas, namely: (a) Prevention of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, (b) Counter Radicalisation and Promote Deradicalisation, (c) Law of Enforcement and Strengthening National Legislation Related to Countering Radicalisation and Violent EXTremism, and (d) Partnership and Regional Cooperation.

The document of ASEAN PoA PCRVE 2018-2025 was initiated by SOMTC-Indonesia as a mandate from the Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2017) and a realisation of the ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together. In addition, the ASEAN PoA is also aimed to further strengthen the close cooperation among ASEAN Member States in preventing and countering the rise of radicalisation and violent extremism.

In order to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2018-2025), SOMTC-Indonesia has held series of ASEAN Cross-Sectoral and Cross-Pillars Meeting in 2019 to develop a Work Plan of the ASEAN PoA PCRVE (2018-2025). The objective of the work plan is to provide an implementation framework for the ASEAN PoA PCRVE, which will guide selected ASEAN Sectoral Bodies in carrying out the necessary activities and monitor their effectiveness in preventing and countering radicalism and violent extremism. The involvement of relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies/Organs/Entities from other ASEAN community

pillars in drafting the Work Plan is a reflection that the participation of all stakeholders is required to prevent and counter-terrorism and violent extremism.

Bali PCRVE Work Plan (2019-2025) has successfully adopted on the 13th AMMTC Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand. Upon the adoption of the Bali PCRVE Work Plan, Indonesia convened 'The First Bali Work Plan 2019-2025 Multi-Sectoral Task Force Meeting and Bali Work Plan 2019-2025 Multi-Sectoral Task Force and ASEAN Partners Meeting' in Bali, Indonesia, 11-12 December 2019. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the Bali Work Plan to ASEAN dialogue partners and international organisations to encourage them to take part in its implementation.

In the context of ARF, Indonesia at the 16th ASEAN ARF ISM on CTTC, held in Bali, 21-22 March 2019 proposed an ARF Statement on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism. The statement, co-sponsored with.....was adopted at the 26th ARF Ministerial Meeting, 2 August 2019, in Bangkok, Thailand. With this statement, ARF participants can increasingly focus on prevention efforts in counterterrorism.

Furthermore, Indonesia has initiated an ARF Statement on the Treatment of Children Associated with Terrorist and Violent Extremist Group in the first half of 2020. The draft of the said statement was already submitted to the Co-Chairs of ARF ISM of CTTC to be circulated to all ARF Participants to seek inputs and comments. Further discussion of the said draft will be held in the next ARF Inter-Sessional Support Group Meeting to seek endorsement, and hopefully can be adopted on the next ARF Ministerial Meeting in 2020.

Indonesia's Efforts at the National Level

a. *The Adoption of the Revised Anti-Terrorism Law*

In May 2018, the Parliament of Indonesia approved the revision of the Anti-Terrorism Law which has come into force in June 2018 through Law Number 5/2018. The Law reflects the balance of hard and soft approach that have been implementing in Indonesia in countering terrorism.

Some of the new features of the Revised Law as follows: (i) criminalizing acts of individuals joining as FTFs abroad; (ii) criminalizing those individuals supporting others to join as FTFs; (iii) criminalizing the incitement to terrorism; (iv) criminalizing preparatory acts of terrorism; (v) establishing a whole set of chapter for the prevention of terrorism, which focused on counter-radicalization, deradicalisation, and national preparedness against the acts of terrorism; and, (vi) setting up a clear guideline on restitution and compensation for victims of terrorism.

This law revision provides a comprehensive policy landscape in Indonesia's counterterrorism strategy—combining hard and soft approach in its implementation. The law underlines preventive measures in elaborate manner, with a focus on counter-radicalisation, deradicalisation, and national resilience against terrorism.

b. *Developing a National Plan of Action on CVE*

Apart from taking steps to revise Indonesia's current Law on Counter-Terrorism, Indonesia is also strengthening its policies against terrorism including violent extremism through its effort to develop a National Plan of Action in Countering Violent Extremism or better known as RAN PE. If adopted, RAN PE will complement the prevention efforts stipulated in the revised Law. The process of developing the RAN PE has been started since August 2017 and in January 2019, President of Indonesia granted his approval for BNPT to draft the Presidential Regulation on RAN PE. To follow up the President's approval, BNPT already sets up a Team from relevant line Ministries and Agencies to draft the Presidential Regulation on RAN PE. It is expected that the Presidential Regulation could be adopted in 2020.

The RAN PE prescribes a "whole-of-government approach and whole-of-society approach". Representatives from the government and non-government entities have been actively involved in the drafting process. After intensive discussion with other ministries and agencies, the RAN PE will consist of three main pillars, namely (a) Prevention; (b) Law Enforcement and Strengthening Legislative Framework; and (c) Partnership and International Cooperation.

Indonesia has also conducted a number of measures in the fight against terrorism to maintain security during the Presidential election in 2019. The National Police has captured more than 90 persons from January to May 2019, some of whom have been allegedly to plan terrorist action to disrupt the general election processes. Some of these people are also the returnee FTF from abroad.

c. *Initiatives of Soft Approach*

Indonesia has taken initiative programs in furthering the soft approach in order to counter terrorism and violent extremism, as follows:

- Synergizing efforts between Ministries and Governmental Agencies to enhance coordination between BNPT and other government agencies in countering terrorism;
- Strengthening collaboration between BNPT, local government and CSOs in countering terrorism through Coordination Forums for Terrorism Prevention;
- Strengthening the role of Pusat Media Damai (the Center of Peace Media) in detecting, monitoring and countering terrorists propaganda;
- Continuing the National Reconciliation program for former terrorist convicts and victims of terrorist attacks;
- Enhancing community empowerment programs as part of the deradicalisation programs outside prisons;
- Empowering youth or the so-called "millennials" as "agent of peace" to spread the message of peace, unity and harmony, particularly through social media.

Measures Against Terrorist Financing

Since the establishment of Indonesia's Financial Intelligence Unit (*Pusat Pelaporan dan Analisis Keuangan* (PPATK)) in 2002, the counter-terrorism financing has become one of the main tasks of the Indonesia's FIU since the enactment of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 Year 2013 on Prevention and Eradication of Terrorist Financing.

Indonesia participated as a member of Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG-ML). The Government of Indonesia was deeply involved in the development of a robust defence against the terrorist financing through the application of global policy standard known as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Recommendations.

To enhance its further efforts in combating money laundering and terrorist financing, Indonesia puts more efforts to elevate its observer status to a membership of FATF. The Mutual Evaluation is still ongoing process that submission of the Technical Compliance (TC) was carried out in September 2019.

In 2019, Indonesia updated the National Risk Assessment on Terrorist Financing (NRA on TF). This document contains the summary of all results of terrorist financing risk assessments from 2015 to 2018, both inside Indonesian territory as well as abroad. It includes the updated information with the latest potential threats and the development of policies and strategies of counter-terrorist financing. As a result, Indonesia successfully identified three emerging challenges in counter-terrorist financing. Firstly, Indonesia revealed the risk of social media in crowd-funding networks and examined the nexus between extremist groups and humanitarian aids. Second, the use of new payment method as part of financial technology innovations was identified as one of significant challenges. Third, there were potential use of alternative money remittance and currency exchange provider as channel for financing the terrorist activities.

ii. Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Indonesia underlines the importance of strengthening the multilateralism approach and reinvigorating political commitments to the issue of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. Indonesia urges all parties to move forward in implementing agreements as well as focusing on low hanging fruits that could serve as building blocks for a general and complete disarmament.

In the ARF, Indonesia has been very supportive of the forum's stronger focus on non-proliferation and disarmament, including through co-chairing the ISM NPD since 2018 together with Republic of Korea and Japan.

Indonesia maintains its position that all pillars of the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), namely nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, must be implemented in a balanced, transparent and comprehensive manner.

Regarding disarmament, Indonesia has always stressed that nuclear countries must fulfill their commitment to disarm their nuclear weapons with a clear time limit (Article VI of the NPT). In addition, Indonesia wants the nuclear disarmament process to be verifiable, irreversible and open (transparent).

Indonesia has become one of the first fifty countries to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on the 20th of September 2017 on the sidelines of the 72nd UN General Assembly in New York. Indonesia is of the view that the treaty is complementary to the NPT and serves as a major step towards our common goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. Indonesia continues to advocate that the universality of the NPT be made a priority and urges states, which are not yet parties, to immediately accede to the NPT as non-nuclear states.

In that context, Indonesia hosted two (2) Regional Dialogue and Consultations on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: Towards the PrepCom 2017 (co-hosted with Chair-designate Netherlands) and Towards the PrepCom 2018 (co-hosted with Chair-designate Poland). Leading towards the next NPT Review Conference that would start in early 2021, Indonesia lend its support to the Stockholm Initiative (16 countries) and co-sponsored the Joint Communiqué to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the NPT in May 2020.

In line with the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint 2025, Indonesia envisions a Southeast Asia that is not only a nuclear weapons-free zone but also a region that is free of all other weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, Indonesia stands ready to intensify the ongoing efforts between ASEAN and NWSs to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the SEANWFZ Treaty with a view to the signing and ratifying of the Protocol of SEANWFZ by the NWSs at the earliest.

Indonesia's reaffirms its principle positions on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. Indonesia believes that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing and are essential for strengthening international peace and security. Non-proliferation derives its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament.

On the other hand, Indonesia believes that non-proliferation policies should not undermine the inalienable rights of States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy, including the sovereign right to develop full national nuclear fuel cycle, for peaceful purposes without discrimination, and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, material and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

On the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Indonesia calls for states to respect the rights of every country to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes (Article IV NPT). Indonesia continues to fight for the recognition of the state's right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and it shall not be misinterpreted as nuclear proliferation. Indonesia has become a party to the NPT, the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM) and its Amendment, Convention

on Nuclear Safety, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and the IAEA Additional Protocol.

In that spirit, Indonesia as a part of Group of Governmental Experts to Consider the Role of Verification in Advancing Nuclear Disarmament (GGE NDV) for the period of 2018-2019 proposed a disarmament principle concept that prioritize inclusivity and that also emphasized on the importance of capacity building in order to narrow the gap between NWS and NNWS in terms of NDV capacity and capability.

To that end, Indonesia maintained its strong relation with IAEA and focuses its cooperation on 7 main sectors under the Country Program Framework (CPF) 2016-2020, they are food and agriculture, health, energy, water and environment, industry, mining of radioactive tin materials, as well as radiation safety and nuclear security.

Indonesia has always been constructively participating in multilateral negotiations to strengthen non-proliferation and to achieve disarmament of Weapon of Mass Destruction (WMD) in all its aspects.

With regard to the annihilation of chemical weapons, Indonesia considers that the main objective of the CWC is the total destruction of chemical weapons, especially to countries that possess chemical weapons. Therefore, Indonesia is very concerned with the very slow implementation of chemical weapons destruction not in accordance with the specified timeline. Destruction of chemical weapons must always be OPCW's top priority.

In addition, Indonesia is currently preparing a biology security bill that will include provisions relating to the implementation of The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction and also incorporate the implementation of agreements in WHO such as the International Health Regulation and the Influenza Preparedness Framework.

Indonesia also has interest in an arrangement that might prevent illegal trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), given the vast border area of the potential supply of illegal weapons that can be used by criminal organizations and terrorists. Furthermore, Indonesia supports international cooperation efforts in combating SALW illegal trade and encourages the establishment of mechanisms at the regional or sub-regional level, specifically customs trans-border, information exchange cooperation between law enforcement, border and customs institutions. Indonesia has several laws that regulate ownership, licensing and prohibition of possession of firearms separately.

In land mines issue, Indonesia considers the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions as important and has played an active role both in various meetings under the framework of the convention, national implementation (demining), and efforts to encourage the universalization of the convention in the Asia Pacific region. Indonesia considers it as an integral part of the convention, and always encourages countries outside the convention to immediately join in, and can fulfill its obligations to destroy their landmine deposits in accordance with the scheduled deadline.

Within the ASEAN framework, the ASEAN Regional Mines Action Center (ARMAC) has been established as the foundation and ideas for ASEAN member countries for lessons learned, sharing best practices and raising awareness in the region, and increasing cooperation and partnerships in advancing the agenda of the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions.

iii. Transnational Crime

Indonesia has actively contributed in preventing crimes in the region by implementing SOMTC/AMMTC and ASEANAPOL programs and cooperation. In the international stage, Indonesia has been contributive to the implementation of Interpol's work as part of the preventive measures through information-sharing, capacity-building, workshops, seminars, and cross-border cooperation.

Illicit Drug Trafficking

Under the National Narcotics Board (*Badan Nasional Narkotika/BNN*), Indonesia reaffirms its commitment in combatting drug trafficking and abuse through Preventing and Combating drug trafficking and abuse Program (P4GN). Indonesia has always placed a high priority on eradicating drug trafficking and abuse to protect its future generation. The Law on Narcotics (35/2009) aims to:

- » Ensure the availability of drugs/ narcotics for the medical, research, technology, and development;
- » Prevent and protect the nation from drug abuse;
- » Eradicate and combat drug trafficking that criminalizes drug traffickers including death penalty; and
- » Ensure the medical and social rehabilitation for drug users.

Indonesia focuses its efforts in 3 (three) areas, which are: supply reduction, demand reduction, and international cooperation.

1. Supply Reduction Approach – Combatting Measures

a. Law Enforcement

In improving supply reduction measures, BNN has collaborated with National Police, National Military, Customs and Excise, and Immigration Office. In 2019, BNN with the institutions as mentioned above have arrested 42,649 drug traffickers and uncovered 33,371 cases, including 84 narcotics syndicate encompassing 27 international and 38 local cartels syndicates, and 19 prisoners in a correctional institution (*lembaga permasyarakatan*).

Indonesia underlines the importance of a comprehensive strategy from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to implement asset forfeiture linked to drug trafficking. In line with the implementation of Law on narcotics/ drugs (35/2009) and Law on anti-money laundering, BNN has uncovered 55 cases and confiscated 184 billion IDR from narcotics syndicates in 2019.

b. Eradicating Cannabis Cultivation

As a tropical country with a vast area of rainforests, Indonesia is prone to illegal cannabis cultivation. Eliminating illicit cultivation of cannabis is essential to reduce the availability of cannabis for unlawful purposes. In 2020, BNN has found and wiped out 4 acres of cannabis cultivation in the forest areas of Aceh Province.

2. Demand Reduction Approach – Preventive Measures

a. Public Education

Indonesia strongly believes that education is an essential element to prevent drug trafficking and abuse. Several programs aim to raise public awareness and increase knowledge regarding the negative impacts of drug trafficking and drug abuse as follows;

- Drug-Free Village (*Bersih Narkoba/Desa Bersinar*) which had been implemented in 195 villages across Indonesia that employs local-based intervention in preventing drug trafficking and abuse
- Anti Narcotic Development Program (*Pembangunan Berwawasan Anti Narkoba*) that engages multi-stakeholder partnership in raising awareness, urine testing, and establishing multi-stakeholder task force in the community level.
- Engaging with the millennial generation in running a digital campaign to prevent drug trafficking and abuse through a platform called *Rumah Edukasi Anti Narkoba (REAN.ID)*

b. Treatment and Rehabilitation Program

The Rehabilitation Program is aimed to cure the drug users and restore their social function in society. Indonesia has established the Integrated Assessment Team (TAT) across the nation, employing a multi-disciplinary approach to assessing drug trafficking and abuse. The team has the authority to determine if the arrested suspect is purely drug users or drug dealers. The rehabilitation program also entails community-based intervention to repatriate drug users into society. In 2019 Indonesia developed rehabilitation across the nations for 13,3220 people, 11.370 outpatients, and 1950 in patients.

c. Community Empowerment

The program is conducted through four sub-program namely:

- 1) Alternative Development Program in areas prone to drug trafficking and abuse. Indonesia underscores the importance of an alternative development strategy to address the rising supply of illicit substances in areas prone to drug trafficking and abuse. Under the Grand Design Alternative Development (GDAD) initiative, BNN and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry have developed an alternative program in rural areas of Aceh Province to reduce the local community's dependency to cannabis cultivation as a source of livelihood. Both institutions have developed an agroforestry program that aims to provide an alternative livelihood as well as boost sustainable economy and food security in Aceh's rural areas such as Aceh Besar, Gayo, and Bireun.

- 2) Facilitating the products from alternative livelihood program through running e-commerce platforms for former drug users to market their products such as souvenirs, arts, and clothes;
- 3) Fostering voluntary Program in the border area that employs 150 local volunteers to prevent drug trafficking and abuse. Besides, Indonesia also engaged 29,485 volunteers in government agencies, private sectors, and academics across the country; and
- 4) Fostering multi-stakeholders approach in conducting massive urine test. In 2019 BNN recorded 601 out of 308.290 people indicated positive for being positive.

3. International Cooperation

As drug trafficking is a shared problem in our region, Indonesia actively promotes international cooperation to overcome this issue. In 2019, Indonesia forged a global partnership that addresses the following issues:

- a. Border Management Meeting in Atambua, East Timor between The Government of Indonesia and East Timor (28-30 October 2019);
- b. International Narcotics Centre of Excellence (Inarcell) training with 11 countries such as Laos, Fiji, Philippines, East Timor, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Seychelles, Cambodia, Brunei Darussalam, and Papua New Guinea;
- c. Joint Advanced Narcotics Investigation Course between Drug Enforcement Administration of the United States of America and BNN;
- d. Indonesia recognizes the importance of regional institutions such as ASEAN in tackling this shared issue. Indonesia will continuously work with ASEAN Member State through ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD), ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) and another relevant regional cooperation mechanism in ASEAN; and
- e. Indonesia will also host the 41st ASOD Meeting. With reference to 40th ASOD Meeting in Siem Reap on 26-31 August 2019, Indonesia has initiated the discussion on Terms of Reference ASOD Review and the arrangement plan of Second Internal Review of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025. These two documents will be the main deliverables of Indonesia's Chairmanship in the 41st ASOD Meeting.

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and People Smuggling

As a country of origin, transit, and destination for trafficking in persons, preventing and combating trafficking in persons is high on Indonesia's agenda. At the multilateral level, Indonesia is a party to United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocol to Suppress, Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UNTOC since 2009.

At the regional level, together with Australia, Indonesia has established the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime to strengthen cooperation in preventing and combating smuggling of migrants as a shared responsibility of countries of origin, transit and destination. Having the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) ratified in 2017, Indonesia is committed to continue the implementation of the ACTIP, the ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children (APA), as well as the Bohol TIP Work Plan 2017 – 2020.

On the national level, Indonesia has enacted a law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons comprising four main pillars: prevention, prosecution, and victims' protection, and the international cooperation in curbing this heinous crime. Indonesia has also established the Task Force for Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons, comprised of relevant related government agencies. The Task-Force main approaches are advocacy, public awareness, protection, and joint training.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Indonesia is well-known as disaster-prone areas and is at risk to various hazards including active volcanos, cyclone, earthquake, landslides, flooding and tsunami. Indonesia experienced 3.678 natural disasters in 2019, most of the disasters were caused by tornadoes, floods and landslides. Therefore, Indonesia have been improving disaster management and emergency response protocols.

Indonesia established a comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) governance system through the Disaster Management Law and its subsidiary regulations and policies, Disaster Management Agencies at the national and local levels, risk analysis and Disaster Management plans, partnership and coordination with DRR stakeholders, and all relevant bureaucratic instruments.

At the global level, Indonesia's remains firmly committed to the strengthening of the implementation of international frameworks for disaster risk reduction. This includes the commitment on the outcome of the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) that is the Sendai Framework On Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015 – 2030. Indonesia stresses the importance of international cooperation to ensure the implementation of SFDRR to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to promote best practices, knowledge sharing and technology transfer. Indonesia also emphasizes the strategic importance of monitoring frameworks at the global and regional levels such as the Global Partnership for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) and the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) to ensure the implementation of SFDRR.

At the regional level, ASEAN Member States (AMS) developed the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) in December 2009 as a legally-binding regional agreement. As also concerned by the increasing the frequency and scale of a disaster, the AADMER aims to facilitate regional and international cooperation among AMS and to reduce losses of people's lives, social, economic, and environmental assets caused by the disaster. Since its inception,

AADMER has directly contributed to building the ASEAN Community and also enhanced disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation of the peoples and communities in ASEAN.

As the humanitarian landscape and nature of disasters are changing, ASEAN needs to recognize such dynamic and continuously adapt and develop the mechanisms to respond and address the challenge. This adaptation aims to ensure the comprehensive and robust disaster management and emergency response system in the region. Therefore, the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management was developed to outline the future directions by ASEAN. The ASEAN Vision also identifies three strategic elements namely (i) Institutionalisation and Communications, (ii) Finance and Resource Mobilisation, and (iii) Partnerships and Innovations, to guide the direction of the implementation of AADMER towards 2025. The three strategic elements will enable a people-centered, people-oriented, financially sustainable, and networked approach of the AADMER's implementation. These elements have been embedded in the development and implementation of the AADMER Work Programme (AWP) 2016 – 2020, which will serve as a basis for the drafting of the upcoming AWP 2021-2025. The AWP drafting is on the way and led by the ACDM, supported by the ASEAN Secretariat and AHA Centre, and in consultation with ASEAN Dialogue Partners and stakeholders.

On the 28th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, the ASEAN Leaders signed the “ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN One Response: ASEAN Responding to Disasters as One in the Region and Outside the Region”. The declaration is based on the principle of harnessing the individual and collective strengths of different sectors and stakeholders in ASEAN to effectively respond to disasters in the region. The declaration confirms that the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) is the main regional policy backbone and common platform for the implementation of One ASEAN, One Response, and that the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) is the primary ASEAN regional coordinating agency on disaster management and emergency response.

In order to further strengthen ASEAN's regional capacity in reducing disasters losses and strengthening our collective response to disasters, ASEAN had endorsed the ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management at the 3rd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) and the 4th Conference of the Parties (COP) to AADMER in December 2015 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The ASEAN Vision 2025 on Disaster Management charts the strategic direction that ASEAN needs to embark on in the next 10 years, and identifies the key areas to move the implementation of AADMER forward to a people-centred, people-oriented, financially sustainable, and networked approach by 2025. These include further strengthening the AHA Centre's role as the main coordinating body for disaster management, and to realise the vision of 'One ASEAN One Response'.

Indonesia's contributes through its efforts at improving the preparedness of the stakeholders within ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific region. On 20th December 2019, Indonesia signed the agreement between the government of the Republic of Indonesia and ASEAN on the Implementation of the Grant for the Repatriation of Dispalced Persons to Myanmar. Referring to the agreement, Indonesia

provided a grant to Myanmar for the purpose of assisting, along with other countries, the financing of the repatriation process of displaced persons to Myanmar, which shall be facilitated by the Implementing Party through the Ad-Hoc Support Team of the ASEAN Secretariat.

v. Maritime Security

Indonesia aspires to maintain the resilience of its maritime resources based on the principles of Blue Economy in order to maintain the sustainability of food security for mankind. Indonesia builds and develops maritime infrastructures and connectivity, and pursue maritime diplomacy as well as maritime security and defense.

As described in the White Book of Indonesian Maritime Ocean Policy, Indonesia identifies seven pillars of maritime cooperation: 1) Management of Marine Resources and Development of Human Resources; 2) Defense, Security, Law Enforcement and Safety at Sea; 3) Ocean Governance and Institutions; 4) Economic and Infrastructure of the Marine Sector and of Prosperity Enhancement; 5) Management of the Ocean Space and Protection of Marine Environment; 6) Maritime Culture; and 7) Maritime Diplomacy.

Indonesia has concluded a number of bilateral agreements and has been part of regional or international arrangements for managing issues of common concern, such as combating illegal activities at sea, trafficking in persons, people smuggling, illicit drugs trafficking, and illegal fishing. Indonesia has arranged for separate coordinated patrols with almost all countries sharing maritime boundaries with Indonesia.

In preserving its marine ecosystem from plastic debris, in 2019 Indonesia with FAO held the *Workshop on the Best Practices to Prevent and Reduces Abandoned, Lost, or otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear* (ALDFG). The workshop was also participated by the United States, Australia, Bangladesh, China, Philippines, Cambodia, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, and Timor Leste. The workshop agrees on these recommendations: the need to adopt FAO's voluntary guidelines for marked fishing gear (VGMFG), as well as cooperation among states, industry, international organization, and NGO in the local, national, and global level.

On the issue of combatting human trafficking, forced labor, and slavery at sea, Indonesia and ILO has initiated the establishment of Sea Forum for Fishers. This initiative was launched in 2018 by firstly calling for Southeast Asian countries' support. At the time, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines was appointed as Steering Committee. The Committee's first meeting was held in Manila in August 2019. Next, efforts are made within the Forum to strengthen the implementation of relevant international instruments in ports. The aim is that the inspecting officials are allowed to come aboard the fishing vessels.

Indonesia puts great emphasis in preventing, deterring, and eliminating IUU Fishing. Indonesia observes that IUU fishing is a crosscutting issue, closely related with other crimes, such as people smuggling, human trafficking, forced labor, drugs trafficking, and violation of sanitary and

environmental protection regulations. In this regard, Indonesia is of the view that IUU fishing should be dealt with in a comprehensive and holistic manner with emphasis on law enforcement and security aspects.

Indonesia always puts forward maritime issues in many international forums, including in the 74th UN General Assembly in 2019. During the *High Level Panel on Building Sustainable Ocean Economy* (HLP Ocean), Vice President Jusuf Kalla delivers three priorities HLP Ocean which are to support global efforts in combatting marine plastic debris, to ensure sustainable fisheries and combatting IUU Fishing and transnational organized crime in the fisheries sector, and mainstreaming of maritime issues in the negotiation on climate change.

vi. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

The architecture of global ICT cooperation has not developed as expected in the last few years. Misuse of cyber space by both state and non-state actors, including proxies, poses risks to international peace and security as well as stability of national political, economic and social domain. Mutual understanding, cooperation, collaboration, CBMs, assistance and capacity building are essential to strengthening security and stability in cyberspace. Bilateral, regional and global efforts, in this respect, must all be supported and seen as complementary, not competing.

Indonesia is of the view that voluntary and non-binding norms serve as an important framework of responsible state behavior, and supports continued discussion and implementation of non-binding norms according to the UN GGE report of 2015. Indonesia reiterates the vital role by the UN and regional organizations in promoting the discussion and implementation of 11 norms, CBMs and capacities on cyber security, especially in narrowing and closing the digital gap between countries. While the gap on ungoverned cyberspace issues needs to be addressed, Indonesia encourages creation of further state and customary practices.

In terms of multilateral efforts, Indonesia is actively engaged in the Open Ended Working Group on the Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (OEWG ICT), including its capacity as the Coordinator of Non-Aligned Movement Disarmament Working Group. Indonesia is also currently among the 25 members the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the context of International Security (UN GGE).

Regionally, Indonesia partakes in Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the ASEAN framework, among others, through supporting the establishment of Point of Contact in ASEAN sectoral bodies dealing with cyber issues under its political-security and economic community pillars, as well as through information exchange, regular cyber security collaboration and Member States' dialogues. ASEAN also strengthen its cooperation on cyber security issues by establishing a cross-pillar coordination committee. Through the ASEAN Regional Forum, the discussion on cyber-CBMs has expanded beyond ASEAN to also involve other countries and partners.

Domestically, Indonesia is pursuing multiple measures actively to both maximize digital potential and tackle cyber threats through strengthening of legal and policy aspects to institutional infrastructure, capacity building and international cooperation.

In 2017, the National Cyber and Crypto Agency (NCCA) was established as Indonesia's centralized body on cybersecurity affairs. National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) is set up under NCCA for rapid response on cyber incidents, directed at government or private infrastructures. A Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) is also established in Indonesia's each central and district government agency in 34 provinces, to tackle and recover from cyber incidents.

In strengthening national legal and policy framework, Indonesia promulgated the Law on Information and Electronic Transaction as well as National e-Commerce Roadmap for 2017-2019 which includes efforts to secure electronic and digital transactions. Indonesia's Cyber Defense Guidelines is adopted through Minister of Defense Regulation Number 82 of 2014. The Indonesia's Cyber Security law has been set as a priority bills of 2020 and legislative process is currently ongoing.

Further, Indonesia maintains bilateral dialogues and cooperation with various states and partners. Indonesia will continue meaningfully advance the efforts in strengthening responsible state behaviour as well as the promotion of an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment.

4. Role of ARF

With the ever-challenging condition that the global livelihood is currently facing, the ARF holds the opportunity to present itself as an inclusive and beneficial forum for Asia-Pacific and even the world. The ARF has a strong foundation for political-security cooperation which ranges from marine ecosystem to humanitarian assistance in crisis, from nuclear security to trafficking in persons. This is the true modality the ARF uniquely owns and not yet fully maximized.

Now, with the refreshment of the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action (2020-2025), Indonesia hopes the ARF to be more robust and practical in measure on the field. The nearest aim from the upgrade of the POA is that all Participants would be more contributive to the forum and at the same time to nurture the sense of ownership and practicability of the forum. By achieving that, in the future all countries could automatically work together and always optimize the ARF as a practical channel to resolve any political-security issues and challenges in the region.

Another way to achieve such aspiration, apart from the enhancement of the core values of the ARF such as the HPOA, is that the ARF needs to promote a more distinct approach of its activities and initiatives. The ARF should emphasize more on concrete programs. Activities such as Table-Top Exercise (TTX) in the maritime security or in combatting cybercrime or a joint disaster relief exercise (such as ARF DiREx) are far more tangible and result-oriented than days of discussions. Indonesia believes that those are the examples of activities that would draw the interest of many Participants and eventually contribute to the international efforts.

Indonesia views this method as the best reachable way in increasing ARF's significance in the region. Thus, to support that, this is the step that Indonesia is planning to instill in the ARF's activities in the coming years, starting from the programs that are co-chaired by Indonesia. With the hope that by producing more calculated outputs, ARF would be able to prove itself as the framework of cooperation that the world needs.

JAPAN

I. Japan's Overview of the Regional Security Environment

With the rise of emerging countries and such, the balance of power in the international community has been changing dramatically, and inter-state competitions, in which states seek to shape a global order to their advantage as well as to increase their influence, are emerging more prominently. Against such a backdrop, there is growing uncertainty over the existing order. Given that national security has been expanding its scope to economic and technological fields in recent years, the enhancement of efforts regarding the security policy in these fields is necessary. In addition, issues related to the transfer, proliferation and improvement of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, including the possibility of acquisition and use of such weapons by terrorist organizations, etc., constitute a major threat. Against such a backdrop, there are countries with outstanding military capability both in terms of quality and quantity around Japan, and there is a clear tendency of further reinforcement of military capability and acceleration of military activities.

Regarding terrorism, while the territory controlled by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq and Syria has been liberated as a result of the operations against ISIL, the return to home countries or relocation to third countries of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) who had been under its influence has spread the threat of terrorism and violent extremism around the world including Asia. In April 2019, simultaneous terrorist attacks, one of the largest cases in Asia in recent years, took place in Sri Lanka, which resulted in deaths of more than 250 people including Japanese. Later in December 2019, a Japanese doctor was killed by a gun attack in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the form and background of terrorism has been diversified, as can be seen from cases in which the video at the incident was distributed via social media at once.

Recent advances in technology are invigorating activities in new domains such as outer space and cyberspace. While this presents big opportunities, it also brings about new risks and threats, therefore international rule-making is required in terms of security.

Furthermore, technology transformation which can bring about a essential change to the nature of the society and people's lives, such as IoT, 5G, AI, quantum technology, is advancing. All countries are engaged in fierce competition to develop technology, which is directly linked to their competitiveness, as well as accelerating their activities to apply technology to the realm of security. In this way, it is predictable that successes and failures in innovation might have considerable impact on the security environment.

Against these backgrounds, the Indo-Pacific region is making progress cooperating in the field of non-traditional security issues through confidence-building measures, not only in bilateral and trilateral frameworks but also in multilateral security frameworks, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM

Plus). Japan welcomes these developments, as these efforts contribute to create a better regional security environment. Japan is eager to further promote and develop these multi-layered initiatives through the above-mentioned regional frameworks securing peace and stability of the region. On the other hand, situation surrounding Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea are major issues that can destabilize the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region. It is essential to continue discussing these issues at ARF.

Maritime issues including those surrounding the South China Sea are directly linked to the peace and stability of the region and the international community as a whole. The international community pays attention to these issues in the context of thorough respect for the rule of law and securing the freedom of navigation and overflight. In the keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2014, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe advocated the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea”: (i) making and clarifying their claims based on international law; (ii) not using force or coercion in trying to drive their claims; and (iii) seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means. These three principles gained supports from many countries, and Japan will consistently support actions based on these principles. In this context, Japan calls for full implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) of 2002, and takes note of the progress of the negotiations towards an effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC). COC should be consistent with international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and not prejudicing the legitimate rights and interest of all stakeholders. Diplomatic efforts such as COC should lead to demilitarization and free and open South China Sea.

On the other hand, Japan shares with relevant countries serious concerns over the continuing unilateral actions in the South China Sea that could change the status quo and raise tensions in the region, including large-scale and rapid land reclamation, building of outposts, as well as their use for military purposes, including deployment of offensive weapons. Each state needs to refrain from unilateral actions and acts based on the universally-recognized principles of international law, as reflected in UNCLOS and in light of the final award rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal under UNCLOS on July 12, 2016, which is final and legally binding on the parties to the dispute. In particular, coastal states need to recognize that in maritime areas pending final delimitation, they are obliged by international law to refrain from unilateral actions that would cause permanent physical change to the marine environment, be it for military or civilian purposes. Japan strongly hopes that the parties' compliance with the award will eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

At the same time, attempts to change unilaterally the status quo in the East China Sea by force or coercion are unacceptable, and Japan will continue to respond calmly and resolutely while strengthening coordination with the relevant countries, along with strengthening communication in order to make the East China Sea a “Sea of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship.”

In the East Asia Summit (EAS) in November 2019, many countries expressed their supports on “ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)” which was announced by ASEAN earlier, demonstrating its unity and centrality. As a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law is a foundation for

peace and prosperity in the region, Japan fully endorses and supports AOIP as expressed by the Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in the EAS then re-emphasized by Minister for Foreign Affairs MOTEGI Toshimitsu by his speech delivered in ASEAN Secretariat in January 2020. Japan will cooperate with ASEAN to materialize AOIP, by achieving synergies with the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” concept.

North Korea has not dismantled all of its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). In 2019, North Korea launched over twenty ballistic missiles. North Korea has also launched multiple ballistic missiles in March 2020. It is clear that their purpose is to improve its missile technology. Japan strongly condemns those launches as clear violations of UNSCRs. For denuclearization, what is critical is the full and expeditious implementation of the agreement between the leaders of the US and North Korea including North Korea’s commitments towards complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as indicated in the Joint Statement of the US-North Korea Summit issued in June 2018.

To this end, it is imperative for each country to fully implement the relevant UNSCRs. From this perspective, Japan will continue to steadily take measures for their implementation. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) and the Japan Coast Guard are conducting information gathering activities for vessels suspected to be in the violation of UNSCRs including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels. JMSDF has found several activities strongly suspected ship-to-ship transfers in the East China Sea, and Japan shared information with Partner countries, notified UNSC 1718 Committee and the Panel of Experts and published the information. Partner countries have also engaged in monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities including ship-to-ship transfers. Japan will continue to cooperate with the US, and trilaterally with the US and the Republic of Korea (ROK), and coordinate closely with the international community including China and Russia, aiming for the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

With regard to Japan-North Korea relations, Japan’s basic policy of seeking to normalize its relations with North Korea, through comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration remains unchanged.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

1. Japan’s Security Policy

(1) “Proactive Contribution to Peace”

The security environment surrounding Japan is becoming more testing and uncertain. Japan cannot secure its own peace and security by itself, and the international community expects Japan to play a more proactive role for peace and stability in the world, in a way commensurate with its national capabilities. Being well aware of this, and under its policy of “Proactive Contribution to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation, Japan will contribute even more actively to ensuring

peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community. With the National Security Council (NSC) serving as a control tower, and in accordance with the National Security Strategy (NSS), Japan will continue its path as a peace-loving nation, work in close cooperation with the US and other partners as a major global player in the international community, and implement its national security policies in a steadfast manner, thereby making a more proactive contribution to peace and stability of the region and the world more than ever.

(2) Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security

Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security took effect in March 2016. The legislation is designed for Japan both (i) to make a seamless response to any situation amid an increasingly severe security environment surrounding the country, and (ii) to put into concrete practice its policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, and thereby administer more proactively to the peace and stability of the international community.

As the Legislation for Peace and Security has taken effect, Japan's "use of force" is permitted, under the Constitution, to exercise the right of collective defense in a limited manner in addition to the right of individual self-defense if the "Three New Conditions," which are unmatched worldwide in terms of stringency, are met.

The legislation has expanded the range of activities in which Japan can engage in during UN PKOs. It also allows Japan to participate in internationally coordinated operations for peace and security that are outside the UN PKO framework. Furthermore, the legislation allows Japan to engage in cooperation and support activities, such as supply and transportation under certain conditions, when the peace and security of the international community is threatened including those concerning UNSC resolutions. By allowing these activities, the legislation enables Japan to better contribute to the peace and stability of the international community.

However, Japan's postwar posture as a peace-loving nation has not been changed for more than 70 years. Japan has taken various opportunities to explain both its policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" and the Legislation for Peace and Security to the countries concerned in a transparent and sincere manner, winning support and understanding from countries around the world.

*Three new conditions for "Use of Force" as Measures for Self Defense

1. when an armed attack against Japan occurs, or when an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to fundamentally overturn people's right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.
2. when there is no other appropriate means available to repel the attack and ensure Japan's survival and protect its people.
3. use of force limited to the minimum extent necessary.

2. Japan's Defense Policy

(1) National Defense Program Guidelines and the Medium-Term Defense Program

The National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG) for FY2019 and beyond sets forth Japan's basic defense policy, the roles of Japan's defense capability, and the organizational objects for and the target level of specific organization of Self-Defense Forces, etc. Japan's security environment is becoming more testing and uncertain at a remarkably faster speed than expected when the former NDPG was formulated. The new NDPG was approved by the Cabinet in December 2018 to take measures in line with the realities of security environment it has hitherto never faced.

The new NDPG sets out the following three points: (i) strengthening Japan's own architecture for national defense, (ii) strengthening the Japan-US Alliance, and (iii) strengthening active promotion of security cooperation, under the basic precept of maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented policy. Japan will strengthen each of the means by which to defend such national interests as Japanese nationals, territory and sovereignty. The NDPG calls for the building of a "Multi-Domain Defense Force" that enables (1) execution of cross-domain operations, which organically fuse capabilities in all domains to generate synergy and amplify the overall strength, so that even when inferiority exists in individual domains such inferiority will be overcome, (2) sustained conduct of flexible and strategic activities during all phases from peacetime to armed contingencies and (3) strengthening of the Japan-US Alliance as well as the promotion of security cooperation. As capabilities, especially, in new domains—space, cyberspace and electromagnetic spectrum will remarkably enhance overall military capability to conduct operations, states are focusing on these areas.

The Medium Term Defense Program (MTDP) is, on the other hand, the first five-year defense buildup program laid out to achieve the target level for defense capabilities set forth in the NDPGs.

The expenditure target for the implementation of the defense capability build-up described in this program amount to approximately 27,470 billion yen in FY 2018 prices. For the duration of this program, in harmony with other measures taken by the Government, substantive funds will be secured by means of thorough going greater efficiency and streamlining in defense force development. The annual defense budgets target for the implementation of this program is expected to be around approximately 25,500 billion yen over the next five years. The amount of expenses based on contracts (material expenses) to be newly concluded to implement this program will be allocated within the ceiling of approximately 17,170 billion yen in FY 2018 prices, and the future obligation shall be managed appropriately.

(2) Defense-Related Expenditures

In addition to the cost of maintaining and operating the JSDF, defense-related expenditures in Japan include the cost of improving the living environment in the vicinity of defense facilities and support for US forces stationed in Japan.

As the budget based on the new NDPGs and MTDP mentioned above, the FY2020 defense-related expenditures budget includes an array of projects aimed at the establishment of a Multi-Domain Defense Force.

Excluding the costs related to the Special Action Committee on Okinawa or SACO (the cost of implementing the SACO Final Report to mitigate the impacts on people in Okinawa), the US forces realignment-related expenses (the portion located for mitigating the impact on local communities), expenses for the introduction of new government aircraft, and expenses for the three-year emergency response plan for disaster prevention, disaster mitigation, and building national resilience, the expenditure budget for FY2020 has been increased by 61.8 billion yen (or 1.2 % growth rate) from the previous fiscal year to 5,068.8 billion yen, marking the eighth consecutive year of growth.

Including these expenses, the total expenditure budget for FY2020 amounts to 5,313.3 billion yen, an increase of 55.9 billion yen, or growth rate of 1.1% from the preceding fiscal year.

The FY2020 defense-related expenditure is 0.89% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), SACO-related expenses, US forces realignment related expenses, expenses for the introduction of new government aircraft and the three-year emergency response plan for disaster prevention, disaster mitigation, and building national resilience, excluded, and 0.93% with the above four included.

3. Japan-US Security Arrangements

Given an increasingly severe security environment in the Indo-Pacific region, securing the forward deployment of US forces based on the Japan-US Security Treaty and strengthening the deterrence of the Japan-US Alliance are essential not only for the security of Japan, but also for peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

In order to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-US Alliance, the two countries have been expanding and strengthening cooperation in a wide range of areas, such as ballistic missile defense, cyberspace, outer space, and maritime security, including efforts made under the 2015 Guidelines for Japan-US Defense Cooperation and the Legislation for Peace and Security.

In light of the recent security environment, the US will strengthen its presence in the Indo-Pacific region, and Japan will assume larger roles and responsibilities in the Alliance. Japan and the US will further enhance cooperation with allies and partners in the region.

III. Japan's Contributions to Regional Security

1. Maritime Security

Japan is a maritime nation that has achieved economic growth through maritime trade and development of marine resources, and has pursued "Free, Open and Stable Seas." For Japan, maritime rights and interests, which are the basis for economic survival, including the freedom of navigation and overflight, and development of marine resources, are of great importance toward securing peace and security. To ensure these maritime rights and interests in the long-term and in a

stable manner, it is indispensable to maintain a maritime order and ensure safe maritime transport. Furthermore, “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” which are upheld by a maritime order governed by law and rules and not by force, are essential for peace and prosperity not only of Japan, but also of the international community as a whole. To maintain and develop “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” Japan contributes actively to maintaining and strengthening maritime order and ensuring safe maritime transport through various initiatives such as counter-piracy measures in Asia and Africa as well as close coordination and cooperation with other countries.

As part of its efforts to secure the safety of navigation in Asia, Japan had advocated the establishment of a forum to provide EAS member countries with the opportunity to discuss maritime cooperation and maritime issues in the region, which bore fruit in the form of the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF). At the seventh EAMF, which was held in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in December 2019, Japan underscored the importance of maintaining and strengthening a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law and reiterated its commitment to capacity building assistance in the region for enhancing maritime law enforcement capabilities as well as protecting marine environment.

In addition, Japan took the initiative in establishing the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). Japan has been actively contributing to the implementation of the ReCAAP by sending Executive Director and Assistant Director to the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) from its inception and supporting ReCAAP ISC’s efforts in the area of information sharing and capacity building assistance through making financial contributions among others. For instance, the third Capacity Building Executive Programme on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia was held in Singapore in 2019. This Executive Programme provided an opportunity for the participants from 19 countries to deepen their understanding on Japan’s efforts and views on such topics as the importance of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific, safety of sea lanes, freedom of navigation, rule of law at sea, enhanced cooperation among maritime law enforcement agencies, maritime domain awareness (MDA), and counter piracy and armed robbery against ships by utilizing the ReCAAP framework.

ARF plays an important role in ensuring the rule of law at sea, the freedom and safety of navigation and overflight, and peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law. In this context, Japan welcomes a number of initiatives that have been taken within the framework of ARF such as official events to discuss maritime security issues in the region. Japan co-chaired the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ARF ISM on MS) with the Philippines and the United States from August 2014 to August 2017. Together with the co-chairs, Japan worked on revising the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security. Furthermore, Japan serves with Malaysia as the lead countries for “confidence-building measures based on international and regional legal frameworks, arrangements, and cooperation,” which is one of the priority areas for the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security. In this context, Japan hosted the ARF Seminar on Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery in Asia, in Tokyo in March 2015 (co-chairing with the US, Malaysia, and India), ARF Seminar on Regional Confidence Building and Law of the Sea, in Tokyo in December 2015 (co-chairing with Vietnam and India), the First ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on MDA in Tokyo in March 2018 (co-chairing with Malaysia), and the Second ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on MDA in Tokyo in February 2020 (co-chairing with Viet Nam).

2. Disaster Relief

Japan has provided active support in responding to large-scale natural disasters in the Indo-Pacific region. During FY 2019, Japan dispatched Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) Infectious Diseases Response Team to the Independent State of Samoa in response to the Measles outbreak in the country, and JDR Self-Defense Force Units to Australia in response to the Bushfire. During FY2019, Japan provided emergency relief goods in two cases to assist the people affected by major natural disasters, such as the volcanic eruption in Philippines.

Japan will continue to work with other ARF participants and contribute to ARF activities in order to make regional disaster relief cooperation more practical and effective.

In addition, Japan is an active player in other regional frameworks as well. For example, Japan proactively participates in EAS initiatives that address disaster risk reduction as a priority area. In the framework of Japan-China-ROK trilateral cooperation, the three countries hold a regular table top exercise on disaster management, whereby they discuss the humanitarian assistance and disaster management mechanisms of each country in order to enhance mutual understanding. Within the framework of Japan-ASEAN cooperation, Japan provides mainly four types of assistance through the ASEAN Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre). The first type of assistance concerns the establishment of an integrated ICT-based disaster management system. This has helped facilitate timely information-gathering and responses, and international rescue and relief operations. The second type concerns the establishment of a Disaster Emergency Logistic System for ASEAN (DELSA). DELSA has been developing a framework for stockpiling emergency relief supplies at specific locations and transporting these items to disaster-hit areas. The third type of assistance concerns the capacity building of the Regional ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT). This has helped further enhance a coordinated response to disaster emergencies by the ASEAN-ERAT. The fourth type of Japan's assistance through the AHA Centre concerns a human resources development project in DRR(Disaster Risk Reduction). This project involves a four-month training program for officials at the DRR organization in ASEAN Member States. Japan welcomes the proactive and abstractive role the AHA center played in extending humanitarian support for the affected persons in regards to the situation in the Marawi and Rakhiane State.

3. Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

In the field of counter-terrorism, Japan continues to make efforts against international terrorism and violent extremism in cooperation with the countries and the regional and international organizations concerned. In this regard, at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in Vientiane, Laos in September 2016, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced that Japan would provide approximately 45 billion yen over the next three years for Asia as comprehensive counter-terrorism measures consisted of (i) improvement of counter-terrorism capacity, (ii) measures to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism, and (iii) social and economic development assistance for creating a foundation for

a moderate society. He also stated that Japan would help develop 2,000 personnel for counter-terrorism over the next three years. In September 2018, Japan had already achieved this goal one year ahead of its goal.

Japan has continuously held multilateral and bilateral counter-terrorism consultations with nations in the Indo-Pacific region and elsewhere, primarily with Southeast Asian countries, to enhance international counter-terrorism cooperation. We held the consultations with ASEAN, US, Australia, and UK in 2019. To help build counter-terrorism capacity, Japan supports projects in such areas as border control, aviation security, maritime security, and law enforcement under a number of frameworks, which include the ASEAN-Japan Counter Terrorism Dialogue (AJCTD), the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime plus Japan (AMMTC+Japan), and the Senior Official Meeting on Transnational Crime plus Japan (SOMTC+Japan). The center of ASEAN-Japan cooperation in this area is the ASEAN-Japan Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime, which was adopted by the 17th Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting in Myanmar in November 2014 and expanded its scope to include international organized crime. In order to implement this declaration, SOMTC+Japan adopted its updated "SOMTC + Japan Work Plan for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Transnational Crime (2018-2022)" in October 2018, based on which SOMTC+Japan has further strengthened cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism and transnational crime.

Japan has also been stepping up its efforts to combat transnational crimes in the Indo-Pacific region in three major aspects. The first aspect is strengthening transnational legal frameworks. For example, Japan has been tackling drug problems in alliance with ARF member countries through measures such as the exchange of information on synthetic drugs, including new psychoactive substances (NPS), and investigative cooperation in accordance with the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and other drug-related treaties. The second aspect is supporting local initiatives designed to combat illicit drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, cybercrime, and corruption in the Southeast Asia through projects of Japan's ODA and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). For example, in 2019, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) continued to invite relevant personnel engaging in measures against trafficking in persons in ASEAN countries to Japan for training and implement other projects on capacity development on assisting victims of trafficking in the greater Mekong sub-regional countries. Japan continued to contribute to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund (CPCJF) managed by UNODC for implementation of a project to enhance the criminal justice capacity including trafficking in persons countermeasures of law enforcement authorities in Southeast Asia.

The third aspect is promoting policy coordination with various countries and international organizations. Japan actively participates in multilateral frameworks such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), and the Bali Process, which involves consultations on irregular immigrants and trafficking in persons.

4. Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

Facing serious challenges to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and the divergence of views on how to advance nuclear disarmament, Japan, as the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during war, will continue to take concrete and practical steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Japan believes that the promotion of cooperation between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States is necessary to achieve such a goal, taking the severe international security situation into account.

In this regard, Japan is committed to maintaining and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation mechanism and has been engaging in various diplomatic efforts to this end. These efforts include the contribution to the three pillars of the NPT (nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy) through the NPT Review Process, as well as the submission of resolutions on the total elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly, the activities through the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) and the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, and the contribution to the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD). In addition, Japan has been engaged in efforts for facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a member of the Group of Friends of the CTBT. Also, Japan is contributing to the creation of the necessary dynamism and momentum for a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) negotiation.

Taking into consideration serious challenges to the international non-proliferation regime, Japan is engaged in outreach activities in the Indo-Pacific region with the aim of achieving three key objectives: (i) promoting the universalization of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and reinforcing their implementation at the national level, inter alia IAEA Safeguards are the fundamental component of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and it remains our key objective to increase the number of States with the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement (CSA) and the Additional Protocol (AP); (ii) establishing and strengthening export control systems; and (iii) raising awareness of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and enhancing related efforts. As part of these activities, Japan has been hosting a range of meetings each year, including the Asia Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation (ASTOP) and Asian Export Control Seminar. In July 2018, Japan hosted PSI Maritime Interdiction Exercise Pacific Shield 18 at Yokosuka with the participation of 17 ARF member states.

5. Cyberspace and Outer Space

Cyberattacks are becoming increasingly diversified and sophisticated. How to develop systems and capabilities to protect states, and the lives and property of the citizens from such cyberattacks constitutes a major challenge from both national security and economic perspectives. To this end, Japan is working with other countries concerned to promote a mutual understanding on these issues in a number of areas. One such area is deliberating international rules, including those on how to

apply existing international law to acts in cyberspace as well as developing international norms. Other areas include supporting capacity building and developing confidence-building measures.

Countries in Indo-Pacific Region are discussing cyberspace issues under frameworks such as ARF and ASEAN+3 meetings. The ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), which was endorsed at the 22nd ARF Ministerial Meeting in 2015, calls for confidence-building measures, awareness-raising, capacity building support, regarding cyber security. Japan is proactively participating in international meetings on these issues to boost cyber security in the region. From the viewpoint of the increasing importance of the situation surrounding cyberspace, ARF recognizes the value of continuing to exchange views from a comprehensive standpoint with the aim of promoting a peaceful, safe, open, and coordinated ICT environment, and preventing conflicts and crisis through capacity-building assistance while building confidence among nations. In January 2020, Japan co-chaired the ARF-ISM on ICTs Security 5th Open Ended Study Group (Study Group) on Confidence Building Measures in Singapore as co-chair countries with Malaysia and Singapore.. Going forward, Japan will continue to increase support capacity building in cyber security with a focus on ASEAN countries according to the “Japan’s Basic Strategy of Cybersecurity Capacity Building”.

Japan’s bilateral initiatives include discussions and dialogue on cyberspace with the US, Australia, the U.K., France, India, Russia, Israel, Estonia, Germany, ROK, Ukraine, and European Union (EU). Japan has also been holding trilateral talks involving China and ROK, and exchanging views with such international organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Council of Europe (CoE), and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

In addition to these initiatives, Japan will accelerate ties with ASEAN countries and public/private-sector collaboration to reinforce its efforts to address cyber security issues.

In order to address threats and challenges to stable and sustainable use of outer space, Japan is proactively engaged in rule-making efforts in multilateral fora, in close cooperation with partners including ARF members, such as the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which adopted the “Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities” in June 2019. As one of the leading space-faring nations, Japan has promoted bilateral dialogues on space with various countries and international space cooperation focusing on multiple areas. Japan has also utilized its space technologies, for the benefit of all, to address global issues such as environmental protection, disaster relief, and resource management.

6. Preventive Diplomacy

Japan believes it is important for ARF to make steady progress from the first stage of the “promotion of confidence-building measure” to the second stage of “development of preventive diplomacy” and further to the third stage of “approaches to dispute settlement.” However, despite the cumulative efforts of the ARF countries have so far succeeded in facilitating confidence-building measures to a certain extent, progress toward the development of preventive diplomacy has only just begun.

Japan has long been committed to conflict prevention and peace building through human resources development and other modalities means. Japan will take advantage of its expertise in these areas to further contribute to the ARF's efforts to promote preventive diplomacy.

7. ADMM-Plus Initiatives

The ADMM-Plus, in which Defense Minister has been participating from Japan since its establishment, provides a framework for addressing a wide range of security issues common to the region. Japan is committed to this framework with the aim of developing the forum into a key pillar of regional security cooperation. Within the ADMM-Plus, seven Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) have been established to increase concrete military-to-military cooperation in handling security issues common to the region: humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR), maritime security, counter terrorism, military medicine, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian mine action and cyber security. Japan is taking part in each EWG to further enhance regional security cooperation by actively exchanging views with other countries and making proposals.

Under the framework of ADMM-Plus EWG, Japan has intensified cooperation with other member countries. In the first cycle, from 2011 to 2013, Japan acted as co-chair of the EWG on military medicine along with Singapore, conducting field training exercises on HA/DR and military medicine in Brunei in June 2013. In the second cycle, from 2014 to 2017, Japan co-chaired the EWG on HA/DR together with Lao PDR. Efforts were made to formulate a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the establishment and management of a Multinational Coordination Center (MNCC) so as to amplify the activities of assisting foreign forces that are accepted by disaster-affected countries in the event of natural or other disasters. In August 2015, for example, a table top exercise (TTX) was conducted in Lao PDR. In September 2016, exercises on HA/DR and military medicine, AM-Hex 2016, were conducted in Thailand in order to test the final draft of the SOP. At the 9th EWG meeting on HA/DR in December 2016, the SOP was adopted and it has been on the track of discussion in the framework of ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) since then. In the third cycle, from 2017 to 2020, Japan actively participated in and contributed to each EWG. In the fourth cycle, from 2020 to 2023, Japan acts as co-chair of the EWG on PKO with Viet Nam. Japan will play active role in strengthening regional cooperation in the field of PKO.

The ADMM-Plus is a vital framework providing the member countries with opportunities to conduct multilateral talks on a wide range of regional security issues in an open manner. Japan believes it is important to keep this framework open without putting any restriction on the issues to be addressed in the forum, while allowing the participating countries to discuss a wide range of issues in a candid manner.

IV. Japan's Future Contribution to Enhance Capability of ARF

As a framework for candid discussion on the political and security issues of the entire Indo-Pacific region, ARF has steadily contributed to confidence-building in the region. In recent years, various

initiatives have been put forward in a wide range of areas, including maritime security, disaster relief, counter terrorism and transnational crime, non-proliferation and disarmament, preventive diplomacy, cyberspace, and outer space. Some of these initiatives have been translated into exercise-type activities, such as the ARF-Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx). During the inter-sessional year of 2015-2016, Japan played a leading role in animated discussions within the ARF by exercising initiatives in such areas as maritime security, disaster relief, outer space, and counter terrorism.

To further develop ARF as an action-oriented framework instead of making it serve merely as a forum for dialogue, ARF countries that co-organize each initiative need to establish practical agenda items and programs with the cooperation with stakeholders, including relevant international organizations and experts. Also, member states need to work more closely with one another to avoid duplications among initiatives and produce favorable outputs. In addition to these efforts to improve ARF functions, it is also important to strengthen cooperation with other regional security frameworks in pursuing effective synergy. The edge of the wedge is the area of disaster relief. In this particular area, similar exercises are increasingly conducted under different regional frameworks such as ADMM plus. Member states need to streamline such exercises from the viewpoint of reducing personnel and financial costs for participating countries and pursuing practical initiatives. The ARF Multi-Year Strategic Exercise Plan Workshop, held in April 2015, discussed how to optimize disaster relief exercises. Such discussions are in line with this awareness. They give a hint as to how the effectiveness of the ARF can be ensured in the future.

Japan will proactively contribute to improve ARF functions and coordinate among different regional frameworks while continue to exercise initiatives in various areas.

LAO PDR

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Regional and international peace and security, and development cooperation are of paramount importance to all countries and regions to achieve sustainable development as well as regional economic integration. Nevertheless, some parts of the world remain complex and evolving due to various challenges and uncertainties in pursuing their national socio-economic development and cooperation, such as pandemic, political and social unrests, natural disasters, terrorism, violent extremism, natural disasters, climate change, trafficking in persons, people smuggling, illegal migration, trafficking of illicit drug, territorial disputes, armed conflict, issue of cyber security, cyber-crime and poverty and development gap. In addition, geopolitical landscape is more diversified and economic globalization is confronted with the rising of protectionist policies. Apart from this, the digital disruption also places challenges to the development in the region, which requires countries to adapt and embrace the opportunities presented by the advancement of technology.

Peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region has continuously been maintained and promoted through bilateral and multilateral regional cooperation and platforms, including ASEAN-led mechanisms. The good relationships and cooperation between countries have been enhanced, and contributed to regional economic growth and promoted peace, security, stability and development.

The most striking phenomenon that the world has experienced like never before undeniably will be COVID-19 pandemic which has caused severe impacts on global political, economic, human and food security. The virus has claimed many lives and left millions of people worldwide infected requiring strict measures and restrictions to be in place in order to control and contain the spread of the virus. People's livelihood has been unprecedentedly reshaped and the practices like handshakes and standing shoulder to shoulder that were once commonly practised have now been considered potential health threat and public physical and social distancing have been encouraged instead which is called a new normal phenomenon. Due to such impacts caused by COVID-19, undoubtedly, the world order in many aspects including economy, politics and social culture will drastically change and new mindsets and vision are required to allow the world community to be able to effectively adjust to a new norm post COVID-19. Unity and cooperation amongst the countries with resources and know-how are the fundamental element to enable the world community to combat this virus.

Lao PDR shares concerns over the fluctuation of the situation in Korean Peninsula and the situation overall still remains complex and unpredictable. Lao PDR reiterates its consistent position to urge the both sides to exercise self-restraints and communicate openly with one another in order to seek means to encourage concrete, honest and open cooperation as shined in Panmunjom Declaration adopted in 2018.

The peaceful and stable environment in the Asia-Pacific presents a solid foundation not only for countries in the region in the pursuit of their socio-economic development and mutually beneficial cooperation, but also for ASEAN in consolidating and strengthening its community through the realisation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

The achievements of ASEAN over the past 5 decades have proved the relevance of ASEAN and made ASEAN a unique and developed example of regional inter-governmental organisation, playing a significant role in promoting and maintaining peace, security, stability and prosperity in the region. Besides, ASEAN-initiated frameworks or platforms have served as venues where ASEAN and its external partners as well as external partners themselves engage one another on issues of common interest and concern, thus contributing to enhancing mutual trust and confidence among participants and also promoting peace, security, stability and development in the region and beyond. Most importantly, ASEAN's centrality has been recognised by all external partners.

Moving forward, ASEAN will further strengthen its resilience and innovation, while enhancing its external relations through its outward looking policy to ensure the realisation of regional economic integration and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. The adoption of the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific by the ASEAN Leaders is a significant milestone as the Outlook will equip ASEAN with a common approach on engagement and cooperation in the wider Indo-Pacific region based on the principles and areas of cooperation that outlined in the Outlook.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Since its proclamation in 1975, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has implemented the two strategic tasks of national safeguarding and development by pursuing its consistent People's Comprehensive National Defence and Security Policy of self-defence with the participation of the entire Lao multi-ethnic people in conjunction with socio-economic development and international cooperation in accordance with its foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation.

The objective in the pursuit of the People's Comprehensive National Defence and Security Policy is to safeguard the national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, to protect national interests and the entire Lao multi-ethnic people, and to ensure national security and social order, thus creating a favourable environment for socio-economic development of the Nation. The Lao PDR's consistent policy is to neither participate in any military bloc or alliance, nor allow foreign military bases in the territory of the Lao PDR since its armed forces are for self-defence only.

The national defence and security is the task of the entire Lao multi-ethnic people where everyone has a role to play as stipulated in the Constitution of the Lao PDR.

III. National Contributions to Regional Security

The Lao PDR is fully committed to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and ASEAN Charter, and pursuant to its foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation and the People's Comprehensive National Defence and Security Policy of self-defence, the Lao PDR has deepened and widened its cooperative relations with all friendly countries and regional and international organisations around the world through the principle of mutually beneficial cooperation to enhance mutual understanding, trust and confidence in the region and the world, thereby ensuring a favourable environment for promoting development cooperation.

To date, the Lao PDR has established diplomatic relations with 140 countries and actively participates in sub-regional, regional and international frameworks such as ASEAN, ASEAN-initiated frameworks (ASEANPlus One, APT, ARF, ADMM Plus, EAS and AMMTC), United Nations, Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), ASEANAPOL, INTERPOL, Moscow Conference on International Security, Xiangshan Forum and Shangri-La Dialogue, among others.

The Lao PDR has over the years been entrusted and given the honour to chair many sub-regional, regional and international meetings. To name a few, the Lao PDR chaired ASEAN in 2004-2005, the 1st Meeting of State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2010, the 9th ASEM Summit in 2012 and ASEAN for the second time in 2016, including the ADMM and other defence-related meetings. The Lao PDR is also the Coordinator of Clearance and Reduction Education 2017-2019 under the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

The Lao PDR has been working with regional and international communities to address various challenges of common concern and interest based on its ability and in accordance with the established international principles and norms.

a. Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

The Government of the Lao PDR always attaches great importance to counter-terrorism and Transnational Crime. The Lao PDR has a consistent policy on cooperating with international community to prevent and combat all forms of terrorism. At the national level, numbers of legal framework have been issued and amended such as Law on National Public Security (2014) and Law on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (2015). More importantly, the Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Law and Penal Code have been amended to criminalize all act of terrorism as well as suppressing and punishing illegal activities related to the crime of terrorism which cause loss to life and property of its citizens, public security and order and national integrity. Operational Organisation called National Counter-Terrorism Ad-Hoc Committee has been established, which leads Ministry of Public Security with mandate, inter alia, to act as an advisory body to the Government on counter-terrorism related issues. Whereas the National Ad-Hoc Committee on Implementing and Reporting United National Security Council Resolutions 1737 has led by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This Committee oversees the implementation of all UNSC terrorism-related resolutions and to submit the National Report to the 1737 Committee.

Moreover, the Lao PDR attaches great importance to the issues of anti-money laundering and counter-funding of terrorism. The Anti-Money Laundering Intelligence Office was established in 2007 under the direct supervision of the Bank of the Lao PDR. In addition, the National Assembly of the Lao PDR enacted the Law on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) on 21 July 2014 upon the request of the National Coordination Committee for Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism, a government body with the mandate to supervise such issues. Following that, the President of the Lao PDR promulgated the Decree No. 012/PO, dated 4 February 2015 to implement the new Law on AML/CFT. The latter laid the fundamental and legal framework for the Lao PDR to undertake the work of the AML/CFT rigorously. In addition, the Lao PDR issued sub-legislation under the Law AML/CFT “Order on withholding, Freezing or Seizure of Funds Relating to Financing of Terrorism (revised), No. 03/PM, dated 11 February 2016”.

At the bilateral level, to ensure safety and security in the border areas, and to jointly address border-related issues, the Lao PDR has bilateral cooperative mechanism on border issues with each of its immediate neighbouring countries, namely Lao-Cambodia General Border Committee (GBC), Lao-China Joint Border Inspection Committee, Lao-Myanmar Provincial/Regional Border Committee (P/RBC), Lao-Thai General Border Committee (GBC), and Lao-Viet Nam Border Committee (BC).

At the regional level, the Lao PDR joined the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) in 2007, which is a sub-regional body of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in order to further advance the work on anti-money laundering and counter-funding of terrorism in the country as well as to enhance cooperation with other countries in the region. The Lao PDR ratified the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism on 28 November 2012.

The Lao PDR successfully hosted and chaired the 9th AMMTC, 3rd AMMTC + China Consultation and related Meetings, which were convened in Vientiane in 2013. The Lao PDR also hosted and chaired the 17th SOMTC and its related Meetings, and co-chaired the 12th SOMTC+ Russia Consultation meeting held on 22-27 May 2017 in Vientiane, and chaired the 21st ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and its related meetings held on 21-24 November 2017.

At the international level, the Lao PDR has always implemented all UNSC terrorism-related resolutions and closely worked with International Community to prevent and combat terrorism. This included information sharing, regularly attended international training and seminars on the margin of INTERPOL and other related transnational crime meetings. The Lao PDR as a state party and signatory to the following 13 UN conventions on counter-terrorism:

- Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (1963);
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (1970);
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation (1971);
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents (1973);
- Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (1979);

- International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages (1979);
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation (1988);
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (1988);
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (1988);
- Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (1991);
- Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (1994);
- International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997); and
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (1999).
- Recently, the Lao PDR is one of the countries faced with the emerging ICT/Cybercrime. As number of individuals and entities have significantly accessed to Information Communication and Technology, it is more likely that they are vulnerable to cyber-threats and cyber-attacks such as information and data theft, scam, phishing and spear phishing attack. These cyber-attacks have caused social-economic insecurity as well as a threat to national security. Therefore, the Government of Lao PDR has been working closely with regional and international organizations to prevent and combat cybercrimes. In order to counter cybercrimes, number of legal frameworks have been issued and amended namely Law on Data Protection (2017), Law on Prevention and Combating cybercrime (2015), Law on National Public Security (2014), Law on E-Transaction (2012), Law on Telecommunication (2011). Moreover, we have amended Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Law and Penal Code to criminalize an act of conducting cybercrimes. Ministry of Public Security, leading by General Department of Police and Ministry of Post, Telecommunications (Lao Computer Emergency Response Team-Lao CERT) are the main operational government agencies addressing this issue. To ensure the prevention and respond of such transnational crime, the Lao PDR is a part of INTERPOL24/7 and the country will continue to working closely with International Community to tackle ICT threats effectively and in timely manner.

b. Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Underscoring the great importance of disarmament and non-proliferation in ensuring durable international peace and security, the Lao PDR is supportive of multilateral disarmament efforts under United Nations frameworks.

The Lao PDR has neither the capacity nor the intention to produce, use or possess, transport, transfer or deliver nuclear, chemical or biological weapons to any states or non-state actors. The Lao Government fully supports the effort of the international community on disarmament and non-proliferation in the world and this should be carried out under the principle of multilateral diplomacy. Today, nuclear proliferation continues to be a major threat to global peace and security. Amid regional conflicts and disputes as well as civil unrests occurring across various regions, the international community should redouble its efforts to address the issue of armament. In this context, the Lao PDR will continue to work closely with regional and international communities to address those issues.

In addition, the Lao PDR is a state party to a number of regional and international instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation such as the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty, Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), and Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and recently signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, or Nuclear Weapon Treaty Ban, among others. Furthermore, being one of the members of APG, the implementation of the 40 recommendations on Counter-Proliferation Financing CPF is a mandate.

The Lao PDR believes that the creation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones has significantly contributed to strengthening the global regime of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and the enhancement of regional and global peace and security, and consolidated international efforts towards peace and security. The Lao PDR further reiterates that the recognizance of these zones by the Nuclear Weapons States (NWSs) is of great importance.

The Lao PDR recognizes the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Lao PDR became a member of the IAEA in 2011 and signed the IAEA Additional Protocol in November 2014. Currently, the Lao PDR is drafting the Law on Radioactive Protection and Nuclear Safety, Decree on Dual-Use Goods Management related to Weapon of Mass Destruction and the Law on Counter Proliferation Financing.

To address the serious impact arising from the unexploded ordnances (UXOs), the Lao PDR, as a state party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions or OSLO Convention, has been actively promoting this universal Convention in order to prevent further victimization of humankind. In addition, the country has accessed to the CCW and has been a party to the Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War. Addressing the UXO impact remains a top priority for the Lao Government. The Lao PDR was a first among the few countries in the world to adopt its own national Millennium Development Goal called MDG9 in early 2000 and recently launched its own national SDG entitled “SDG18: Lives Safe from UXO”. However, UXO clearance, victim assistance and mine-risk education remain challenges for the Lao PDR to fully operate due to the fact that the operation is a very complex process which requires sufficient resources, human and technical capacities, Therefore, that is very important that all countries, International Organisations and INGOs continue to support and assist UXO/Mine Action Sector in the Lao PDR. In order to further strengthen regional cooperation in this area, the Lao People’s Army and the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation are co-chairing the ADMM-Plus Experts Working Group (EWG) on Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) from 2017 to 2020, and so far have successfully conducted a number of meetings as follows:

- 5th ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA, 22-25 May 2017, Vientiane, Lao PDR;
- 6th ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA, 2-5 October 2017, Moscow, Russia;
- 7th ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA, 24-27 April 2018, Xiengkhouang, Lao PDR;
- 8th ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA, October 2018, Moscow, Russia;

- ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA Site Survey And Final Planning Conference, 26–29 March 2019, Bogor-Indonesia;
- ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA FTX, 14-22 September 2019, Bogor-Indonesia; and
- 9th ADMM-Plus EWG on HMA and Co-Chairmanship Handover Ceremony, 3-6 December 2019, Vientiane, Lao PDR

In addition, the Lao PDR supports the role of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre as the center of excellence to encourage efforts to address explosive remnants of war (ERW), to facilitate cooperation between interested ASEAN Member States and relevant institutions, including the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and has contributed USD 10,000 to the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre.

c. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The Lao PDR places high importance to and supports regional and international cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) based on its limited resources and in accordance with the principle of request or consent of the affected countries.

The Lao PDR is a party to four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and two additional Protocols as follows: Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, 12 August 1949; Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, 12 August 1949; Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 12 August 1949; Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 12 August 1949; Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977; and Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), 8 June 1977.

The Lao PDR hosted and chaired the 7th Joint Task Force on Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Relief on 5 April 2017 in Vientiane and the 31st ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management, 8th Task Force on Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Relief, 5th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management and 6th Conference of Party to ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response on 17-19 October 2017 in Luang Prabang, and the Lao PDR has volunteered to be co-chair of the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief for 2 inter-sessional years (2018-2020).

The Lao People's Army has actively contributed to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR). To name a few, the Lao People's Army co-chaired the ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR with Japan from 2014 to 2016 and successfully carried the following activities:

- 5th ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR on 10-12 December 2014, Vientiane, Lao PDR;
- 6th ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR (TTX) on 5-7 August 2015, Vientiane, Lao PDR;
- 7th ADMM-Plus EWG on 9-10 December 2015, Tokyo, Japan;

- 8th ADMM-Plus EWG on 10 May 2016, Tokyo, Japan;
- ADMM-Plus Military Medicine Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Joint Exercise 2016 (AM-HEX 2016), 1-11 September 2016, Chonburi, Thailand; and
- 9th ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR, 14-16 December 2016, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

In addition, the Lao People's Army hosted and chaired the 7th ACMMC under the theme: "Strengthening ASEAN Military Medical Cooperation in HADR" on 11-15 July 2017 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The Lao PDR has co-chaired with Canada and China the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ARF ISM on DR) for the cycle 2019-2021, the co-chairs successfully hosted the 18th ARF ISM on DR on 2-3 April 2019 in Vientiane, the Lao PDR.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR has jointly organised annual seminars on international human rights law (IHL) to promote awareness and understanding of IHL in the Lao PDR.

d. People Smuggling

The Lao PDR acknowledges that people smuggling and human trafficking violate fundamental rights, freedom and dignity of its citizens as stipulated in the Lao PDR's Constitution and laws as well as in international conventions. Therefore, the Government has attached great importance to addressing those issues by establishing a National Steering Committee on Human Trafficking in 2004 as a dedicated anti-trafficking governmental body, which is comprised of high ranking government officials from ministries concerned. Amongst others, the Committee cooperates with neighbouring countries, international agencies as well as with non-governmental and civil society organizations to actively run projects and joint activities in response to human trafficking that takes place domestically and across the border. It also enhances the implementation of the policies and legislation as well as National Plans of Action (NPA) and other preventive measures on countering human trafficking to be in line with sub-regional and regional action plans. To support this ambitious work of the Committee, the Ministry of Public Security set up the Department of Anti-Human Trafficking to act as the Secretariat and the National Focal Point for cooperation with foreign governments, and regional and international organisations. The Department of Anti-Human Trafficking chaired the 32nd Meeting of Heads of Specialist Units on Trafficking in Persons on 23 May 2017 in Vientiane Lao PDR.

In order to institutionalize the fight against human trafficking as well as to bring justice to the victims and punish the offenders, the Law on Anti-Human Trafficking has been approved by the Lao National Assembly in 2015 after a broad consultation process. The law calls for strong punitive measures, including maximum penalty of life imprisonment and covering all forms of human trafficking while also foreseeing protection and assistance for the victims. In fact, the law reflects our obligations and commitments under relevant regional and international instruments to which the Lao PDR is party.

In order to fight against human trafficking in a comprehensive and effective manner, the Lao Government further enhances its strong bilateral cooperation and collaboration with countries in the region such as Thailand, Viet Nam and China as well as multilateral collaboration with ASEAN and Mekong sub-region countries, including through ASEAN-Australia cooperation on counter trafficking, Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking Process (COMMIT) and the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crimes.

Lao PDR signed the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) in 2015 and ratified it in 2017.

At the international level, the Lao PDR has concluded bilateral agreements and is party to the following conventions on and relating to the fight against human trafficking:

- Convention on the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others in 1978;
- Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;
- Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Lao PDR and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand on Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;
- Agreement between the Government of the Lao PDR and the Government of Viet Nam on cooperation in Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons and Protection of Victims of Trafficking;
- Agreement between the Governments of the Lao PDR and People's Republic of China on Cooperation in Preventing and Trafficking in Persons;
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Lao PDR and the Government of Australia Concerning Mutual Cooperation in Combating Unlawful migration, Trafficking in Humans and Smugglings of People.
- United Nation Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and Human Right Trafficking; and
- Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

IV. Role of the ARF

Since its inception, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), a multilateral forum with ASEAN as the primary driving force, has played an important role in promoting mutual understanding, confidence and trust among diverse participants through dialogue and practical cooperation, thereby contributing positively to the maintenance and promotion of peace, stability and development cooperation in the region and the world as a whole.

The ARF has achieved significant progress in its three-stage process towards the ultimate stage of conflict resolution. In light of growing traditional and non-traditional security challenges and in moving forward, all participants should build upon the achievements made thus far including through joint initiatives, and move the ARF process forward at a pace comfortable to all ARF participants, taking into account the diversity of this Asia-Pacific region with a view to further enhancing mutual understanding, trust and confidence, and maintaining and promoting peace, stability and cooperation for development in the region and the world at large. To this end, the Lao PDR will continue to work with all participants under ARF processes, including the ARF ISM on DR that the Lao PDR is a co-chair from 2018 to 2021, in contributing to the realisation of the ARF Vision Statement.

MALAYSIA

OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Malaysia places high importance on the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to uphold, among others, the ASEAN Charter, Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and universally recognized principles of law in enhancing regional peace, security, stability and prosperity.

In recent years, the world security environment has undergone major changes that will likely shape the situation in Southeast Asia in the years to come. The continuing confrontation between major powers as well as the political and economic challenges could begin as a course that can threaten stability and prosperity. Having said that, these may bring new opportunities, especially in cultivating a new order. The main outlook in the future is the challenge to oversee the uncertainty and complex regional order due to uncertain relationship between major powers.

On the cyber front, the advancement of technology is now contributing to a new form of threat. As population around the globe has become more technologically savvy, security operations need to leverage on a different modes of doing things. Cyber-attacks for example can be very complicated to deal with and requires new approach to counter it effectively. With the rise in cyber threats, in addition to other existing security challenges such as maritime security and terrorism, strategic collaboration between regional countries is needed.

The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic outbreak has impacted not only individuals but also organisations and countries. People have to adapt to living in new normal condition and organisations have to resort to remote working hence increasing the dependency on online services. This growing reliance on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has escalated the risk of malicious cyber-attacks exponentially. In this era of digital economy and extensive use of the Internet of Things (IoT) as well as other emerging technologies, cyber security is becoming a critical success factor for such implementation. Recognising that, ASEAN has collectively work in various platforms to eradicate the risks and contain the threats to increase the trust and confidence in the use of ICTs.

Currently, ASEAN cyber security landscape is advancing through the development of the regional framework, plan, strategy, statement and declaration related to cyber security such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of ICTs, ASEAN ICT Master Plan 2020, ASEAN Framework on Personal Data Protection, ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation Strategy, ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Cybersecurity Cooperation and ASEAN Declaration to Prevent and Combat Cybercrime.

To further facilitate the implementation of the strategic level documents, several cyber security related platforms have been established. Among others are ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime Working Group on Cyber Crime (SOMTC WG on CC) under ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting-Plus Expert Working Group on Cybersecurity (ADMM-Plus EWG on CS) under ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting (ADMM), ASEAN Network Security Action Council (ANSAC) under ASEAN Digital Senior Officials Meeting (ADGSOM) and ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of ICTs (ARF ISM on ICTs Security) under ARF. Along with that, cyber security issues are also being discussed in other platforms namely the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting Responsible for Information (SOMRI) Working Group on Information, Media and Training (WG IMT) and ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC).

Realising the existence of various platforms across ASEAN that discuss the cyber security issues, ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Leaders Statement on Cybersecurity Cooperation at the 32nd ASEAN Summit 2018, which tasked the relevant ASEAN Ministers to closely consider and submit recommendations on feasible options of coordinating cyber security policy, diplomacy, cooperation, technical and capacity building efforts of the three pillars of ASEAN, so that ASEAN's efforts are focused, effective, and coordinated holistically. Subsequently, the 4th ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC) 2019 agreed to recommend the establishment of an ASEAN Cross-Sectoral Coordinating Committee with representatives from relevant sectoral bodies to strengthen ASEAN's cross-sectoral coordination on cyber security. Based on AMCC's recommendation, the 19th ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers Meeting (TELMIN) 2019 agreed to establish the ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordinating Committee (ASEAN Cyber-CC). ASEAN Cyber-CC shall promote cross-sectoral and cross-pillar cooperation among ASEAN sectoral bodies on efforts to strengthen cyber security in the region, facilitate cross-sectoral discussions to promote policy coherence across the sectors and strengthen ASEAN centrality in the area of cyber security. This will allow ASEAN to drive its cyber security agenda synchronously regardless of discipline or area, and advance as one entity at the international fora to ensure a stronger, unified and inclusive ASEAN's voice on this cross-cutting matter.

Malaysia also reiterates the need for a more effective international cooperation to accelerate counterterrorism efforts, and remains committed to tackle this evolving threat, including from groups such as Daesh. Daesh's so-called physical caliphate was declared defeated on 23 March 2019 by US-backed forces, with the liberation of Daesh's last stronghold, Baghuz, in Syria. Daesh supreme leader Abu Bakar al-Baghdadi was pronounced dead on 26 October 2019, and this also served as a severe blow to the group. Closer to home, key regional terrorists operating in Syria, including Indonesia's Bahrum Naim and Bahrum Shah, as well as, Malaysia's Muhammad Wanddy, Akel Zainal and Rafi Udin, who were known to have actively recruited individuals in the Southeast Asian region to join the group, were also killed in past years. This can be said to have slowed down recruitment in the region quite significantly. Nevertheless, remnants of Daesh and other militant groups remain a threat, as they continue to find an audience for their extremist ideologies. Malaysia, in particular, is concerned over the rise of 'lone wolves' and 'wolf packs' threatening the country, as well as foreign terror elements viewing the region as a strategic transit point and destination for conducting terror-related activities.

Trepidation over the return of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) continue to be voiced by many quarters. History has shown that, returning FTFs with potential battle-hardened ideology, combat skills and networks, pose a serious threat to receiving nations. Southeast Asia, in particular, is mindful of FTFs who wish to continue Daesh's fight and bring the "battle" to the region. In this regard, Malaysia has stated its commitment to bring Malaysian FTFs home, to be subject to local judicial and rehabilitation processes.

Meanwhile, longstanding terrorist networks between countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, is also a cause of great concern to the stability of the region. The detention of an Indonesian man in Sabah, Malaysia in May 2019 serves as an example. Acting as a facilitator for the movement of terrorist elements between Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines since 2018, he was responsible for the safe passage of an Indonesian couple (and their family) into southern Philippines via Sabah. The Indonesian couple was accountable for the January 2019 church bombing in Jolo in the southern Philippines.

Taking into consideration all the above, the strengthening of regional cooperation driven by regional instruments such as ASEAN is ever more pressing. In this respect, Malaysia's contributions towards regional counter-terrorism efforts can be illustrated by SEARCCT's utilising of ASEAN mechanisms to conduct regional-level capacity building programmes, such as through the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Other platforms including the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), also provide SEARCCT with the opportunity to include participants in the Southeast Asian region and beyond, to be part of the Centre's programmes.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

Malaysia recently published the Defence White Paper (DWP) which details the Government's stance on national defence, presents its outlook for strategic trends, and outlines the National Defence Framework to pursue the vision of Malaysia as a secure, sovereign, and prosperous nation. The DWP aims to establish a holistic long-term planning for Malaysia's defence capability and sustainability in protecting our national interests. In order to achieve an effective defence planning, the DWP draws out the priorities and future plans to enhance Malaysia's security and defence capability. The DWP identifies Malaysia's defence strategy as centred on three pillars, namely:

- (i) **Concentric Deterrence: Malaysia's interests are categorised into three geographic areas:**
 - a. Core Areas houses the government administrative capital, socio-economic centres and main population zones.
 - b. Extended Area is rich in living and non-living resources especially hydrocarbons, as one of the main sources of Malaysia's revenue.
 - c. Forward Area covers locations beyond the extended area, with national interests that include regional stability and efforts towards global peace.

(ii) **Comprehensive Defence by adopting the whole-of government and whole-of-society approaches to defend the country, in line with the spirit of Total Defence.**

(iii) **Credible Partnerships through bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation with external partners.**

DATA CONTRIBUTION TO ARF ARMS REGISTER

i. Total defence expenditure on annual basis

1. Defence expenditure

EXPENDITURE	(RM)	(USD)*
OPERATING	12,496,237,400	2,850,679,213.43
DEVELOPMENT	3,083,655,200	703,452,687.29
TOTAL DEFENCE	15,579,892,600	3,554,131,900.72

*Exchange rate as per June 2020 (USD1 = MYR4.3836)

2. Defence expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP): **1.03% (2020)**

3. Defence expenditure per capita: **RM476.01 (USD108.59)***

*Exchange rate as per June 2020 (USD1 = MYR4.3836)

NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO REGIONAL SECURITY

PARTICIPATION IN COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN/ GERMANE TO ASIA-PACIFIC

COUNTERTERRORISM

- **Promoting a people-centred approach to counterterrorism**

Since the 9/11 incident, we have witnessed many security operations that have been carried out all over the world to wipe out terrorist groups. Although countries are spending huge sums of money on security, the threat posed by terrorist organizations still exists. Therefore, Malaysia joins other countries in calling for robust and effective international action to fight against terrorism. Such efforts must be based on and in full respect of the UN Charter and universally recognised principles of law, including international humanitarian and human rights laws. The fight against terrorism and extremism can never be won through force or punitive measures alone. It should also encompass strategies such as winning the hearts and minds of the terrorists, wisdom and moderation. Rehabilitation and de-radicalisation are important elements in the war against terrorism and violent extremism. Malaysia

has initiated several de-radicalisation programmes to address the problem of radicalism due to religious misconceptions, with the specific purpose to rehabilitate and subsequently reintegrate the radicalised persons into the society.

Malaysia's Integrated Rehabilitation Module for terrorist detainees covers various aspect, such as social skills, self-management, psychology, patriotism and financial management as well as counselling session that is conducted with the aim to counter extremist ideology and to reintegrate radicalized individuals back into society. Malaysian authorities also conduct reintegration or post-release programme that provide support mechanisms to constantly engage with the former-terrorist and his/her family members to reduce the risk of relapse.

The rehabilitation and reintegration programme are implemented with the cooperation from community including clerics, family members as well as NGOs. Effective and sustainable P/CVE programmes are essential to address violent extremism issues and preventing them over the long-term. Governments cannot do this work alone, but should pursue a "whole of society" approach that includes civil society and other local actors. Malaysia has also adopted the "Upstream Strategy" which involves community engagements with multiple-agency support such as the National Security Council and the Religious Department. Furthermore, The Malaysian Islamic Development Department (JAKIM) has set up a cross-agency committee, known as the Jihad Concept Explanation Action Committee to address misconceptions about jihad.

Besides the public awareness campaign, rehabilitation programme for militant detainees has been implemented to help deradicalize ideologically driven individuals from extremist thoughts and behaviour, and re-educate them with mainstream values suitable for Malaysian society. This programme also includes financial assistance and continuous monitoring after their release from detention. Apart from the national initiatives, civil society organisation (CSO), such as Global Movement of Moderates (GMM), Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM), Malaysia Lifeline for Syria, and Islamic Renaissance Front (IRF) have also come forward to help the authorities in countering extremist narratives. They organize public talks, produce materials, and created posters and short videos with the purpose of raising awareness and prevention.

With the youth demographic representing a potentially vulnerable group within the Malaysian context as well as within the region and beyond, the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) has decided to reach out to influencers within such groups. A number of youth programmes were organised by SEARCCT to achieve this objective, with also the added objective of equipping and encouraging youth leaders to be partners in shaping comprehensive, community-based solutions and to invite youth to be part of the content creation. SEARCCT has been involved in a number of media-based initiatives to prevent incitement to terrorism and violent extremism, including:

- i. The *Bongkar* web series was a collaboration between Suria FM a local radio station and SEARCCT, which aimed to address the issues of terrorism and radicalisation in a more attractive and consumable form for the Malaysian audience.

- ii. The *HYPE* video competition and campaign were aimed at encouraging youth currently studying in tertiary education institutions all over Malaysia to be partners in shaping comprehensive, community-based solutions in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE).
- iii. The *Teh-Tarik Talks* is a series of short videos which combined discussions on countering violent extremism with themes that are attractive to the Malaysian public. The series featured various groups of people who can play a part in PCVE i.e. humanitarian activists, educators, students, researchers, celebrities and social media influencers.
- iv. The *Prison 3R* (Radicalisation, Rehabilitation & Reintegration) Series was aimed at obtaining and documenting first-hand experiences of detainees currently serving prison sentences for terrorism-related activities, in order to show the public the dangers of online radicalisation as well as the push/pull factors that can propel an individual to either lend support or engage in violent extremism. This project was in collaboration with the Prisons Department Malaysia as well as media agencies who could provide guidance with regard to the 'story-telling' aspect of the documentary. From this project, SEARCCT produced media products (videos and comics) based on the stories provided by the detainees and the products were subsequently disseminated via SEARCCT's social media platforms (@MyAman).

In 2019, by working with an advertising media agency, SEARCCT also ran a digital campaign called #SenjataSaya, which sought to act as an alternative narrative to counter violent extremism by redefining what an individual's 'weapon' is. This campaign featured specific social media/community influencers such as musicians, radio hosts, NGO leaders, poets, etc. to produce audio and video public announcements which were distributed by radio stations and on social media platforms.

- **Promotion of inter-civilization dialogue**

SEARCCT and the Commonwealth Secretariat co-organised a five-day Commonwealth Youth Dialogue Conference: Youth Summit on International Peace and Security & Building Community Resilience from 1 - 5 April 2019. The programme focused on international peace and security as well as building community resilience. Fifty-three young participants from Bangladesh, Brunei, India, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Malaysia successfully completed the course. The programme was also uniquely conducted. Only 30% consisted of lectures and the rest was filled with discussions, dialogues, group activities and a mock Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. During the mock meeting, issues such as hate speech, radicalisation, extremism, equal opportunities, education and economic growth were discussed. The sessions were designed as a platform for participants to voice out their opinions and they were not shy to do so.

On 20 November 2019, SEARCCT along with the Asia-Europe Institute, the Department of International & Strategic Studies and CARUM of the University of Malaya (UM), organised the *Post "Caliphate": Daesh in the Digital Realm* Dialogue. Speakers as well as moderators were roped in from the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP), International Islamic University of Malaysia (UIA), S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Singapore (RSiS), British High Commission of Malaysia, CyberSecurity Malaysia, EBDesk Malaysia, Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS Malaysia), *Pusat Hak Asasidan Keselamatan Negeri Sabah* (ASASI), SEARCCT and UM.

SEARCCT has also been working to get civil society organisations (CSOs) to play a more prominent role in PCVE, as we believe that their voices would resonate better among local communities in countering the threat of terrorism. In a bid to strengthen further the “Whole-of-Society” approach in counter-terrorism, SEARCCT and *Pertubuhan IKRAM* Malaysia held a one-day program entitled *Discussion and Dialogue with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (PCVE) Campaigns* on 27 November 2019. Thirty-four participants representing 27 local CSOs attended the programme. In December 2019, SEARCCT co-organised a programme with Deakin University, Australia to conduct a Peer-to-Peer Sharing of Best Practices on PCVE Online/Offline Campaigns. Among the objectives of the programme were to learn from Australia’s experience in engaging with CSOs in PCVE and planned a suitable strategy to collaborate with CSOs in PCVE campaigns. The programme involved 22 participants from local CSOs.

- **Information sharing and intelligence exchange and document integrity and security in enhancing cooperation to combat terrorism and transnational crimes**

Current scenarios of terrorism acts have become increasingly sophisticated with the use of advanced communication and cyber technologies. Malaysia has been working closely with other countries to enhance cooperation in the field of counter terrorism and eventually looking forward to continuing its efforts in exploring strategies to combat terrorism, which could add high value to Malaysia’s counter terrorism measures in practice. Malaysia is always committed to address terrorism threat, especially at the international level. Malaysia’s commitment is reflected by the cooperation and sharing of information with other countries, international organizations and foreign intelligence counterparts.

Malaysia is a member of several international forums on counter terrorism, such as ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN-Japan Dialogue on Counter-Terrorism and ASEAN-Europe Meeting (ASEM). Malaysia is currently State Party to 9 of the 13 international conventions and protocols on combating terrorism;

- v. 1963 Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (Tokyo Convention);
- vi. 1970 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (Hague Convention);
- vii. 1971 Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation (Montreal Convention);
- viii. 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crime against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents;
- ix. 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings;
- x. 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Montreal Convention;
- xi. 1979 International Convention against the Taking of Hostages;
- xii. 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism; and
- xiii. 1991 Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection.

Furthermore, Malaysia also cooperates with regional countries to address terrorism threats such as: sharing of FTF personal details and security information with INTERPOL and friendly services;

- i. sharing of FTF personal details and security information with INTERPOL and friendly services;
- ii. listing all subjects suspected of endangering the national security in the Watch List; and
- iii. establishing an intelligence sharing on foreign nationals that is of interest to the security of regional countries during meetings using platform such as INDOMALPHI meetings, Trilateral CT Intelligence Workshop and etc.

Terrorism plays a direct threat to the security of many countries. It is a persistent global threat that knows no borders, nationality, and is a challenge that all countries must work together in addressing it. Recent events have shown that the threat of terrorism should not be addressed solely through hard approaches such as conducting counter-terrorist operations but also to include soft approaches such as counter narratives and improving economic conditions of the population. The Malaysian Government is taking a wide range of actions in countering terrorism. The annual ADMM-Plus meeting attended by the Defence Ministers of ASEAN Member States and the eight Plus dialogue partners regularly discusses the issue of terrorism and proves a significant signal of ASEAN unity and consistency in fighting terrorism. In addition, Malaysia's regional involvement in combatting terrorism includes:

- i. Established Malacca Straits Patrols (MSP) in 2004 with Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia.
- ii. Established Trilateral Corporation Agreement (TCA) in 2016 with Indonesia and the Philippines to improve maritime security conditions in the Sulu Seas.

These initiatives focus on the conduct of maritime patrols, provide immediate assistance for safety of people and ship in distress, conduct information sharing and intelligence as well as serves as hotline of communications between members state. These initiatives also have produced remarkable impact with perpetuate reduction of sea robberies cases and kidnapping for ransom which ultimately contributed towards the security of our waters.

- iii. Member of the ASEAN Our Eyes Initiative under ADMM, adopted at the 12th ADMM in 2018.

It aimed at enhancing information and strategic intelligence exchange to combat terrorism by utilising the ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI), a secure telecommunication connection between Defence Ministers of ASEAN member states.

- iv. Member of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Counter Terrorism (ADMM-Plus EWG on CT) since its establishment in 2011.

Participated in seminars, workshops, and exercises with ADMM-Plus members, aimed at enhancing practical cooperation and confidence building measures between ASEAN and Plus partners in maritime domain whilst promoting efforts towards safe navigation in the region.

In addition, SEARCCT has also been active on a number of regional and international platforms including the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and several United Nations (UN) entities including United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNCCT), United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC).

The latest UN-level programme was held in collaboration with UNCCT in August 2019 in Kuala Lumpur, on 'Enhancing the Skills of Southeast Asian Officials in Relation to the Exploitation of Social Media and the Internet to Counter the Foreign Terrorist Fighters Phenomenon and Violent Extremism – National Workshop for officials of Malaysia'.

At the regional level, the latest programme was jointly organised between SEARCCT, the ASEAN-Malaysia National Secretariat (AMNS) and the United States, entitled 'ARF Workshop on Aviation Security and Information Sharing' in Kuala Lumpur in July 2019. The sessions were mainly filled with discussions on the challenges of implementing Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Records (PNR). Experts also shared the best practices of good watch listing, suspicious traveller encounter management and managing insider threat. Several sessions explored promoting a culture of security awareness among aviation industry stakeholders, as well as the importance of information sharing and having effective landside security.

SEARCCT was part of the Malaysian delegation for the 15th Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Counter-Terrorism Working Group (CTWG) Meeting on 10 February 2020. The Centre contributed to discussions on counter-terrorism in other international fora as well as exchanged views on analysis of terrorist threats in the APEC region and measures taken by Economies to respond to terrorism.

- **Cooperative counter-terror action to border security**

Malaysian authorities have practiced the exchange of intelligence information between INDONESIA, MALAYSIA and PHILIPPINES officially through the INDOMALPHI Trilateral Cooperation Arrangement (TCA). The TCA has been holding a joint conference and meeting for the last three years on a quarterly basis with the countries taking turns in hosting them.

In addition, there are also intelligence officers who maintain direct contact with counterparts and exchange information promptly. The cooperation of these three countries will be enhanced over time to ensure the effectiveness of intelligence sharing concept and to succeed in combating cross-border criminals. The INDOMALPHI concept also facilitates joint assignment of the TMP (Trilateral Maritime Patrols) and TAP (Trilateral Air Patrols), under which periodic activities are carried out. The joint air and maritime patrols are usually held at the Malaysia-Philippines and Malaysia-Indonesia borders.

Malaysia authorities also have close relationships with INTERPOL in order to combat terrorism and transnational crimes. To date, we have launched various joint task force operations.

Besides that, Malaysia has established the Malacca Straits Patrols in 2004 with Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia; as well as a Trilateral Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with Indonesia and the Philippines in efforts to improve the maritime security conditions in the Sulu Seas.

- **Measures against terrorist financing**

In terms of terrorism financing, based on the risk assessment conducted by Malaysian authorities, legitimate means remain the primary source of terrorist funding in Malaysia. Among the fundraising methods used are self-funding from legitimate income, savings, social security withdrawals, financial support from family members, and small donations from the public.

To date, Malaysian authorities have prosecuted 22 terrorism financing cases. There has also been an increase in the use of bank accounts to receive donations from sympathisers and moving the funds to leaders of terrorist organisations, groups and individuals in conflict zones. Remittance operators and unregulated operators or “hawala” have also been reported to be the preferred channels to move funds abroad.

Despite current terrorism financing method in Malaysia is not too complicated, Malaysian authority remain vigilant as to new method of financing that they might use in the future. This include kidnap for ransom (KFR), exploitation of emerging technologies, manipulation of not-for profit organisations (NPO) as well as smuggling of exotic wildlife and natural resources. Malaysia also realise that trans-border criminal activities would be used by terrorist as a mean to raise fund, this includes smuggling of migrant and smuggling of illicit goods.

Besides that,SEARCCT has also organised two programmes surrounding theme of counter-terrorism financing investigation, involving about 60 participants mainly from the Royal Malaysia Police, Attorney General’s Chambers and the Central Bank of Malaysia in 2019.

NON-PROLIFERATION, COUNTER-PROLIFERATION, ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

Malaysia remains committed towards the goal of general and complete disarmament of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Malaysia is of the view that the elimination of such weapons, especially nuclear weapons, must remain at the top of the international agenda, as it significantly contributes towards international peace and security.

- **Supporting national implementation of united nations security council resolution 1540**

Malaysia reaffirms the significance of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540 (2004) in further strengthening the non-proliferation regime and has:

- i. Signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (1972 BWC) on 10 April 1972 and ratified on 6 September 1991.

Malaysia recognizes the importance for States Parties to undertake necessary measures, including reviewing relevant constitutional process to implement the provisions of the BWC, as stipulated under Article IV of the Convention. Malaysia is in the process of finalising a comprehensive BWC Bill, which would reinforce the existing domestic legislative framework for the implementation and enforcement of the BWC.

Malaysia and the BWC Implementation Support Unit had co-hosted the Second Regional Workshop for ASEAN States Parties to the BWC on Preparedness to Respond to the Deliberate Use of Biological Weapons from 1-2 October 2019. In collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Malaysia also co-hosted the Regional Workshop for ASEAN States on the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical, Biological and Toxin Weapons on 3 October 2019.

- ii. Ratified the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (1925 Geneva Protocol) on 10 December 1970.
- iii. Signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (1993 CWC) on 13 January 1993 and ratified on 20 April 2000.

Malaysia is committed to the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the CWC, and works closely with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) through our National Authority for the CWC (NACWC). Malaysia co-hosted two (2) regional programmes with the OPCW in 2019, namely the OPCW Workshop on the Role of Implementing Legislation on the Chemical Weapons Convention in Addressing Threats arising from Non-State Actors from 9-11 April 2019, and the Advanced Course on Chemical Emergency Response for First Responders from the Asia Region from 23-27 September 2019. Malaysia is scheduled to co-host a field exercise for first responders from the Asia region in November 2020. Malaysia will continue to strengthen its implementation and enforcement of the CWC as well as its cooperation with the OPCW.

- iv. Signed the Arms Trade Treaty on 26 September 2013.

Malaysia remains supportive of the Arms Trade Treaty and had played a constructive role during the negotiations leading up to the conclusion of the Treaty. Malaysia is actively pursuing the ratification of the ATT domestically, and looks forward to being a State Party at the earliest opportunity.

Malaysia is also actively undertaking efforts towards enacting comprehensive nuclear legislation, which will allow Malaysia to ratify and accede to various international instruments on nuclear safety and security.

To this effect, Malaysia continues to undertake the necessary measures in implementing all aspects and obligations under UNSCR 1540 (2004), which includes reviewing and amending domestic legislation to adapt to the changing dynamics of proliferation scenarios.

In 2017, the Strategic Trade Act 2010 (STA 2010) was amended to incorporate several new elements such as the introduction of penalties, introduction of the presumption of export, and the appointment of additional authorized officers under the Act with respect to the enforcement of proliferation financing. Other domestic laws that complement the STA 2010 and the implementation of UNSCR 1540 include the Arms Act 1960 and the Customs Act 1967. These laws also regulate conventional arms in Malaysia and prevent their diversion to the illicit market.

- **Non-proliferation**

Malaysia is also committed to preventing the proliferation of WMDs and their related technologies and delivery systems. In this regard, Malaysia is Party to a number of international treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation of WMDs, including the:

- i. Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water (1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty - PTBT) on 21 August 1963 and ratified on 15 July 1964.
- ii. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (2017 TPNW) on 20 September 2017.

Malaysia hails the adoption of the TPNW as the much needed momentum in rejuvenating the process towards general and complete disarmament. Malaysia was among the first 50 States to sign the TPNW when it was opened for signature in 2017, and is currently undertaking the necessary domestic processes towards ratifying the Treaty at the earliest opportunity.

- iii. Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (1998 CTBT) on 23 July 1998 and ratified on 17 January 2008.

Malaysia recognises the contribution of the CTBT to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Malaysia continues to host a Radionuclide Monitoring Station (RMS) as part of the monitoring and verification installations under the Treaty since 2008. Malaysia has also served as Chairperson of the CTBT Organisation Preparatory Commission from June to December 2019.

- iv. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968 NPT) on 1 July 1968 and ratified on 5 March 1970.

Malaysia reaffirms the role of the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Malaysia had chaired the 2019 NPT Preparatory

Committee which took place from 29 April to 10 May 2019 in New York, and will be chairing Main Committee I on Nuclear Disarmament during the 2020 NPT Review Conference when it is convened. Malaysia looks forward to contributing towards a successful Review Conference, both in its national capacity and as Chair of Main Committee I on Nuclear Disarmament, and hopes that the upcoming Review Conference will bring States Parties together towards achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, despite the challenges facing the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture at present.

- v. Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof (1971 Seabed Treaty) on 20 May 1970 and ratified on 21 June 1972.
- vi. Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) on 15 December 1995 and ratified on 11 October 1996.

Malaysia reaffirms the significance of the SEANWFZ Treaty as the disarmament and non-proliferation instrument in the ASEAN region. Malaysia welcomes the readiness of the Nuclear Weapon States to resume consultations on the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty, and stands ready to engage the Nuclear Weapon States towards the resolution of outstanding issues pertaining to their accession to the Protocol.

- vii. Agreement between the Government of Malaysia and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1972 IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement) on 29 February 1972.
- viii. Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency on 1 September 1987.
- ix. Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident on 1 September 1987.
- x. Regional Co-operative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (2017 RCA) on 19 June 2017.
- xi. Agreement between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Governments of Malaysia and the United States of America Concerning the Transfer of A Research Reactor and Enriched Uranium (Supply and Project Agreement) on 22 September 1980.

Malaysia continues to support activities related to disarmament and non-proliferation under the ambit of the ARF. Malaysia had co-chaired with Canada and New Zealand the 7th, 8th and 9th ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ARF ISM on NPD) in 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively, and continues to participate in ARF ISMs on NPD, most recently in April 2019 in Indonesia.

Malaysia is also part of other disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, in which Malaysia had endorsed the Initiative's Statement of Principles on 21 March 2012, as well as the Proliferation Security Initiative, which Malaysia had subscribed to on 23 April 2014. Malaysia believes that these initiatives add value to a country's existing arrangements and efforts to curb illicit trafficking of WMDs.

TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

The fight against transnational crime must be done collectively. Considering the complexity of transnational crime, Malaysia needs to enhance our defence capability and work together with other countries in this borderless environment. In line with this, Malaysia continues to highlight transnational crimes as one of the non-traditional security issues that needs to be addressed on various platforms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and ADMM-Plus.. The Ministry of Defence Malaysia has also established the Cyber Defence Operation Centre (CDOC) to address the increase in non-traditional security threats.

- a. Established Trilateral Corporation Agreement (TCA) with Indonesia and the Philippines to improve maritime security conditions in the Sulu Seas; and
- b. Member of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Counter Terrorism (ADMM-Plus EWG on CT)

Through seminars, workshops, and various multinational joint exercises, the EWG on CT has progressed to enhance practical cooperation, capacity building, and interoperability among member nations forces in countering terrorism in multi scenario, including urban terrorism.

- **Promoting collaboration on the prevention of diversion of precursors into illicit drug manufacture**

Malaysia is a party to three (3) international conventions namely the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, Convention on Psychotropic Substances 1971 and United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The implementation of control is to ensure that the substances are used rationally for medical treatment, research and education, legal industrial activities and is not diverted. By virtue of international obligation, Malaysia deals with the Competent Authority of each country in regard to the import and export of the mentioned items.

Domestically, import and export of precursors are controlled under Customs Prohibition Order and Poisons Act 1952. The mechanism of control is done via licensing, inspection, audit and monitoring activities. In addition, Malaysia fully supports INCB decision in scheduling new substances into the three International Conventions, by incorporating the substances into the national law. For instance, MAPA (MAPA is frequently used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine-type stimulants. MAPA: Methyl alpha-phenylacetoacetate) which was agreed to be scheduled under Schedule I, 1988 Convention during the 63rd CND Meeting was immediately listed under the Poisons Act 1952 and Customs Prohibition Order in Malaysia.

Malaysia has also strengthened the import and export control of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine and ephedrine whereby each consignment requires permit prior import and export since 31st December 2010. Malaysia imposed the annual legitimate requirement (ALR) of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine as a prerequisite for import permit application starting from 2011. The ALR for Malaysia will be reported to International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) annually.

Malaysia has fully utilised the INCB online system for Pre-Export Notification (PEN-ONLINE) before approval of importation and exportation for all precursors since 2007. Malaysia issues PEN prior to exportation of precursors including pharmaceutical preparation containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. In order to prevent diversion attempt, Malaysia will not approve the export if legitimacy of the end-user is suspicious. Those systems are secured on-line tools for enhanced communication, information and intelligence sharing between competent national authorities on the internationally controlled substances.

Therefore, Malaysia urges all countries to support INCB's international initiatives, i.e.: Project Prims, Project Cohesion, Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS), Project ION Incident Communication System (IONICS) and utilise the INCB online system to ensure legitimacy of trade and prevent the diversion.

As with other controlled substances, sharing of information and intelligence between enforcement agencies are pertinent to stop the illicit trafficking of substances, including precursor chemicals. Therefore, multilateral and bilateral cooperation between Malaysia and other States are covered in the scope of cooperation in drug matters.

Inline with the regional theme of "Securing ASEAN Communities against Illicit Drugs", Malaysia continues to stand in solidarity with all ASEAN Member States to remain resilient and committed to protect our people and communities from the dangers of illicit drugs.

Malaysia participates actively in various ASEAN platforms on drug related issues namely, the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD) and the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD). Malaysia also supports the regional cooperative mechanisms under ASEAN, such as the ASEAN Airport Interdiction Task Force (AAITF), ASEAN Seaport Interdiction Task Force (ASITF), ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Centre (ASEAN-NARCO) and ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network. Most recently, Malaysia has become a member of the Asia Pacific Information Coordination Centre for Combatting Drug Crimes (APICC), which is a cooperation platform between ASEAN and the Republic of Korea.

The Golden Triangle is still a hot spot for opium cultivation and synthetic drugs manufacture. To continue regional effort in tackling this problem, ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle 2017 – 2019 is extended for another 3 years from 2020 - 2022. Malaysia has committed in supporting and contributing accordingly as stated in the work plan by providing trainings and exchange of information and intelligence.

As the new Chair of ASEAN Working Group on Alternative Development, Malaysia will work together with other ASEAN Member States to ensure a significant and sustainable reduction in illicit crop cultivation in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Alternative Development as a guideline, where appropriate. Malaysia is devoted to set up a network of experts in ASEAN region to develop sound and robust Alternative Development projects while continue sharing experiences in good model practices and promote technology exchange.

- **Strengthening transport security against international terrorism**

Malaysia remain a source, transit point, and destination country for terrorist groups including ISIS, Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and Al-Qaeda. Thus, Malaysia has cooperated with the regional states to increase border security capacity at all entry points through the following measures:

- i. Strengthening the legal cooperation framework to combat terrorism in all modes of transport with the respective ARF countries through convention, treaties and table talk;
- ii. Tightening border control with practical cooperation between RMP and law-enforcement agencies by improving security features of travel documents and visa systems; and
- iii. Assisting in providing appropriate training and equipment to respective security services.

In addition, Malaysia is working on implementing Advanced Passenger Screening System (APSS) as a preliminary screening for travellers who enter Malaysia.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DISASTER RELIEF

Malaysia shares the concern of the international community that there is an urgent need to accelerate globalefforts in providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) when in need. In this connection, Malaysia continues to play an important role and contribution on HADR, in which Malaysia has introduced:

- i. the ASEAN Militaries Ready Group (AMRG) on HADR to facilitate the coordination and rapid deployment of ASEAN military personnel, assets and capabilities under a single ASEAN banner, to areas of crises in a quick and timely manner.
- ii. Mobilised HADR assistance to various countries in the region, such as Indonesia, Lao PDR and the Philippines.
- iii. Hosted the World Food Programme United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (WFP UNHRD) in Subang which houses goods ready to be sent to disaster-affected areas.
- iv. Set up the Malaysian Field Hospital at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh in November 2017 to provide medical aid to Rohingya refugees.
- v. Co-chaired the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on HADR with the United States (2017-2019) and has
 - a. Developed the SOP AMRG on HADR, to be tabled for adoption at the 14th ADMM in 2020 for operationalization; and
 - b. Organised ADMM-Plus EWG on HADR Staff Exercise and Communications Exercise in 2019

MARITIME SECURITY

In the efforts to build trust, address mutual concerns and advance shared interests among stakeholders in the region, Malaysia remains committed to upholding the sanctity of international law, including the provisions laid down in the United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Among others, Malaysia has established the Malacca Straits Patrols in 2004 with Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia; and Trilateral Cooperation Agreement (TCA) with Indonesia and the Philippines to improve maritime security conditions in the Sulu Seas.

Further, Malaysia is also a Member of ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Maritime Security (ADMM-Plus EWG on MS) and has taken part in various ADMM maritime exercises with China in 2018 as well as the United States in 2019.

IV - ROLE OF ARF

Since its establishment in 1994, the ARF is a thriving platform in regional security cooperation that brings together 27 participants to engage in productive dialogue and consultation on political and security matters and contribute towards "confidence building and preventive diplomacy in the Asia Pacific region". In line with established principles of the ARF, Malaysia is of the view that it is significant to build on the ARF's present work, with the goal of addressing the region's current and emerging security challenges - both traditional and non-traditional. The year 2020 has seen its fair share of major historic events, wherein the ARF has to adapt itself to the new security challenges especially in light of the evolving global and regional environment that are multi-faceted and cross-dimensional in nature. Nevertheless, the diversity of practical and continuous proposals, discussions and engagements among ARF Participants reflects the ARF's increasing ability to respond to contemporary challenges. This presents the ARF Participants with an opportunity to renew our individual and collective commitment in strengthening existing dialogues and practical cooperation.

MONGOLIA

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Though disputes and instability remain, the situation in the Asia-Pacific region is, by and large, stable. The geopolitical rivalries persist between the major players in the region, including the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, the United States of America, Japan and India. Despite the unprecedented inter-Korean and US-DPRK talks in 2018 and 2019, the situation on the Korean Peninsula remains complex and continues to pose a major challenge to the security in Asia and the Pacific.

The global geopolitical tensions and trade disputes have created uncertainty in the international trading system, and it has negatively affected the regional cooperation. In addition, the spread of coronavirus is affecting every life not only in the Asia-Pacific region, but around the world. As a result, the global economic growth has slumped to its lowest point since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Against this backdrop, the Asia-Pacific region is keen to enhance confidence-building through its common security cooperation both at bilateral and multilateral levels, including the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus. Also, theregional cooperation has deepened through various free trade arrangements.

Mongolia is closely interconnected with the Northeast Asian countries in terms of politics, economy and security. Mongolia established Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with the People's Republic of China in 2014 and with the Russian Federation in 2019, and Strategic Partnership with Japan in 2010, with India in 2015 and with the United States in 2019, respectively.

In addition, Mongolia has been conducting periodic policy consultations with all the Northeast Asian countries with the aim of further enhancing mutual understanding and confidence-building in the sub-region.

Also, Mongolia has actively engaged in trilateral consultative mechanisms such as Mongolia-Russia-China Summit meetings, Mongolia-US-Japan trilateral meetings and conducted bilateral inter-governmental consultations with other member states of the ACEAN Regional Forum.

2. National Security and Defense Policy

Mongolia is committed to the policies and actions strengthening the strategic stability and security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly Northeast Asia. In accordance with the revised National Security and Foreign Policy Concepts, adopted by the State Great Hural (Parliament) in 2010 and 2011, Mongolia pursues a peaceful, open, and multi-pillared foreign policy directed towards building active relations and cooperation with other states and international institutions.

In line with its multi-pillar foreign policy, Mongolia pursues balanced relations with its two immediate neighbours – Russia and China, as well as enhanced cooperation with its “third neighbours”, including active engagement with the ASEAN countries. The multi-pillar foreign policy also involves strengthening cooperation with the United Nations and other international organizations, as well as constructive participation in the international peace support operations.

The key defense policies and its implementation mechanism are formulated in the “Fundamentals of National Defense Policy”, which was revised and adopted by the State Great Hural (Parliament) in 2015. The objective of the revised document is to comprehensively embody the policy of 1) strengthening a unified defense system based on local protection, 2) deepening military confidence through an active participation in the promotion of international and regional security, 3) enhancing the reform, and the capacity-building and advancement of military personnel through long- and medium-term programs. The main policy issues include, but not limited to:

- Maintaining the unity of the army and establishing modern armed forces based on professional troops;
- Building the peacekeeping capacity of the army;
- Strengthening civil-military relations;
- Improving legal and social status of servicemen in the armed forces; and
- Involving servicemen in the country’s construction and development works.

Transparency of military spending

The digital form of Mongolian Defense Expenditure in FY 2019 was reported in accordance with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/24 on “Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures”. The report is available at the following link: <https://milex-reporting.un-arm.org/report/edit/55/>.

National Contribution to the PKO

Peacekeeping is one of Mongolia’s tangible contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. Mongolia first joined the United Nations peacekeeping in 2002 with the deployment of unarmed military observers. Since 2006, when the country started deploying troops, nearly 18 000 Mongolian peacekeepers, including 700 female officers and non-commissioned officers, have served in the UN missions around the world.

As of May 2020, Mongolia is the 24th largest contributor to the UN peacekeeping among 121 troop-contributing countries with 1100 troops serving in 6 UN mandated PKOs, including in DRC (MONUSCO), Darfur (UNAMID) and South Sudan (UNMISS).

To improve the UN peacekeeping operations’ interoperability, Mongolia has been hosting the annual Khaan Quest multinational exercise with the United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM). In 2019, the exercise was attended by 37 countries, including 14 ARF member States.

While pursuing a policy to strengthen its participation in the UN peacekeeping, Mongolia set an objective to encourage the participation of civilian engineers, medical personnel and police officers.

3. National Contribution to the Regional Security

Mongolia actively promotes policies, actions and mechanisms aimed at strengthening strategic stability and security cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. Mongolia is the only country in Northeast Asia which does not have any unresolved issue, be it territorial or political with other countries in the region, or any other country in the world. Thus, since the 1980's, it has been consistently pursuing the policy of launching a dialogue mechanism in Northeast Asia. These efforts yielded the "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security" – an international conference conducted since 2014 on an annual basis.

Since 2017, the conference has been upgraded to track 1.5 level gathering together both government officials and academia and it is evolving into an open and inclusive mechanism covering all the political entities in Northeast Asia. The Ulaanbaatar Dialogue offers a platform for facilitating talks, promoting mutual understanding and confidence-building and searching rooms for compromise when necessary.

The 6th Ulaanbaatar Dialogue meeting was organized on 4-5 June 2019 discussing not only security issues, but also potential avenues of engagement for the participating countries in infrastructure, environment, energy security and humanitarian assistance.

The 7th UBD conference, which was scheduled in early June 2020, has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Youth and Peace

With a view to utilizing better social media in promoting a culture of peace, non-violence and tolerance among the youth globally, the first-ever Peacebook Forum was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia in partnership with the Facebook, Inc. in April 2019, in Ulaanbaatar.

In June 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia together with the United Nations hosted a Northeast Asia Forum on Youth, Peace and Security. At the Forum, Mongolia proposed to create a completely digital Peacebook Journal of International Relations that would publish research works on global issues by scholars and peacebuilders from around the world. The proposal enjoyed broad support from the participants as they agreed to follow-up with practical action to set up the Peacebook Journal.

The Second Peacebook Forum, scheduled for May 2020, has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Arms Control and Disarmament, Nuclear non-proliferation

Mongolia is committed to a nuclear-weapon-free world and has consistently supported every effort by the international community to promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to achieve nuclear disarmament.

In developing relations with other countries, Mongolia is guided by universally recognized principles and norms of international law as defined in the Charter of the United Nations, including non-use of force and settlement of disputes by peaceful means. It pursues a policy of refraining from joining any military alliance or grouping, allowing the use of its territory or air space against any other country, and the stationing of foreign troops or weapons, including nuclear or any other type of mass destruction weapons in its territory.

For instance, as a responsible member of the international community, Mongolia has joined most of the major international treaties on arms control, disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and has initiated and successfully promoted the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolutions on the right of peoples to peace and establishing an annual disarmament week.

Moreover, Mongolia has always considered that one important path to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation lies in the regional approach. This is a realistic and concrete approach to advance our common goals in the field of security, disarmament and non-proliferation, one that consists in seeking a political solution to regional tensions, and to latent or open conflicts.

Nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia

Mongolia declared its territory as a nuclear-weapon-free zone in 1992 and has made continuous efforts to internationally institutionalize its nuclear-weapon-free status.

Today, Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status enjoys a wide international support and is being reflected in numerous bilateral statements and declarations, UN General Assembly resolutions, and other international documents.

On 5 October 2000, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (P5), that possess nuclear weapons, issued a joint statement providing security assurances that they would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Mongolia. On 17 September 2012, the P5 made a joint declaration that affirmed their intent to respect Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and not to contribute to any act that would violate it.

The Government of Mongolia submits biannually its national report on the implementation of UN General Assembly resolutions on "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status".

Mongolia participated in and welcomed the Ministerial Statement issued at the Third International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening Efforts held on 10-14 February 2020,

in Vienna. The Mongolian delegation reaffirmed its commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world and emphasized the important role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Mongolia is currently serving as a Coordinator of the Fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and Mongolia, which was scheduled to be held in New York in conjunction with 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). For the preparation of the Fourth Conference, a number of informal meetings were held during the past two years. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN General Assembly decided to postpone the Fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia to a later date in 2021.

As a member of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Mongolia has been actively participating in its summits and conferences, including the 5th Summit held in June 2019, in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The CICA member states have highly appreciated Mongolia's contribution to and its nuclear-weapon-free status for security and confidence-building in the CICA region.

National Implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1540

Mongolia reaffirms its commitment to the UN Security Council resolution 1540 which, inter alia, provides a good basis for improving national control facilities with the assistance pledged under the resolution. It welcomed the extension of the mandate of the 1540 Committee of the UN Security Council until 2021.

Mongolia does not provide any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

Over the past two decades some additional measures have been undertaken to improve and strengthen implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1540 at the national level. In addition to the Law on Nuclear Energy (2009) and the Law on the procedure to implement it, the Sub-Group of the Working Group of the Parliament's Standing Committee on Security and Foreign Policy was established in January 2014 to monitor the implementation of the Law on Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status and of the UNSC Resolution 1540.

Activities related to NPT, CTBT and other treaties

Mongolia recognizes the NPT's utmost importance as a multilateral instrument, in maintaining and reinforcing international peace, security and stability. It sees the third pillar of NPT – peaceful use of nuclear energy, as vital as the other two pillars; thus, the Agency's technical cooperation programme helps facilitate the implementation of not only NPT, but also the Sustainable Development Goals. The IAEA Technical Cooperation projects on food and agriculture, geology, mining and health such as the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) have been contributing significantly to the scientific progress and sustainable socio-economic development in Mongolia.

Mongolia is actively cooperating with the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT) and other countries to make its modest contribution to the course of facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT, as a universal and legally-binding security assurance to non-nuclear-weapon states.

As a steadfast supporter of the CTBT and its verification regime, Mongolia hosted the East Asia Regional National Data Center Workshop in Ulaanbaatar in September 2018. Mongolia hosts the Primary Seismic Station PS25, Radionuclide Station RN 45 and Infrasound Station IS34 within the International Monitoring System Network established under the Agreement between Mongolia and the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT on the Conduct of Activities, Including Post-certification Activities, relating to International Monitoring Facilities for the CTBT of 2000.

Furthermore, Mongolia actively participated in the negotiation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and voted in favour of its adoption in July 2017. The internal process towards joining the treaty is underway.

Terrorism and Transnational Crime

Mongolia is a party to all UN conventions against terrorism and organized crimes applicable to it, and is taking all the necessary measures to fully implement them.

In 2019, during the UNGA74, the Government joined the “Code of Conduct to Achieve a World Free of Terrorism” initiated by Kazakhstan, as well as “Christchurch Call to Action” initiated by New Zealand.

In October 2019, Mongolia adopted the Law on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Counter-Terrorism, and launched the “National Strategy for Countering Terrorism and Proliferation for 2020-2024”.

Mongolia has continuously held multilateral and bilateral counter-terrorism consultations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. In order to establish effective cooperation mechanism on combating terrorism, Mongolia signed inter-governmental agreements with Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. Moreover, the Government of Mongolia, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, successfully organized the capacity building workshops in 2018 and 2019 in Ulaanbaatar.

In June 2019, Mongolia hosted the UN/OSCE High-level Inter-regional Conference on “Whole-of-Society-Approach” to preventing and countering violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. One of the main conclusions of the conference was that the old approach of focusing mainly on security-based counter-terrorism measures needs to be further enhanced to address comprehensively development, education, good governance, human rights, media, religion, the rule of law and other relevant sectors. Also, the critical importance of supporting developing countries in their efforts to strengthen their anti-terrorism and anti-organized crime capacity was emphasized and reflected in the Outcome Document.

There is a rising trend of illicit drugs and narcotics being trafficked from China, Russia, and South East Asian countries into Mongolia. Also, domestically cultivated drugs are being sold, prepared, and consumed mainly by the youth. In order to prevent and intercept the transfer of illegal cash flow, Mongolia proactively pursued to establish effective cooperation mechanisms with the regional countries and international organizations. To this end, Mongolia signed mutual legal assistance treaties with more than 20 countries and expanding the scope of cooperation.

Moreover, within the framework of combating transnational crimes and conducting financial investigation of money laundering, Mongolia actively cooperates with international organizations including FATF, Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering, UN, EGMONT group, INTERPOL, CARIN, ARIN-AP, and EUROJUST.

Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Assistance

Mongolia has been actively promoting regional cooperation in the field of disaster management and humanitarian assistance. Since the adoption the Sendai Framework in 2015, Mongolia has made substantial progress in shifting from disaster protection to disaster risk reduction, improving disaster risk management system, reducing disaster risks, refining legal environment and increasing the public engagement.

For instance, the reformulated Law on Disaster Protection, adopted in February 2017, contains new clauses on establishing the legal environment for national and local disaster risk reduction platforms, clarifying the roles and duties of multiple stakeholders in disaster risk reduction, enhancing the legal status and social support of emergency management personnel and improving the coordination of humanitarian aid during disasters. In 2018, Mongolia adopted our “Medium-term strategy to implement Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2017-2020” and its Action Plan which is now operationalized by governors of the capital and provinces and other responsible bodies.

In July 2018, Mongolia hosted the Second Asian Ministerial Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR), under the theme of “Preventing Disaster Risk: Protecting Sustainable Development”.

The Ulaanbaatar Declaration, adopted at the AMCDRR highlighted the importance of strengthening the development of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, including through the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the Action Plan 2018–2020 of the Asia Regional Plan for Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015– 2030.

Reiterating the importance of enhancing the regional cooperation, the Government of Mongolia put forward an initiative to establish a Northeast Asian regional platform in Disaster Risk Reduction at the 5thUBD conference and the AMCDRR held in June-July 2018. To start, Mongolia proposed to initiate concrete ideas such as organizing joint simulation exercises inviting sub-regional countries, collecting and sharing data using the UBD platform and engaging international humanitarian cluster system in these efforts.

While being one of the beneficiary countries during emergency or disaster relief and response, Mongolia has been providing humanitarian assistance to the disaster affected countries in the region, as well. The Government of Mongolia provided humanitarian assistance to the following countries:

- California wild fire, U.S, 2007
- Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan, 2011
- Gorkha Earthquake, Nepal, 2015
- Kumamoto Earthquake, Japan, 2016

In 2011, the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia (NEMA) sent 12 rescuers to the tsunami and earthquake affected areas in Japan. In 2015, 50 Mongolian rescuers & firefighters were also deployed for assistance to the forest and steppe fires in Siberia, Russian Federation.

The Government of Mongolia has been undertaking a high-alert preparedness since January 2020 to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19, Mongolia has been receiving humanitarian assistance worth of around 13 million USD from the regional partners and international organizations. These assistance include vital diagnostics and personal protection equipment provided from the regional partners such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the USA.

With the aim to contribute to the global efforts to combat COVID-19 pandemic Mongolia has donated 1 million USD worth of meat and meat product to the Russian Federation, 30 thousand sheep to the People's Republic of China, and the 1 million USD worth of personal protective equipment to the United States.

4. Role of ARF

The ARF has played an important role and steadily contributed in promoting mutual understanding, confidence and trust among diverse participants through dialogue and practical cooperation. It has constructed a solid base of confidence building measures in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mongolia is committed to further strengthening ties with ARF partners and supports the advancement of the ARF process towards the preventive diplomacy phase, along with the strengthening of confidence-building measures.

Mongolia's contributions to enhancing the ARF and regional security

Contribution of each member state in the regional confidence building efforts and preventive diplomacy is essential. Thus, Mongolia proposed to have an informal meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Northeast Asian countries on the sidelines of ARF Ministerials on mutually agreeable issues in 2000. In August 2019, during the ARF Ministerial Meeting in Bangkok, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia proposed to start engaging in such a format. Mongolia believes that such mechanisms will further contribute to promote peace and stability in the region and enhance mutual-trust and confidence-building among nations.

MYANMAR

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

1. Asia-Pacific is a strategically important region in the world. As Southeast Asia is typically included in Asia-Pacific region, some problems occurring in Asia Pacific region have threatened peace, stability and security in the region. Southeast Asia region is strategically located between Eastern and Western hemispheres of the world. In Southeast Asia, the synergy of ASEAN Member States in the political, economic and cultural sectors, have largely contributed to regional security and stability. Yet, among the ASEAN Member States, issues such as border disputes between neighboring countries, multiple claims to certain islands, illegal border trades, transnational crimes, human trafficking and interference in the internal affairs of other nations are the problems that needed to be carefully tackled.

2. The military expansions of regional states, the issues of disputed islands in East Asia and the power rivalry of super powers are the regional security problems which can transmute from the form of a spark to a flame at any time. If the problems are not peacefully tackled, these situations will impact from state-level security to regional security. As mentioned above, there are not only traditional security threats to the Asia-Pacific region, but also the non-traditional security threats to the region. The threats include international terrorism, production of WMDs, arms smuggling, transnational crimes, illegal drugs producing and trafficking, human trafficking, maritime security, natural disasters and climate change, epidemic of infected diseases and illegal migration. As the consequences of technology developments, the momentum of Globalization assists the spread of non-traditional security problems and such threats are likely to endanger the regional to global security.

2. National Security and Defence Policy

a. Overview of the national security and defence policy

3. Myanmar Tatmadaw upholds the three main national causes as the national policy and always takes the responsibility of national security and defence. Regarding the Defence of the Union of Myanmar, the article 42 of State Constitution (2008) has clearly promulgated that:

- (a) The Union of Myanmar shall not commence aggression against any nation.
- (b) No foreign troops shall be permitted to be deployed in the territory of Myanmar.

4. The Republic of the Union of Myanmar lays down the following National Defence Policies to safeguard the national interests of the Union as well as the citizens:

- (a) To prevent all acts detrimental to the three main national causes which are non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of the national solidarity and perpetuation of sovereignty.
- (b) To formulate the National Defence with the People's War Strategy centered at Tatmadaw as pillar depending on the synergy of entire people.
- (c) To valiantly and effectively prevent foreign aggression and interference in the internal affairs of the Union, deploying various ways and means while avoiding interference in the internal affairs of other nations.
- (d) To employ a defence system that has oriented towards friendly relations with other nations in accord with the five principles of peaceful co-existence.
- (e) Not to permit forming military alliance with other nations and the deployment of any foreign troops in the territory of the Union.
- (f) To cooperate with international community in non-traditional security issues and anti-terrorist affairs and to render assistance when calamities occur in the Union.

b. Data Contribution to ARF Arms Register

i. Defence Budget (Military Expenditure)

5. The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar allocated Defence Budget about US \$ 2.2 Billion (2.8 % of GDP) for 2019-2020 fiscal year.

3. National Contributions to Regional Security

6. Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997 and has promoted the regional cooperation. In the same year, Myanmar became the member of Bay of Bengal Initiative of Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and has promoted the cooperation with South Asian countries. After becoming the ASEAN Member State, Myanmar joined ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) which is the most important political and security platform in Asia-Pacific region and has participated in the dialogues and workshops organized by the ARF.

7. Myanmar has commenced the formulation of the bills for anti-terrorism since 2005. After carrying out the amending and adding the complements to the bills with regard to the funding terrorism and handing over of criminals, Myanmar signed the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Among Like-Minded ASEAN Member Countries. Moreover, Myanmar signed the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism-ACCT as member in 2007 and ratified the Convention in 2012.

8. Regarding anti-narcotic measures, Myanmar has attended annual Meetings of ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matter-ASOD as an observer before joining ASEAN. After becoming a member of ASEAN in August 1997, Myanmar has annually attended the ASOD since its 20th meeting in Brunei and has been implementing its resolutions.

9. Myanmar had successfully hosted 4th MAF-IAF Air Force Staff Talks Meeting from 18 to 19 September 2019, 11th ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group on Military Medicine Meeting and Handover Ceremony from 6 to 10 October 2019, 6th MAF-RTAF Air Working Group Meeting from 5 to 6 November 2019 and 8th Myanmar-Thai Navy to Navy Talks from 28 to 31 January 2020.

10. For regional cooperation, Myanmar signed the MOU for narcotic drugs control with China, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia in 1993 and MOU for the Centre of Information Sharing in Asia-Pacific region was signed with ASEAN Member States and Republic of Korea in 2014. A 15-year project for total elimination of narcotic drugs was implemented from 1999-2000 to 2013-2014 through the adoption of five measures: the elimination of poppy cultivation; eradication of narcotic drug use; preventative measures; organising local people to support the measure; and cooperation with international organizations. Anti-narcotic measures are also conducted in real time collaboration with adjacent countries in the region. In order to meet Myanmar Anti-Narcotic Project's requirements, another 5-year drug elimination plan for the fiscal years 2014-2015 to 2018-2019 was implemented. For the effectiveness of anti-narcotic measures, the Department of Narcotic Drugs Elimination was reorganized into Myanmar Police Force Narcotic Drug Suppression Division in 2013.

11. In order to develop the friendly relations with regional countries, senior officials from Myanmar Armed Forces have all paid goodwill visits to regional countries. Reciprocally, military leaders from regional countries have also paid goodwill visits to Myanmar. Senior military officials and related ministers from Myanmar have attended ASEAN defence-related meetings and participated in regional security activities. Moreover, Myanmar has participated in regional security exercises.

12. As ASEAN is enclosed in the Asia-Pacific region, the security threats to the region are also challenges for ASEAN. International terrorism, production of WMDs, arms smuggling, transnational crimes, illegal drug producing and smuggling, human trafficking, maritime security, natural disasters, climate change, epidemic of infected diseases and illegal migration are the challenges not only for the region but also for the global security.

13. Act of terror still remains as one of the most challenging measures to the sustainable security in the ASEAN region even though sustainable security in fact focuses on four interconnected, long-term drivers of insecurity: climate change, competition over resources, marginalisation of the majority world, and global militarisation. The underlying root causes for such acts of terror are affiliated with the stimulus such as politics, nationalism and religion. Regardless of type of terrorism, human resources and modernized technologies will compulsorily be required in order to conduct counter terrorism.

14. As the impacts of the security threats grow among ASEAN Member States, all Member States have compulsorily to share the information related to counter terrorism. Any type of terrorism is to be the concerns of any country, and the common security threat for ASEAN Member States, the deeper cooperation among ASEAN militaries become necessary. Preventive measures and

intelligence services should be sorted out as a high priority, additionally accompanying activities such as enhancing cooperation, reci-procal assistance in technology and training sectors, bilateral and multilateral support among countries and creating blockage in interconnection among terrorist extremist groups.

15. The acts of terror become the prominent threat in 21st century, and these terrorist activities are carried out by the individual groups or non-state actors. Some terrorist organizations are able to establish their connection not only with other organization within the country, but also with those from other countries and regions. Consequently, the co-operation among ASEAN Member States is necessarily required for conducting counter terrorism, otherwise the Safe Havens for the terrorist organizations will also be existed occurring their continuous attacks around the world.

16. As for Myanmar, the Union is actively participating in matters relating to counter terrorism as in regional forums, workshops, and conferences in cooperation with other ASEAN Member States and international communities. ASEAN member states have to enhance the bilateral and multilateral relations and deepen military and security cooperation to respond to the challenges relating to acts of terror which we are now confronting and support us to building our future nations to be peaceful, tranquil and developed. Coordination among countries will surely support for dissolving the problems and enable to confront the challenges. Moreover, the betterment of the relationship among the ASEAN Member States will ensure the successful implementation processes of counter terrorism.

4. Role of ARF

17. With regards to the role of ARF, the contributions of the ASEAN Member States based on the principles of coordination and cooperation to the stability and peace of the region are critically required. In responding to the regional security challenges by the cooperation and principles of joint actions, the role of the ASEAN Member States should continue emphasizing on a more stable and secure region. Moreover, the non-traditional security threats such as natural disasters, terrorism, maritime security and transnational crimes, epidemics, food and energy security, human security, cybercrimes, climate changes and global warming are still regional concerns and the ASEAN Member States should continue conducting the information sharing, capacity building, joint exercises and trainings.

18. ASEAN Member States should continue enhancing peace and stability of the region in cooperative manner, encourage the states to sign the additional protocol of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ), cooperate more in the areas of traditional security challenges and non-traditional security challenges that will impact regional peace and stability such as the risk of extremists and terrorists, disaster management and information security, drug trafficking, human and arms smuggling, transnational crimes, illegal migration, money laundering, sea piracy and maritime security, climate change and epidemics like Zika, Ebola and the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).

NEW ZEALAND

1. Overview of the regional security environment

1. The Indo-Pacific region is central to New Zealand's security and economic well-being. At a time when the region faces unprecedented challenges from COVID-19, New Zealand values its engagement with the regional security architecture, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus). These channels provide us the means to coordinate our efforts and work collectively on initiatives that will support a broad-based recovery from the crisis and a more stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific region.

2. New Zealand also considers that regional bodies such as the ARF, EAS, and ADMM-Plus have an important role to play in promoting the principles, rules and norms that New Zealand values in the Indo-Pacific region, such as openness and inclusivity, ASEAN centrality, transparency, freedom of navigation and overflight, adherence to international law, open markets and respect for sovereignty.

3. In addition to promoting a strong rules-based system, close regional cooperation on security threats is increasingly important as the nature of threats continues to evolve. New Zealand is working to ensure that we – as a country and as a region – are equipped to deal with the emerging risks posed by the increased use of technology, potential security impacts of climate change and the diverse range of actors seeking to challenge global rules and norms.

4. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) continues to be the most pressing security threat in our region. The DPRK's possession and ongoing development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles is a clear violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. The challenges on the Korean Peninsula are long standing and complex. Any resolution will require patience and careful diplomacy. It is New Zealand's hope that diplomatic engagement will resume and lead to greater stability and prosperity in our region. New Zealand continues to engage actively with international efforts to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea, including through the full and effective implementation of sanctions in accordance with all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

5. Prosperity and stability in the Indo-Pacific region also depends on a secure maritime environment and the peaceful resolution of disputes. All ARF members have an interest in avoiding miscalculations and the maintenance of freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea in accordance with international law. New Zealand is concerned that activities such as land reclamation, construction and militarisation could escalate tensions and erode the trust and confidence that is needed to deliver solutions. It is important that all parties take steps to rebuild trust, avoid provocative actions and manage tensions. New Zealand continues to encourage full

implementation of the Declaration of Conduct of Parties and conclusion of an effective and enduring Code of Conduct which is in accordance with international law and does not impinge on the rights and interests of third parties.

6. New Zealand is also strongly committed to an open, rules-based trading regime and considers that enhanced economic integration is one of the most effective means of ensuring longer term regional security and prosperity. New Zealand is committed to pursuing multilateral, plurilateral and bilateral trade agreements that support this goal. New Zealand also aims to strengthen the broader regional trade architecture to ensure it is resilient to future shocks. New Zealand attaches considerable importance to the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which entered into force in 2010 and looks forward to commencing negotiations to upgrade this agreement. New Zealand has other bilateral FTAs or Closer Economic Partnerships with many other ARF members, including China, the Republic of Korea, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei.

7. Several ASEAN members are also part of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which entered into force for New Zealand, Mexico, Singapore, Japan, Canada and Australia on 30 December 2018 and for Viet Nam on 14 January 2019. New Zealand is looking forward to Malaysia, Brunei, Chile and Peru ratifying the agreement as soon as their domestic processes have been completed. New Zealand is actively participating in negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), with a view to signing RCEP in November 2020. In addition to the network of free trade agreements, the work of APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) promoting trade and economic growth in the region is of considerable importance to New Zealand and we look forward to our forthcoming turn to host.

2. New Zealand's security and defence policy

2.1 Overview of national security and defence policy

8. As a founding member of the United Nations, respect for international norms and law is fundamental to New Zealand's approach to promoting security, stability and peace. The onset of COVID-19 has tested our assumptions and challenged national and regional security structures in new and unanticipated ways. While New Zealand's domestic territorial borders are geographically isolated, New Zealand is not immune to the accelerating and intensifying impacts of geo-strategic competition and trans-national threats such as climate change, terrorism, arms proliferation, organised crime, cyber attacks, and bio-security. Recognising this, New Zealand is highly committed to multilateral solutions to security threats and the promotion of effective international rules. New Zealand takes a multi-layered approach to security that includes strong bilateral relationships, regional partnerships, and support for regional architecture and institutions. ASEAN-centric regional security architecture has an increasingly important role in bringing countries together and providing a forum for discussions. Our view is that these forums fulfill an important role promoting understanding, entrenching habits of dialogue and facilitating practical military-to-military cooperation.

9. New Zealand has a strong interest in fostering and maintaining a network of robust international relationships, which include:

- New Zealand's alliance with Australia;
- the Five Power Defence Arrangements (New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and the United Kingdom);
- the Five Eyes partnership (New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States);
- close bilateral ties with Pacific Island neighbours, including those for which New Zealand has constitutional responsibilities;
- close and growing bilateral ties with a number of Indo-Pacific partners from North Asia to Southeast Asia; and
- Pacific and Indo-Pacific regional security architecture such as the South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting (SPDMM), the ARF and the ADMM Plus, in addition to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process).

10. New Zealand defence policy settings are articulated in the Strategic Defence Policy Statement 2018. This statement describes Defence's value to New Zealand in terms of its contributions to the community, the nation and the world, with emphasis on community and environmental resilience. It also provides perspective on the evolving strategic environment; specifying the priority for the Defence Force being able to operate in the South Pacific (to the same level as that for New Zealand's territory, the Southern Ocean and Antarctica); featuring a set of principles for Defence; and underscoring the importance of contributing to New Zealand's key security partnerships. The statement reaffirmed that the ADMM-Plus remains New Zealand's principal forum for multilateral defence engagement in Asia. The Statement has been supplemented by standalone assessments such as The Climate Crisis: Defence Readiness and Responsibilities. The Statement is supported by indicative planned investments as set out in the Defence Capability Plan 2019.

2.2 Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

11. The total appropriation for the New Zealand Defence Force for the year ended 30 June 2019 was NZ\$3.641 billion, of which operating expenses were NZ\$2.877 billion and capital expenditure was NZ\$764 million.

3. New Zealand's contribution to regional security

Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime

12. As was demonstrated by the callous and violent terrorist attack against the Muslim community at worship in New Zealand on 15 March 2019, no country is immune from the scourge of terrorism and violent extremism. New Zealand remains firmly committed to countering and preventing terrorism and violent extremism in all forms, and to combatting transnational organised

crime. To prevent, detect, and respond to these threats, New Zealand is engaged at the multilateral, regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels, with a particular focus on the Indo-Pacific region.

13. To support achievement of New Zealand's global security priorities, including assisting with capacity building in neighbouring states, New Zealand has a number of specialised security funds, including dedicated Global and Pacific Security Funds. The specialised security funds assist New Zealand's achievement of its Plan of Action with ASEAN, particularly in areas of border control; legislation; law enforcement; policy; irregular migration; and prevention/counterradicalisation and countering the threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

14. Globally, Da'esh/ISIS and its affiliates continue to pose a significant threat to international and regional security, even though the group no longer controls the territory it once held in Syria and Iraq. Foreign terrorist fighters and their families currently in Iraq and Syria continue to pose a potential threat. Ongoing collective effort is required to prevent their relocation to other conflict zones or effectively manage their return home through targeted rehabilitation and reintegration support.

15. In line with our commitment to reduce the risk of South East Asia being a target or source of terrorism we are sharpening our strategic focus, and plan to strengthen efforts to support partners to prevent and respond to terrorist attacks, to counter the root causes of violent extremism by building resilient communities, and help invigorate mechanisms that promote coherence and coordination of counter-terrorism policy and practice within governments and across the region.

16. Breaking down the silos that impede cooperation within governments and the barriers that hinder cooperation between governments is necessary to tackle these significant and complex transnational security threats. New Zealand seeks to work closely with our partners in the region to invigorate mechanisms that help achieve coherence in policy and practice, including ASEAN-centred initiatives such as those under the umbrella of the ASEAN Regional Forum. New Zealand's co-chairing of the ARF workstream on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime along with Malaysia and the EU is indicative of the importance that we place on this regional mechanism, especially as a forum for advancing broader regional efforts to counter violent extremism online.

17. On a bilateral basis, capacity building in South East Asia is a significant focus of New Zealand's global counter-terrorism engagement. We have long-standing relationships with institutions in the region such as the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement and the South East Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (Malaysia). Recent examples of capacity building initiatives New Zealand has contributed to across the region include:

- training of law enforcement personnel on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE);
- training of corrections staff to help manage extremist prisoners;
- aviation security and counter-Improvised Explosive Device (IED) training; and
- post-blast crime scene investigation courses.

- 18.** New Zealand also remains concerned about irregular migration and its regional impact. As part of our contribution to managing the security and humanitarian challenges posed by irregular migration, New Zealand is an active and constructive member of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (the Bali Process). In addition to Co-Chairing (with Fiji) the Working Group on the Disruption of People Smuggling and Trafficking Networks, New Zealand provides support for regional capacity building, through our capacity building assistance and secondment contributions to the Bali Process' Regional Support Office.
- 19.** New Zealand also works closely with the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering to support the coordination of technical assistance in Southeast Asia and the Pacific to combat transnational organised criminal and terrorist groups, by targeting their financial systems and processes.
- 20.** Additionally, New Zealand has funded and organised a number of regional capacity building workshops for ASEAN countries on key issues, including anti-money laundering/counter-terrorist financing standards, cyber security, terrorist prosecutions, chemical and nuclear security, major event security, and maritime and aviation security. These efforts are complemented by significant bilateral work to build individual national capability, especially within law enforcement agencies.
- 21.** New Zealand also participates in multilateral initiatives which engage on counter-terrorism projects in the region, including the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), for which we are pleased to support the extension of the CVE programme to the Philippines.
- 22.** In addition to its work in South East Asia, New Zealand also works with Pacific Island countries (PICs) to help strengthen resilience and build capacity to respond to a range of shared security challenges. In 2018, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders endorsed a new declaration, the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, which affirms an expanded concept of security, recognising climate change as the preeminent security threat to the region. This expanded concept of security encompasses traditional and non-traditional challenges encountered by the region, prioritising human security, environmental security, transnational crime, and cyber security. New Zealand strongly supports the implementation of the Boe Declaration, and channels this through existing programmes as well as new initiatives on information sharing, leadership training, cyber security, transnational crime, and national security policy development. These programmes are in addition to the number of initiatives New Zealand supports through the Pacific Islands Forum, including enhancing aviation and maritime security, drafting and implementing national counter-terrorism legislation and supporting the ratification of international counter-terrorism instruments. New Zealand works closely with and funds regional law enforcement agencies such as the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police Secretariat, Oceania Customs Organisation and the Pacific Immigration Development Community, and contributes to their consideration and responses to regional security issues. New Zealand also provides technical assistance, capacity building, and mentoring for law enforcement and border agency officials in the region.

23. One growing challenge the region faces is the unprecedented use of social media by terrorist groups. This has forced states to adapt, with many adopting sophisticated counter-messaging protocols and systems to enable them to convey another view to would-be terrorists. New Zealand experienced first-hand how social media can be co-opted as a tool of terrorism in the attacks of 15 March on Christchurch's Muslim community. In response, New Zealand developed (with France) the Christchurch Call to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online. The Call represents a unique effort to have technology companies and countries work together, with civil society, to tackle the shared problem of this content and its harmful effects, while protecting a free and open internet and human rights online.

Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

24. New Zealand has a long-standing commitment to nuclear disarmament and non proliferation. New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty. Most recently New Zealand signed on to the text of a Malaysian-led Joint Communiqué to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the NPT's entry into force and calling for full implementation of the Treaty, including its nuclear disarmament obligations.

25. New Zealand is a key proponent of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). New Zealand ratified the TPNW Treaty in 2018 and, as one of its Core Group members, works to encourage non-signatory states to sign, and signatories to ratify the Treaty. To this end, New Zealand hosted a conference in Auckland in 2018 specifically to support the efforts of Pacific Island countries, and participated in a similar conference in Bangkok in 2018 focused on South East Asian countries. New Zealand has continued its active promotion of nuclear disarmament more generally, including through its membership of the New Agenda Coalition and its current leadership of the De-alerting Group.

26. New Zealand is a strong proponent of nuclear weapon-free zones in view of their role in reinforcing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. New Zealand is party to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (Treaty of Rarotonga) and has had legislation in place since 1987 creating a New Zealand Nuclear-Free Zone. New Zealand strongly encourages all Nuclear Weapons States to ratify the Protocols to Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones, including the South East Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the Treaty of Rarotonga, without any reservations or interpretative declarations.

27. New Zealand supports the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as an important contribution to regional and global security. New Zealand has welcomed ratification of the CTBT by Annex 1 and 2 states in the region and encourages ratifications by all ARF participants.

28. New Zealand is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which provides the global focal point for nuclear cooperation and safeguards. New Zealand is in full compliance with its safeguards obligations and supports international projects involving the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We routinely urge all states to sign Additional Protocol agreements with the IAEA.

29. New Zealand joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) in 2007, and, alongside over 80 GICNT partners, is committed to preventing nuclear or radiological material falling into the hands of terrorists. New Zealand has contributed to the GICNT in the Indo-Pacific region by: developing a table-top exercise kit for use by other GICNT partners in testing their own national response systems; supporting radioactive source security projects in Southeast Asia; providing funding support to GICNT workshops in the Indo-Pacific region; and helping its Pacific island neighbours address the risk of nuclear/radiological security.

30. New Zealand is a strong proponent of enhancing nuclear security. In 2016, New Zealand ratified two key nuclear security treaties: the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In 2016, New Zealand also enacted a new Radiation Safety Act to ensure its legislative framework for the safety and security of nuclear and radioactive material meets current international best practice. New Zealand has provided financial support for nuclear security capacity-building projects in the Indo-Pacific region. Additionally, we make annual voluntary contributions to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund.

31. New Zealand is a party to Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. We have provided financial assistance for the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to assist with the removal of chemical weapons materials in Libya and Syria, and have spoken out strongly against the use of chemical weapons in Malaysia, Syria and the UK.

32. New Zealand has in place a comprehensive national export control regime. This is informed by our active membership of the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee. New Zealand is currently the chair of the Missile Technology Control Regime (2019-October 2020). Our priorities include broadening outreach in the Indo-Pacific and improving public communications about the Regime's activities and its value.

33. New Zealand's involvement in the Proliferation Security Initiative, including our membership of the Operational Experts Group (the PSI steering committee) and participation in exercises and capacity building initiatives has enhanced New Zealand's capabilities to prevent proliferation activity both nationally and in collaboration with partners. New Zealand has developed (and shared with PSI partners) a Model National Response Plan which provides easy-to-follow guidance on the range of issues that need to be considered in developing a framework for responding to proliferation situations. As part of the PSI Asia-Pacific exercise rotation, New Zealand hosted a PSI table-top exercise in Wellington in 2015 and is currently scheduled to host a live exercise in 2023. New Zealand would welcome further adherence to the PSI throughout the Indo-Pacific as part of a coordinated effort to reduce the threat of WMD proliferation.

34. Given the role played by the unregulated global arms trade in fuelling conflict, New Zealand is a strong supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which we ratified in 2014. The ATT is an important contributor to international and regional peace, security and stability. New Zealand has been engaged in a breadth of initiatives that support broader membership, and greater implementation, of the Treaty, including as current Chair of the Treaty's Voluntary Trust Fund which has as its core objective the assistance of States Party to implement the Treaty. In our national capacity New Zealand has sponsored the development of ATT model legislation and a model control list, both of which can assist countries to implement their domestic obligations under the ATT. New Zealand hosted a conference in Auckland in 2018 to promote greater adherence to the ATT and other conventional arms treaties among Pacific Island countries, and co-sponsored – with significant support from Australia – a follow-up conference in Brisbane in 2019. New Zealand looks forward to continuing to work closely with its ARF partners on reinforcing the ATT.

35. New Zealand strongly supports the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and the Anti-Personnel Landmine Ban Convention (APLMBC). Landmines and cluster munitions are indiscriminate weapons that – in New Zealand's view – breach International Humanitarian Law. As such, New Zealand is pleased to have worked with many ARF States on practical mine clearance operations, including in Cambodia and Lao PDR – some of the most mine-contaminated States on the planet, but which are making large and promising steps to meet their clearance obligations. New Zealand is the coordinator for national implementation measures in the CCM, and we have produced model legislation for possible use by small states with no history of use or contamination. New Zealand continues to work closely with ARF participants that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to both Conventions. In 2019, New Zealand sponsored and co-hosted alongside the governments of the Philippines and Sri Lanka, a regional workshop on CCM universalisation and implementation hosted in Manila, which included the participation of eight South Asia and Pacific States who are not yet signatories of the Convention.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

36. The Indo-Pacific region continues to be afflicted by natural disasters that underline the need to continue deepening practical and effective cooperation in relation to disaster reduction, response and recovery. New Zealand has been an active participant in ARF and EAS discussions about preparing for and responding to regional disasters. In 2019, New Zealand provided NZ\$2.5 million to support humanitarian action in Myanmar through the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

37. New Zealand is continuing to play its part in deepening regional capacity to prepare and respond to disasters, including drawing on lessons learned from the Christchurch earthquakes. New Zealand is committed to further cooperation and implementation of work plans in ARF, ADMM-Plus and EAS contexts. Disaster Risk Management is a priority study area for our knowledge and skills investments in the Indo-Pacific region.

38. New Zealand has been a solid proponent of the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) Centre since its inception, and has trained ASEAN officials in disaster response leadership at the University of Canterbury and contributed technical expertise to the Centre. We have recently jointly completed a needs assessment with the AHA Centre and will shortly move into design of an e-learning series based on the findings of the assessment.

39. New Zealand successfully co-hosted the Pacific Environmental Security Forum (PESF) with the United States Indo-Pacific Command (US INDOPACOM) on 21-24 May 2019. The Forum convened 120 civil-military participants from nearly 40 countries and regional organisations. Discussions centred on the theme of building resilience in the Pacific and facilitated alignment with existing regional efforts. The forum generated strong momentum for the network of mid-senior regional practitioners and identified environmental security projects for practical civilian and military partnership. The US INDOPACOM seeks to continue this momentum towards the Philippines' hosting of the PESF in 2020.

40. New Zealand has a strong legacy of supporting Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance in the Indo-Pacific region for nearly 20 years. We currently implement an NZ\$11.5 million four year package of demining support in Lao PDR, and will be expanding demining support to include NZ\$6.5 million over four years for work in Cambodia, and developing regulatory frameworks in Myanmar.

Maritime Security

41. As a maritime state, the preservation of secure and sustainable oceans is critically important to New Zealand. Accordingly, New Zealand values its maritime cooperation with ARF partners and has been actively involved in the implementation of the ARF's maritime security work plan, and in sharing our experiences on various maritime security-related issues, including illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and oil-spill response.

42. In May 2018 this interest in maritime security issues translated into New Zealand co-hosting with Singapore the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue. The dialogue included thematic sessions on maritime counter-terrorism, counter-terrorism interagency cooperation, and chemical, biological and radiological defence.

43. More recently, New Zealand participated in the EAS Seminar on Maritime Security and International Law in Kuala Lumpur, 11-13 February 2019 and in February this year the EAS Maritime Security Meeting in Chennai and the Second ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness in Japan. New Zealand also continues its active involvement in the ADMM-Plus Experts Working Group on Maritime Security.

ICTs Security

44. Connectivity is a crucial driver of our region's growth. However, with increased connectivity comes increased exposure to cyber threats. New Zealand remains concerned by the growing number of cyber incidents globally, including activity undertaken by both state and non-state actors. These threats are particularly concerning in the context of COVID-19, as public reports emerge of malicious actors targeting systems and infrastructure central to the pandemic response in a number of countries. They underscore the importance of adherence to and implementation of the framework of responsible state behaviour online, comprised of international law, norms of responsible state behaviour, confidence-building measures, and capacity-building.

45. New Zealand sees the ARF as an important forum to support implementation of this framework, and to improve transparency, understanding and confidence among regional partners in cyber space. To this end, we were pleased to participate in the second Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the use of ICTS in March 2019, and the associated Study Group on Confidence-Building Measures, which last met in January 2020. We are pleased with the progress made on a number of concrete measures, including establishment of a Points of Contact Database, and look forward to further progress in this area.

46. New Zealand remains committed to building regional cyber security capacity, including through membership of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise, with a particular focus on our Pacific and South-East Asian neighbours. In September 2019, New Zealand announced a NZ\$10 million programme of cyber security capacity-building aimed at supporting Pacific Island Countries.

47. In the ADMM-Plus, New Zealand co-chaired with the Philippines the Experts' Working Group on Cyber Security over the 2017-2020 term. During New Zealand's three year term as co-chair, we sought to promote practical and effective cooperation among ADMM-Plus countries to enhance capacity for the protection of cyberspace and address challenges to regional cyber security. As co-chairs we hosted five ADMM-Plus Expert Working Group on Cyber Security meetings, a Cyber Security Legal Seminar and a Table Top Exercise. The Expert Working Group also successfully agreed a cyber incidents points of contact directory; compiled a cyber terminology glossary; and devised a communications plan to guide how cyber security issues are escalated and communicated.

4. Role of ARF

New Zealand's contributions to enhancing the ARF and regional security

48. For New Zealand, the ARF is a key mechanism for security engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. It contributes to building an environment of dialogue and cooperation on a wide range of regional security issues. The ARF is also contributing in an important way to the development of international norms and principles on security that are directly relevant to this region. The number

and diversity of practical ARF projects under implementation during the current intersessional year, despite COVID-19 disruptions, reflects the ARF's ability to respond to contemporary security challenges facing this part of the world.

49. New Zealand also attaches considerable importance to working with its ARF partners to advance the ARF's preventive diplomacy agenda, in line with the ARF's three-stage evolution. In April 2019, New Zealand co-chaired with the US, Indonesia and Timor-Leste a Preventive Diplomacy Workshop on Early Warning Systems in Dili. This workshop followed two others co-chaired by New Zealand: one on negotiation and mediation in Naypyidaw in September 2018 (with the US and Myanmar) and one on Preventive Diplomacy in a Post-conflict Environment in Dili in April 2017 (with Singapore and Timor-Leste). In 2020-2021, New Zealand is planning, along with our co-chairs the US and Indonesia, to host an additional two-part integrated preventive diplomacy series building on this earlier work. This will enable ARF participants to enhance their understanding of and capacity to employ preventive diplomacy methods to prevent and mitigate conflict between and among States.

50. New Zealand is committed to working with its ASEAN partners to ensure coherence between the ARF and other pieces of the regional architecture, in particular the EAS and ADMM-Plus. While the ARF and ADMM-Plus have their distinct mandates and different memberships, greater functional coordination between them on issues that straddle multiple fora, such as disaster relief/management, cyber security and maritime security, would help to achieve streamlining and eliminate unnecessary duplication of activities. New Zealand also actively supports efforts to strengthen the EAS, to ensure it can fulfil its role as the region's premier forum for leaders to address issues of strategic risk.

Future of ARF

51. The ARF is a forum that was established with the aim of fostering habits of constructive dialogue on issues of concern. At the ARF's outset it was envisaged that the Forum would move as part of its evolution from a confidence building phase to preventive diplomacy, and finally to conflict resolution. The ARF has constructed a solid base of confidence building measures and made progress in the field of preventive diplomacy. But it has yet to reach its potential. New Zealand supports the ARF in increasing its capacity and effectiveness in the preventive diplomacy space, and encourages all participants to keep an eye to the future to ensure we are well-equipped when we move into the conflict resolution phase.

THE PHILIPPINES

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

1. The Asia-Pacific is recognized as a region of economic growth and prosperity, contributing more than two-thirds to global growth. However, a deceleration in regional merchandise trade and investment, and an uncertain policy environment has given rise to prolonged uncertainty that weighs down economic growth. The pessimistic outlook stems from the global economic standstill due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a possible deepening of US-China rivalry, and rising geopolitical risks.
2. Known for being an arena of shifting power dynamics, the Asia Pacific remains susceptible to complex relationships and growing strategic divergences among major powers. Diverging visions of a regional order remains a key uncertainty in the region's future. The region has been navigating competing impulses - between pulling the region closer through economic and development initiatives, and consolidating control for global expansion. The shifting geopolitical environment has compelled states to pragmatically engage the major powers while diversifying and deepening relations with others.
3. The region is also beset with security concerns that challenge the ability of states to engage in cooperative actions. These range from longstanding territorial disputes and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to non-traditional security threats such as terrorism, transnational crimes, natural disasters and humanitarian crises, and cybercrimes. The COVID-19 pandemic has complicated relations and raises the question whether it will reinforce or change the dynamics of external power engagement in the region.
4. Fluid power dynamics presents challenges to international stability but it also offers opportunities for new forms of regional cooperation.
5. It is, therefore, imperative for states in the region, their external partners, and other stakeholders to enhance dialogue and cooperation to effectively address these challenges. Equally important, commitments must realize tangible outcomes.

Maritime Security

For coastal states like the Philippines, maritime security is essential to national development. Free, open, and healthy seas facilitate trade, provide food and livelihood, and potentially, offshore hydrocarbon resources to satisfy national energy needs. The exploitation of marine resources must be balanced against the protection of coastal and marine ecosystems to allow continued and sustained benefits for future generations.

6. Threats to free, open, and healthy seas are multidimensional and transnational. These include piracy and armed robbery at sea; maritime kidnapping and terrorism; trafficking in and smuggling of weapons, drugs, and persons; illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, poaching; intentional marine environmental destruction; climate change; and disregard for maritime safety, including navigational safety.

7. Disputes over maritime rights and entitlements further threaten maritime security. They limit the ability of coastal states to exploit resources at sea as well as manage illegal activities at sea. Disregard for international law and engaging in unilateral actions, such as militarizing offshore outposts and conducting coercive paramilitary operations, increase tensions and undermine regional stability.

8. To address maritime security threats, coastal states must build and strengthen their enforcement capacities. Given the transnational character of these threats, coastal states must also engage in sustained dialogue among themselves, and undertake meaningful cooperation grounded in international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as well as in shared values and common interests.

Situation in the Korean Peninsula

9. The lack of substantive progress in cross-border engagements between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) casts doubt on the positive momentum in inter-Korean relations. While ROK continues to actively promote the resumption of inter-Korean projects and the delivery of humanitarian aid, DPRK has not responded to these initiatives. DPRK's refusal to accept food aid worth 50,000 tons of rice in July 2019 is attributed to its disapproval of joint military exercises between the ROK and the US.¹

10. The firing incident at a ROK guard post in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in May 2020 has exacerbated border tensions between the two Koreas, as it violates the spirit of the 2018 Comprehensive Military Agreement that calls for the cessation of hostilities.² Similarly, DPRK's decision to shut off all cross-border communication lines with South Korea and its attack on the Kaesong Joint Liaison Office on 16 June 2020 raises concerns regarding DPRK's willingness to cooperate, and could have dire consequences.

11. Deadlocks in nuclear negotiations between the DPRK and the US have hampered progress in building sustainable peace in the Korean Peninsula. While their leaders continue to maintain positive interpersonal relations, working-level talks conducted in October 2019 in Sweden failed to reach a compromise in the "final, fully verified denuclearization" of the DPRK and the easing of

¹ Han-na Park, "N. Korea rejects food aid over S. Korea-US military drills," *The Korea Herald*, July 24, 2019, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190724000638> (accessed May 15, 2020).

² "Multiple gunshots from N. Korea hit S. Korean border guard post: JCS," *The Korea Herald*, May 3, 2020, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20200503000083> (accessed May 15, 2020).

economic sanctions.³ To avoid the deterioration of the security situation in the peninsula, the parties are urged to explore amicable and constructive ways to reintegrate the DPRK into the international community.

12. Further aggravating the denuclearization efforts, the DPRK has resumed its short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) tests and expansion of nuclear capabilities since May 2019, breaking the hiatus in provocations facilitated by inter-Korean exchanges and peacebuilding efforts in 2018.⁴ The DPRK also claimed to have successfully tested submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) in October 2019, which is contradictory to inter-Korean agreements and international law.⁵

13. In light of these developments, DPRK should recommit to efforts towards achieving sustainable peace and stability in the region. Miscalculations pose a serious threat, not only to the Korean Peninsula, but to the broader Asia-Pacific region. The international community for its part should remain vigilant and committed to effectively enforcing UNSC resolutions and upholding international regimes on the non-proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Regional Power Dynamics

14. The intensification of the geopolitical rivalry among major powers has numerous implications for the Asia Pacific region. The rivalry figures prominently as a vital long-term strategic concern in the region, necessitating the prudent management of relations and the strengthening of existing multilateral mechanisms.

15. The competition for influence by regional security and development initiatives, such as the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), underscores the region's strategic and economic significance. Consequently, countries are deftly navigating diverging visions of the regional order in the Asia Pacific to ensure a stable balance of power. These new ideas and concepts for a regional security architecture must be harmonized with the goal of enhancing existing mechanisms, ensuring mutually beneficial cooperation, and maintaining inclusiveness.

16. Major powers wield considerable diplomatic and economic influence in the region. This reaffirms the intertwining of security and economic development considerations, and could greatly affect the future of global security. This has left some states uncertain about the prospect of economic gains vis-à-vis the challenges in ensuring the rights of sovereign equals.

³ "Johan Ahlander and Philip O'Connor, "North Korea breaks off nuclear talks with U.S. in Sweden," *Reuters*, October 5, 2019, <https://reut.rs/2lq2hBG> (accessed May 15, 2020).

⁴ Arms Control Association, "Chronology of U.S.-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy," April 2020, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron#2019> (accessed May 15, 2020).

⁵ "North Korea says submarine-launched missile test succeeded," *The Korea Times*, October 3, 2019, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2019/10/356_276568.html (accessed May 15, 2020)

17. Maintaining ASEAN Centrality is vital to managing the impact of unilateral actions of major powers and their interactions in the region. The ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) adopted at the 34th ASEAN Summit on 22-23 June 2019 in Bangkok reflects ASEAN's determination to preserve its centrality in the regional architecture. Should major powers desire an active role in shaping global governance rules, it must be through international and regional organizations such as ASEAN. Equally important, all states must strive to become responsible stakeholders in the global community and avoid creating new global governance mechanisms if the existing ones are sufficient or need only to be reformed. Regional peace and stability will rest on the commitment and efforts by all states to a stable, open, and rules-based order.

Terrorism

18. The evolving nature of terrorism and violent extremism continues to destroy communities and lives, undermining global peace and security. The loss of the Islamic State's (IS) territories in the Middle East has not stopped it from adapting to the new conditions by moving towards a decentralized model of global insurgency. The porous borders of Southeast Asia make it more vulnerable to IS's threat, with more foreign terrorist fighters using it to conduct terror activities, as witnessed in the 2017 Marawi crisis. Weak local institutions, poverty, and a sense of grievance at the grassroots make it difficult to weed out radicalization and terrorism.

19. The growing sophistication of terror groups is apparent in their recruitment and radicalization techniques, particularly in the use of cyberspace and social networks. Reports have shown that there is growing use and distribution of online terror-related manuals, audio, and video clips. Terror organizations have also established their own specialized websites and online portals available for their members and radicals worldwide. Through these channels and forums, extremists spread radical ideas glorifying suicide terrorism, the narrative of martyrdom, and armed struggle. It is also through these networks that radicalized sympathizers channel funds to terrorist groups to carry out attacks. There are also reports of terrorists receiving funding from non-profit organizations under the guise of assistance for community development. Troubled youth, the rural poor, and women migrant workers in ASEAN are vulnerable to radicalization.

20. The transnationalization of terrorism and its evolving nature necessitate stronger cooperation and collaboration among states and other stakeholders. Apart from sharing best practices and expertise in deradicalization, national governments must also continue to strengthen and standardize security laws and border controls, increase intelligence-sharing, enhance community vigilance, and develop rehabilitation practices and preventive measures. ASEAN Member States may also consider increasing combined training and operation programs. Likewise, there must be urgency in addressing the underlying conditions of terrorism and violent extremism such as economic inequality, social injustices, and marginalization.

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

21. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the structural vulnerabilities of countries to possible weapons of mass destruction (WMD) attacks. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, in his remarks to the Security Council, stressed that the weakness and lack of preparedness of states exposed by the pandemic provide “a window onto how a bioterrorist attack might unfold.” Non-state actors could gain access to virulent strains that may cause similar or worse devastation to societies across the world.

22. The devastating impact of COVID-19 further reinforces the stark need for greater vigilance and international cooperation in addressing chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats. The proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery to non-state actors constitute a serious threat to international peace and security. The risk that non-state actors may develop, acquire, manufacture, trade, transfer or use sensitive items and commodities with the potential to become WMDs should not be downplayed. Due to the persistent terrorist threat, states are called to fully abide by and strengthen their national implementation of treaties and agreements on nonproliferation and arms control.

Cybersecurity

23. The rapid advancement of information and communications technology (ICT) is a critical issue affecting global security. The growing global dependence on ICT increases sophisticated cybersecurity risks such as cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, data breach, malware attacks, loss of data, hacking, electronic espionage, state-sponsored cyberwarfare, cybercrimes involving financial fraud, and online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Cyber attacks compromise national security by paralyzing government functions and disrupting military technologies, disrupting financial institutions and business corporations, and endangering the lives, privacy, and safety of ordinary citizens. In addition, the easy access to the internet has also resulted in the rise of radicalization, as insurgents, terrorists, and other groups have used this space to spread extremist ideologies.

24. ICT permeates almost all aspects of life, providing newer, better, and quicker ways for people to interact, work, learn, and gain access to information. As technology becomes more pervasive, societies become more vulnerable to exploitation by cyber-criminals unless there are proper security measures for protection in place. It is more crucial than ever to strengthen national ICT infrastructures, ensure the integrity of the system, and prioritize investment in overall cybersecurity.

25. The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of reliable internet access and a strong ICT infrastructure. Disruptions in work, education, health services, and access to essential goods have accelerated the movement towards digitally sourced solutions. Digital platforms have emerged as viable solutions to the weakening of economic industries, especially at a time when physical distancing and restrictions on the movement of people and on business operations worldwide have been implemented.

26. The international community should be able to adapt and respond effectively to challenges emanating from cyberspace, especially as cybercrimes transcend international borders. This would entail updating national legislations on cybercrime-related issues, increasing the number and building the capacity of cybersecurity professionals and experts, especially in law enforcement and security sectors, and strengthening critical infrastructures. There should also be enhanced and sustained cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders at the national, regional, and international levels to address the gaps and ongoing improvements in strengthening cybersecurity initiatives. Likewise, governments must put an overarching strategy in place to prevent multinational corporations from carrying out actions that may put the personal data of consumers at risk.

Natural Disasters

27. At least 396 natural disasters in 2019 were reported in EM-DAT, the global database on natural and technological disasters maintained by the Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED).⁶ In sum, 2019 disasters killed 11,755 people, affected 95 million others, and cost USD 30 billion. The number of disasters in 2019 is higher than the average of the last ten years (343 disasters in EM-DAT).⁷ Asia was the most vulnerable continent in 2019, accounting for 40 percent of all disaster events and 45 percent of total deaths.⁸

28. According to the Annual Report 2019 of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), biodiversity has been hit hard by natural hazards. The ecological costs of rising global temperatures last year was apparent in Australia, where record bushfires killed an estimated 1.25 billion animals.⁹ The UNDRR report underscores the importance of risk reduction strategies in protecting lives, livelihood, and ecosystems.

29. The Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2019 (APDR) similarly highlights growing climate risks particularly experienced by the Asia Pacific region, which is seen as the most disaster-prone region due to its long history of catastrophic disasters, as well as the continuing lack of community resilience by the region's developing countries. The APDR identifies an earthquake as the most expensive disaster event, followed by flood, a tropical cyclone, and a tsunami respectively. Droughts have been mentioned in the report as a source of widespread, slow-onset and creeping risk that primarily affects agriculture in developing countries with large rural populations and high levels of poverty.¹⁰

⁶ "Disaster Year in Review 2019," CRED Crunch, Issue No. 58 (April 2020), <https://cred.be>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, *Annual Report 2019* (United Nations: 2020), <http://www.undrr.org>

¹⁰ United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, *Asia Pacific Disaster Report 2019* (Bangkok: United Nations, 2019), <https://www.unescap.org>

30. Disaster risk management will continue to play a crucial role in minimizing the increasing economic, social and environmental costs brought by natural disasters. More than implementing national strategies to address these risks, international cooperation must be intensified to create regional mechanisms that sharpen individual states' capacities and build community resilience across the whole region.

II. National Security and Defense Policy

A. Overview of National Security and Defense Policy

31. The vision of the Philippines for a secure and prosperous nation is anchored on two key documents: 2017-2022 National Security Policy (NSP) and the 2018-2022 National Security Strategy (NSS). The NSP establishes the Philippines's national security goals and strategic directions with particular focus on the political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, informational, diplomatic and military aspects, which are vital for nation-building. The NSS, on the other hand, articulates in operational terms the policies set forth in the NSP through (1) the combined, balanced, and effective use of the instruments of state power, and (2) wealth creation and resource generation.

32. The development of a minimum credible deterrence remains the main goal of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), through Horizon Two of the Revised Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Program (RAFPMP). The modernization program focuses on the procurement, development, and upgrading of capabilities and equipment of the AFP to protect the country from both internal and external security threats.

33. The Philippines continues to diversify its security relations and cultivate partnerships with members of the international community. Defense collaboration and security engagements provide the AFP a wider perspective and exposure to new technologies and systems, and most importantly, facilitate the sharing of new knowledge and skills, thereby strengthening interoperability and combat readiness

B. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

i. Total defense expenditure on annual basis

1. Defense expenditure

- For the fiscal year 2020, the approved defense budget of the Philippines is PHP192.1 billion (USD3.776 billion), which is a 2 percent increase from PHP188.2 (USD3.6 billion) the previous year. The defense budget also amounts to 4.69 percent of the total government budget (PHP4.1 trillion) for 2020.

2. Defense expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

- The Philippines's 2019 defense expenditure (USD3.6 billion) was 1.01 percent of its GDP (USD355.5 billion).

3. Defense expenditure per capita
 - In 2019, the Philippine defense expenditure per capita was USD32.1, an increase from USD26.7 the previous year.

III. National Contributions to Promoting Regional Security

A. Counter-terrorism

34. Despite the slight decrease of terror activities in the Philippines since the Marawi siege of 2017, the Philippines remains among the top countries affected by terrorism around the world. The country ranks 9th in the 2019 Global Terrorism Index, making it the only Southeast Asian country in the top ten (10).¹¹

35. In 2019, the Philippines was hit by a spate of suicide bombings and attacks on government targets. Terror activities in the country were dominated by the communist group New People's Army (NPA), and groups affiliated with the Islamic State such as the Abu Sayyaf and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF).

36. The lessons from the Marawi siege have been the driving force behind the implementation of several inclusive counterterrorism initiatives, which focus not only on the application of military force to combat terrorist activities, but also on the elimination of the socio-economic conditions that enable radicalization and violent extremism to thrive in communities.

37. In 2019, the Anti-Terrorism Council adopted the National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (NAP-PCVE), with the Department of Interior and Local Government leading its implementation. The plan involves addressing the root causes of extremism in spaces where they are likely to breed, including certain communities, learning institutions, jails, and social media. Recognizing the role of education in preventing radicalization, the government designated the local government units (LGUs) in conducting PCVE training and workshops at the grassroots. It also includes working with religious leaders (e.g., *imams* and *Muftis*) to help deradicalize youths who are often vulnerable to recruitment. There are also deradicalization programs that will be implemented in detention centers and jails, where several suspected violent extremists are being detained.

38. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continues to help various government agencies and LGUs to facilitate the operationalization of the NAP-PCVE. It deployed Community Support Program Teams in the countryside to assess the people's needs, facilitate development, and improve governance in the area by organizing communities and linking them to appropriate government units and agencies. Promptly addressing bad governance and lack of basic services means that terrorists would have lesser issues to exploit to bolster their propaganda and recruitment narratives.

39. The Philippines has also taken an important step in confronting the long-drawn-out local communist insurgency with the signing of Executive Order (EO) No. 70 in December 2018. The order institutionalizes the whole-of-nation approach in attaining inclusive and sustainable peace to confront local communist terrorist groups (CTGs). It is in line with the objective of the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022 to attain inclusive and sustainable peace through intensified development in vulnerable communities, and with the Joint Communiqué of the 50th ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting held in 2017 in Manila, which reaffirms the importance and effectiveness of the whole-of-nation approach as opposed to a purely military option in combating violent extremism.

40. EO 70 created the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) to harmonize government policies, programs, projects, services, and activities with those of all stakeholders in conflict-affected areas and vulnerable communities. Initiatives include local government empowerment, international engagement, legal cooperation, basic services, livelihood and poverty alleviation, sectoral unification, capacity-building, empowerment, and mobilization.

41. The Philippine Congress also fast-tracked the passage of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020, which will amend the Human Security Act of 2007. With sufficient safeguards against abuse in place, it seeks to strengthen terrorism-related law enforcement capacities and criminal justice procedures to preserve national security.

42. In conjunction with Republic Act No. 10168 or the Terrorism Financing Prevention and Suppression Act of 2012, the Philippines adopted the National Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism Strategy (NACS) 2018-2022 through Executive Order No. 68. The NACS provides the objectives and standardizes the process of countering the financing of terrorism. It recognizes the importance of good governance in the grassroots, the coordination between the government and private sector, and international cooperation, particularly on intelligence-sharing, in countering the financing of terrorism. The Philippines recognizes the need to monitor funds going through remittance agencies, non-profit organizations, illegal drug trade, and digital currencies or cryptocurrencies that could be used as channels to finance terrorist activities in the country.

43. To complement its national initiatives and policies, the Philippines pursues a broad range of bilateral and multilateral partnerships. Through ASEAN, Member States and their Dialogue Partners can develop concrete capacity-building and information initiatives in combatting terrorism in land and sea. One example is the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) Experts' Working Group (EWG) on Counterterrorism, which has conducted land-based counter-terrorism exercises, the latest of which was held in Guilin, China in 2019. The Philippines also supports the ASEAN Our Eyes Initiative (AOEI), which is an intelligence-sharing platform in the region that aims to facilitate a more effective and immediate response to terrorism.

44. In response to transnational security threats such as piracy, kidnappings, and terrorism in the porous maritime borders, the Philippines works with Indonesia and Malaysia through the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) signed in 2016. The countries intensified joint maritime

security patrols, assistance for the safety of people and ships in distress, and information- and intelligence-sharing to prevent the utilization of respective territorial waters as an avenue for the proliferation of terrorism.

45. The Philippines also works with bilateral partners in the areas of capacity-building, modernization, information-sharing, and intelligence exchange. Among these partners is Australia, which has been deploying a military training team to the Philippines to train Filipino soldiers in urban combat and joint operations, air coordination in the urban environment, and maritime security through *Operation Augury-Philippines* since 2017. The initiative transitioned to an Enhanced Defense Cooperation Program (EDCP) on 01 December 2019.

46. On countering terrorism financing, the Philippines's Anti-Money Laundering Committee (AMLC) has been working closely with the Australia Transaction Report and Analysis Center (AUSTRAC) and other financial intelligence agencies. AUSTRAC helps AMLC in protecting many sectors that are exposed to risks of money laundering and terrorism financing. This improved the monitoring capabilities of the Philippines on suspicious financial transactions that can be linked to terrorist groups and their sympathizers.

47. Affirming the commitment to combatting terrorism, the Philippines co-sponsored the United Nations Security Council Resolution No. 2462 in 2019, which calls upon Member States to combat and criminalize the financing of terrorists and their activities in line with the standards set by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). This includes reinforcing access to the information and terrorist financing analytical capacity of their financial intelligence units and strengthening cooperation with the private sector concerning the trends, source, and methods of terrorism financing.

B. Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

48. The Philippines' staunch commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is anchored in its Constitution. Article II, Section 8 of the 1986 Constitution states that "the Philippines, consistent with the national interest, adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory." Support for the regulation of arms and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction stems from the country's strong adherence to the principles of international law for the promotion of global peace and security.

49. While the global COVID-19 pandemic rendered it impossible for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty of Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to commence on 27 April-22 May 2020, the Philippines looks forward to participating in the Review Conference once rescheduled. With its partners from the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), the Philippines commits to continuously serve as a bridge-builder between the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States in coming up with practical and realistic ways of strengthening the implementation of the NPT.

50. The Philippines, with fifteen (15) other State Parties, issued a Joint Communiqué to mark the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT on 19 May 2020. This joint communiqué highlights the pivotal role of the NPT in supporting international efforts to curtail the threats posed by nuclear weapons and their proliferation, while providing a foundation for global nuclear disarmament leading towards the complete elimination of these weapons. It also enjoins all States Parties to redouble efforts to fully implement the treaty's equal and reinforcing pillars—nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

51. The Philippines is deeply concerned with recent developments in the global security environment that indicate deepening mistrust and a widening of the divide among the State Parties, the modernization and refinement of nuclear weapons capabilities, and the lowering of the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons. It calls on the nuclear-weapon States to fulfill their commitments with sincerity and without conditions. The Philippines further reiterates the need for full and effective implementation of the decisions and resolutions adopted during the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, the thirteen (13) practical steps in the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and the 64-point action plan in 2010 NPT Review Conference.

52. Recognizing the destructive effect of nuclear testing on the environment and the humanitarian consequence of its use, the Philippines urges the eight (8) remaining Annex 2 states to promptly sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to usher its entry into force.

53. The Philippines emphasizes the crucial role of nuclear-weapons free zones in reinforcing the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation framework. The country reiterates its commitment to preserve Southeast Asia as a region free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). The Philippines further advocates the timely signing and ratification of the SEANWFZ's protocol by the nuclear weapons states.

54. The Philippines continues to promote regional and multi-agency cooperation through the hosting of the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Centre of Excellence (CBRN CoE) in Southeast Asia. The country also plays an active role in strengthening regional cooperation and preparedness, response and assistance in addressing CBRN threats. Under the ARF, the Philippines has hosted a number of workshops and table-top exercises on issues such as biological threat reduction, bio-risk management, disease detection and surveillance, preparedness and response to a biological event, countering illicit trafficking of CBRN materials, and raising awareness on CBRN risk management.

55. The Philippines further strengthens its national implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1540. The National Security Council-Strategic Trade Management Committee (NSC-STMCom) has identified the roles of each government agencies in implementing Republic Act No. 10697 (Strategic Trade Management Act) and established permanent subcommittees and working groups on the following: (1) technical reach back for the classification of strategic goods; (2) risk assessment for the determination and analysis to potential security risk

in the trade of strategic goods; (3) enforcement for ensuring compliance and investigating potential STMA violations; and (4) establishing notification mechanisms on approved licenses and properly identifying strategic goods in expert shipments. The Strategic Trade Management Office (STMO) has also conducted twenty-six (26) outreach activities through company visits, industry consultations and seminars. The STMO plans to implement the STMA in phases: registration (Q1 2019), export (Q3 2019), transit/transshipment (Q1 2020), re-export/ re-assignment, (Q3 2020), related services (Q1 2021), and import (Q3 2021).

C. Transnational Crime

Proliferation of Illicit Drugs

56. The Philippines is determined to provide a proactive solution to the proliferation of illicit drugs by upholding the rule of law, observing due process, and complying with its commitments under international human rights conventions. The Philippine Anti-Illegal Drug Strategy (PADS) serves as the government's blueprint for suppressing drug supply and decreasing drug demand in the country. It harmonizes anti-illegal drugs initiatives and encourages collaboration among national government agencies. Anchored on the National Security Policy and the 2017-2022 Philippine Development Plan, PADS is governed by three (3) principles: 1) being evidence-based and culturally appropriate, 2) adopting a comprehensive and balanced approach, and 3) being inter-sectoral and participatory.

57. The government adopts a comprehensive approach in tackling the drug problem through prevention, education and public awareness, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement, and dispensation of justice. It has partnered with local government units, faith-based groups, and civil society groups in attaining drugs-free communities by institutionalizing programs, seminars, and workshops for the youth, families, health practitioners, and law enforcers. Specific examples of these programs include *Oplan Sagip* (Rescue Operation Plans), *Barkada Kontra Droga* (Peer Group Against Drugs), Drug Abuse Prevention Programs for the out-of-school youth, Drug-free Workplace Program, Training on Effective Parenting, and the utilization of social media in promoting anti-illegal drug campaigns.

58. The government has also partnered with international organizations to strengthen cooperation and capacity-building on eliminating the spread of illegal drugs. An example of this is the collaboration with The Colombo Plan on the implementation of the Universal Prevention Curriculum (UPC) with the Department of Education and the ASEAN Training Center for Preventive Drug Education in meeting the demands for evidence-based practices in substance abuse prevention.

59. The Philippines recognizes the importance of unified data and a scientific basis for important aspects of its anti-drug campaign in aid of policy, program development, and implementation of targets and deliverables. The government currently undertakes a data-gathering initiative to determine the nature and extent of drug use in the country.

60. In terms of treatment and rehabilitation, the Philippines institutionalized Community-Based Drug Rehabilitation Programs (CBDRP) in recognition of the important role of communities in creating favorable conditions of treatment and rehabilitation for People Who Use Drugs (PWUDs). The government has provided funding to cities and provinces throughout the country to establish, maintain, and operate CBDRP facilities for mild and moderate PWUDs who would surrender voluntarily for appropriate interventions under *Oplan Sagip*.

61. On 10 February 2020, the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) and the Department of Science and Technology-Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI) launched three dietary manuals to be used in Treatment and Rehabilitation Facilities (TRFs) in the Philippines. These manuals are the product of research conducted by the DOST-FNRI on “Nutrition and Quality Life of PWUDs” and are designed to provide guidelines on the adoption of a balanced diet for PWUDs. Since the implementation of these manuals, significant improvements in the status of PWUDs were observed, particularly, lowered depression and decreased psychological distress among the PWUDs.

62. The Philippine government established the Integrated Drug Monitoring and Reporting Information System (IDMRIS) that monitors the implementation of anti-drug programs by national agencies, local government units, and partner groups and organizations. IDMRIS also serves as a venue for reporting implementers of drug prevention-related programs. The government’s Integrated Drug Abuse Data and Information Network (IDADIN) is an online data pooling and collection system used by Treatment and Rehabilitation Facilities nationwide for treatment, rehabilitation, and aftercare of drug dependents. IDADIN also allows authorities to monitor and determine the admission, relapse rate, and profile of drug users.

63. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippines issued guidelines on the Use of Electronic Prescription for any legitimate transaction of dangerous drugs. The flexibility of prescribing and dispensing these items, which remain under strict monitoring, is a way to ensure that access to medical preparations containing dangerous drugs by patients with legitimate medical needs will not be hampered.

64. At the regional level, the Philippines supports ASEAN mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network (ADMN), which give emphasis to policy formulation and program development through data collection, sharing of best practices, and establishing accountability among ASEAN Member States. The Philippines also looks forward to the upcoming publication of the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Report 2019 which identifies each ASEAN Member State’s drug policies and programs. Likewise, the Philippines continues to support the implementation and realization of the goals identified in the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs 2016-2025.

65. In the ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD), the Philippines serves as the Chair of the Treatment and Rehabilitation Working Group. As Chair, the Philippines, through the DDB, benchmarks its policies and best practices on institutionalizing treatment and rehabilitation initiatives with that of other ASEAN Member States.

66. The Philippines aligns its drug policies with international protocols, laws, and standards such as the UN General Assembly 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation toward an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem. The Philippines is also a signatory to the 1961 Single Convention of Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

67. The Philippines was also elected as chair of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific (HONLEA), the subsidiary body of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (UNODC) during the 43rd Session held in Bangkok, Thailand from 22 to 25 October 2020. As Chair, the Philippines, through the DDB, shall oversee, supervise, and liaise with the 23 member states, two associate members, and six observers within the jurisdiction of the HONLAP.

Trafficking in Persons

68. The Philippines maintained its Tier 1 status in the 2019 US State Department Report on Trafficking in Persons as a result of its continued efforts to fully comply with the standards for the elimination of trafficking.¹²

69. The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) is the lead agency representing the Philippines to the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), while the Philippine Center on Transnational Crime (PCTC) is the designated Secretariat and Project Management Office. There are ten (10) transnational crimes under the purview of the AMMTC, and the Philippines is the ASEAN Voluntary Lead Shepherd on Trafficking in Persons.

70. The adoption and entry into force of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP), which was spearheaded by the Philippines, marked a major achievement that demonstrated a region-wide commitment to combat trafficking in persons. It provides specific action plans within ASEAN Member States' domestic laws and policies, as well as relevant international obligations, to effectively address concerns such as prevention of trafficking in persons (TIP), protection of victims, law enforcement and prosecution, and regional and international cooperation and coordination.

71. Article 24 of the ACTIP holds the SOMTC responsible for promoting, monitoring, reviewing, and reporting periodically to the AMMTC on the effective implementation of the Convention. The Philippines recognizes the urgent need to establish mechanisms institutionalizing the reporting, monitoring, and evaluation of the implementation of the ACTIP, as indicated in Article 24. Such a system would be an essential tool for gauging the effectiveness of the ACTIP.

208 ¹¹ United States Department of State. *2018 Trafficking in Persons Reports*. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-trafficking-in-persons-report/> (accessed on 18 May 2020)

72. The cross sectoral nature of TIP requires thorough and multiple consultations and coordination with national agencies concerned with TIP. The Philippines, through the DILG and PCTC, is currently conducting a Country-Level Workshop in each ASEAN Member State to further discuss the proposal to establish mechanisms for the institutionalization of a reporting, monitoring, and evaluation system for the ACTIP. The Workshop also aims to gather views on the establishment of a focal point system of National ACTIP Representatives that would work best for the region. To date, the workshop has already been conducted in Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar.

73. As Chair of the Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime – Trafficking in Persons, the Philippines continues to set a high standard in the fight against Trafficking in Persons. In March 2019, during its hosting of the ASEAN Consultative Meeting on the Implementation of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the 2017-2022 Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan (Bohol TIP), the Philippines posted remarkable accomplishments in addressing transnational crimes in Southeast Asia, including ten (10) activities on law enforcement and prosecution, six (6) on TIP prevention, four (4) on protection of victims, and three (3) on international and regional coordination and cooperation. These activities represent 72 percent of the total thirty-two (32) possible areas of collaboration on the Bohol TIP. With this significant achievement, the Philippines calls to further strengthen regional efforts to combat TIP-related offenses through effective justice systems within each ASEAN Member State.

74. The Philippines' experience in combating transnational crimes demonstrates the need for an integrated approach among government agencies, and the active support by other sectors and stakeholders, complemented by strong collaboration with international partners.

D. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

75. The Philippines is a populous archipelago constantly plagued by natural disasters. It is no surprise that the country ranks second among the Ten Most affected Countries in 2018 in the Global Climate Risk Index 2020.¹³ The same report also ranks the Philippines as the fifth country most affected by extreme weather events in the period 1999 to 2018.¹⁴ The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) expressed concern that the COVID-19 pandemic could complicate emergency response efforts, specifically during evacuation activities following the devastation brought by Typhoon Vongfong (local name *Ambo*) last May 2020.¹⁵

¹³ David Eckstein, Vera Kunzel, Laura Schafer, and Mark Wings, "Global Climate Risk Index 2020," (Bonn: Germanwatch e.V., 2019), www.germanwatch.org/en/crri

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ OCHA, "Philippine typhoon recovery complicated by coronavirus concerns," *UN News*, May 15, 2020, news.un.org/en/story/2020/05/1064202

76. The Philippines is committed to reducing the loss of lives and assets due to disasters by being one of the signatories of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) that aims to protect lives, health, livelihoods, ecosystems, cultural heritage, and critical infrastructure from natural and human-caused hazards over the next fifteen (15) years.

77. The Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, otherwise known as Republic Act 10121, serves as the main framework of the government in mitigating risks, enhancing disaster response, and improving societies' disaster resilience. It was this legislation that shifted the government's perspective to a more comprehensive and holistic DRRM process.

78. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan 2011-2028, which fulfills the requirement of Republic Act 10121, serves as a road map that focuses on objectives and activities related to four (4) thematic areas: (1) Disaster Prevention and Mitigation; (2) Disaster Preparedness; (3) Disaster Response; and (4) Disaster Rehabilitation and Recovery.

79. The Government has also established partnerships with telecommunications companies to improve the dissemination of risk information for natural disasters and other emergencies. The need to adapt to and utilize technological advancements is recognized as a means to mitigate the losses and damages in infrastructure, and economic impact of disasters.

80. At the international level, the Philippines has actively participated in the United Nations (UN) meetings and discussions aimed at enhancing humanitarian assistance and disaster response. During the UN General Assembly meeting on 16 December 2019, the Philippines, aligning with ASEAN, stressed the need to collaborate with the private sector and non-traditional sources of support to reinforce international humanitarian relief and address increasing humanitarian emergencies. The Philippines also urged Member States to mainstream disaster risk mitigation and management within national development plans and policies.¹⁶

81. In ASEAN, the Philippines has engaged other ASEAN Member States and ASEAN's external partners through platforms such as the 7th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) and the 8th Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) held on 04 October 2019, as well as through the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the ASEAN Plus meetings. The Philippines also actively supports the work of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) in responding to both natural and human-induced disasters.

82. The Philippines is one of only two (2) countries that have established an ASEAN Satellite Warehouse to enhance mobilization and delivery of relief items across the region.¹⁷ The ASEAN Satellite Warehouse is a mechanism under the Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) co-managed by the AHA Centre.

83. The COVID-19 pandemic has facilitated a new template of cooperation among countries in protecting societies and countering its economic repercussions. Governments have closely coordinated in mutually building resilience, such as donations of medical supplies, information-sharing, and online diplomatic exchanges. Nonetheless, the pandemic has amplified the need to immediately produce essential resources and develop a vaccine, and has endangered the stability of developing countries with limited health care capacity. Hence, the international community is incentivized to formulate a consolidated approach to regional cooperation that envisions a long-term and equitable path to normalization.

84. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), by virtue of Executive Order No. 168, has activated the Interagency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), which acts as the lead advisory body to the President of the Philippines on the management and implementation of actions to address the impact of COVID-19 on the country. Led by the Department of Health, the IATF-EID has developed the *Interagency Contingency Plan for Emerging Infectious Diseases and COVID-19* that identifies the necessary tools to mount a whole-of-government approach in code red situations characterized by sustained community transmission leading to epidemic surge.¹⁸

E. Maritime Security

85. As an archipelagic and coastal state, the Philippines places high priority in maritime security. It is fully committed to resolving its maritime disputes peacefully and to combating crimes at sea, guaranteeing the freedom and safety of navigation, and ensuring the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources in cooperation with regional partners and the international community. Issues such as piracy and armed robbery at sea; maritime kidnapping and terrorism; trafficking in and smuggling of weapons, drugs, and persons; illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including poaching; intentional marine environmental destruction; climate change; and disregard for maritime safety, including navigational safety, are of great concern to the country.

86. In the South China Sea, the Philippines continues to affirm the importance of promoting and maintaining peace and stability; freedom and safety of navigation and overflight; freedom of international commerce and other peaceful uses of the seas; and the peaceful settlement of territorial and maritime jurisdiction disputes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, through friendly

¹⁷ Chairman's Statement of the 26th ARF, Bangkok, August 2, 2019, <https://asean.org/chairmans-statement-26th-asean-regional-forum/>

¹⁸ COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan Philippines, *Philippines: COVID-19 Response Plan (May 11, 2020 Revision)*, <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/philippines-covid-19-humanitarian-response-plan-may-11-2020-revision>

consultations and negotiations by the sovereign states directly concerned, and in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In line with the 25th anniversary of the entry into force of UNCLOS on 16 November 2019, the Philippines called on all state parties to respect and fulfill their legal obligations under the Convention to prevent conflict over the seas. In its Statement on the 4th Anniversary of the Issuance of the Award in the South China Sea Arbitration, the Philippines reaffirmed adherence to the award and its enforcement without possibility of compromise or change, that compliance with the award would be consistent with obligations under international law, including UNCLOS, and commemorated the issuance of the award as a celebration of the rule of law as a means to settle disputes amicably, achieve peace, advance a rules-based and equitable international order and foster cooperation among friendly, responsible and civilized nations.

87. The Philippines emphasizes the need for parties in the South China Sea to uphold the principles of freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea, freedom of international commerce, and to enhance mutual trust and confidence, observe non-militarization, and exercise self-restraint in conducting unilateral activities that may complicate the situation. In this regard, the Philippines urges all parties to observe the full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety. The Philippines also underscores the urgency of concluding an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), consistent with international law. As the current Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, the Philippines continues to work closely with ASEAN Member States and China in substantive negotiations toward a COC. The Philippines welcomes the early completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text in July 2019.

88. The Philippines encourages all parties in the South China Sea to continue making progress on early harvest measures. The Philippines is pleased with the implementation of the 2016 Joint Statement on the Application of the Code of Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) in the South China Sea and the 2016 Guidelines for Hotline Communications among Senior Officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of ASEAN Member States and China in Response to Maritime Emergencies. The Philippines hopes that substantive regional cooperation also emanate from the 2017 Declaration for a Decade of Coastal and Marine Environment Protection in the South China Sea (2017–2022), which affirmed the commitment of ASEAN Member States and China to preserve and sustainably manage coastal and marine ecosystems in the South China Sea. The Philippines also encourages the parties to continue exploring other practical cooperative initiatives as early harvest measures.

89. The Philippines is fully committed to peacefully resolve its maritime disputes with its neighbors. In 2017, the Philippines and China established the Bilateral Consultation Mechanism on the South China Sea (BCM) as a venue for both sides to discuss their concerns in the South China Sea. At the fifth meeting in Beijing in October 2019, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to constructively handle their disputes and to continue exploring practical maritime cooperation activities. In line with this, the Philippines and China exchanged views on enhancing cooperation on the areas of maritime search and rescue, maritime safety, marine scientific research and marine environmental cooperation, and fisheries. The two countries also convened the first meeting of

the Inter-Governmental Joint Steering Committee on Cooperation on Oil and Gas Development in Beijing in October 2019. The committee is tasked to negotiate joint oil and gas exploration and exploitation arrangements in the South China Sea under the 2018 Philippines-China Memorandum of Understanding on Oil and Gas Development.

90. In 2019, the Philippines completed the ratification of its boundary agreement with Indonesia over their overlapping exclusive economic zones (EEZs) in the Sulawesi Sea and the Philippine Sea. The treaty entered into force on 01 August 2019 after an exchange of the instruments of ratification. The Philippines considers the maritime boundary delimitation agreement to be a valuable example of peaceful and rules-based dispute settlement in accordance with UNCLOS.

91. In the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas, the Philippines is pleased with the state of its cooperation with Indonesia and Malaysia under the 2016 Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement, which establishes a framework for coordinated maritime and air patrols among the three countries. Since the launching of patrols in 2017, there has been a significant reduction in abductions of shipping crews in the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas. The Philippines is confident that continued trilateral cooperation will eventually help the littoral states effectively combat piracy, armed robbery at sea, and other crimes at sea in the tri-border area.

92. As part of domestic efforts to ensure maritime safety, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has implemented the “Issuance of Maritime Safety and Security Card.” This policy aims for the application, processing, and issuance of the Maritime Safety and Security Card (MSS) for all persons aboard shipping vessels and other watercrafts—including officers and crews, owners/operators, and passengers—while transiting the Maritime Areas of Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi (ZAMBASULTA). This serves as a deterrent for criminal activities.

93. The PCG has also implemented the “Safety, Security, and Environmental Numbering (SEEN) System for All Philippine Registered Vessels and/or Watercrafts.” In order to enhance marine environmental protection, maritime security and safety within the Philippine Maritime Domain, unique identification numbers have been assigned to each registered vessel/watercraft in the Philippines. This effort is aimed at preventing the use of vessels/watercraft in various maritime infractions, particularly piracy and terrorism.

94. The Philippines supports ASEAN-led maritime security forums such as the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ARF ISM-MS), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM), and the ADMM-Plus. The Philippines also lauds several ASEAN initiatives such as the Inaugural ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Field Training Exercise (FTX), the launching of the ASEAN Direct Communications Infrastructure (ADI), and the adoption of the Guidelines for Air Military Encounters, and Guidelines for Maritime Interaction. The Philippines recognizes the value of these different forums in fostering dialogue and building confidence on maritime issues at different levels, and supports efforts for greater coordination and synergy among these platforms.

95. The Philippines also supports ASEAN-led multilateral maritime exercises such as the ASEAN Multilateral Naval Exercise (AMNEX), first held in 2017 with a second iteration that was supposed to be held in May 2020 (postponed indefinitely); the ASEAN-China Maritime Exercise launched in 2018; and the ASEAN-US Maritime Exercise inaugurated in 2019. These exercises help build confidence and trust, and enhance mutual understanding among the navies of the coastal and user states of regional seas.

96. The Philippines also actively participated in the Regional Training on Maritime Crime Scene Investigation conducted on 28 January-01 February 2019 in Cebu City. Representatives from the Philippine Navy, Philippine Ports Authority, Philippine Coast Guard, National Coast Watch System, and the Bureau of Customs participated in the training. This initiative enhanced the institutional capacity of the maritime law enforcement agencies through activities on strengthening investigative resources and specialized forensic capabilities, improving information-sharing, and bolstering national and regional maritime law enforcement cooperation to combat terrorism, piracy, and armed robbery.

97. The Philippines advocates greater cooperation among regional coast guards and maritime law enforcement agencies in the region. The Philippines hosted the 2nd Experts' Group Meeting on the Establishment of an ASEAN Coast Guards Forum (ACGF) in January 2018 and hopes for further discussions to explore the feasibility of establishing an ACGF. The Philippines also welcomes parallel efforts at the ARF, guided by the 2016 ARF Statement on Enhancing Cooperation among Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies.

98. The Philippines promotes regional efforts to protect the marine environment and sustainably manage fishing activities. The Philippines acknowledges the role of the ASEAN Center for Biodiversity (ACB)—which it hosts in Los Baños, Laguna—in facilitating collaboration among ASEAN Member States on biodiversity conservation, such as the ASEAN Heritage Parks Program. The Philippines also recognizes the roles of the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI), the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), and the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) in enhancing regional cooperation on sustainable development and marine environmental protection.

F. Security of Information and Communications Technology

99. According to research conducted by cybersecurity firm Kaspersky in 2019, the Philippines ranks 7th among the most attacked countries worldwide in terms of internet-borne web threats and 3rd in Southeast Asia in terms of mobile malware.¹⁹ Recognizing the vulnerabilities faced by the country, the Philippine government is strengthening its ICT infrastructure and capacity to address the security risks posed by the rapidly evolving nature of ICT.

¹⁸CGMW News. Philippines 7th most attacked country by cyber threats in Q4 2019

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/scitech/technology/723701/philippines-7th-most-attacked-country-by-cyber-threats-in-q4-2019-kaspersky/story/> (accessed 12 June 2020)).

100. The Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) is the primary agency tasked to plan, develop, and promote the ICT development agenda in the country. The Philippines recognizes that security in the cyber domain serves as a critical building block for national progress. Hence, the DICT launched the National Cyber Security Plan 2022 to serve as a roadmap of actions to safeguard the cyberspace against threats and attacks. Among its primary goals is to implement cyber resiliency through:

- a. Continuous and safe operation of critical infrastructures, public, and military networks;
- b. Implementation of cybersecurity measures to enhance the ability to respond to threats before, during and after attacks;
- c. Effective coordination of law enforcement agencies; and
- d. Promoting a cybersecurity educated society.

101. The establishment of the Cybersecurity Management System (CMS) Project and the National Cyber Intelligence Web Monitoring (NCIWM) are milestone initiatives of the government. The CMS is the country's first-ever cyber resiliency initiative—a unified national platform for intelligence-sharing with which the DICT and its cybersecurity partners from the private sector are able to assist government agencies with cybersecurity threats, attacks, and other issues. Meanwhile, the NCIWM is a tool which can provide real-time analysis of web attacks on government websites and other domain names added to the system. An early version of the NCIWMS was utilized during the SEA Games 2019 for monitoring of possible IT-related threats.

102. In an effort to establish and promote computer emergency response in the country, and to capacitate government ICT personnel with the appropriate skill in information security, the government has initiated the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training Program.

103. The Armed Forces of the Philippines has also been pursuing initiatives to enhance its cyber defense through the creation of the AFP Cybersecurity Strategic Plan (CSP) and the conduct of a Cyber Security Summit. The CSP aims to enhance the AFP's cyberspace capabilities, while the Summit aims to educate and raise the awareness of the Armed Forces on the latest trends in cybersecurity.

104. Equipping the general public with skills and knowledge on cybersecurity has also been a priority of the government. Hence, capacity-building activities and awareness campaigns have been initiated. These include the Digital Parenting Advocacy Campaign, which seeks to equip parents on the proper use of ICT in order to protect their children from digital and online dangers, and Cybersecurity Awareness and Information Caravans to High School and College Students. Furthermore, there are ongoing efforts to integrate cybersecurity courses in the academe with the aim of increasing the number of experts and professionals in the field of cybersecurity.

105. Committed to further contribute to addressing cyberspace risks and vulnerabilities in the region, the Philippines, as co-chair of the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus Experts' Working Group on Cyber Security, hosted the Table-Top Exercise (TTX) on Cyber Security in August 2019. The TTX served as a platform to develop practical understanding of the complexity of threats

emanating from cyberspace, and strengthen regional cooperative efforts to address the challenges brought by modern technology. Through this exercise, the Philippines and other ADMM-Plus members were able to test and enhance their communication strategies, escalation procedures, and decision-making in the face of an information security incident. The simulation exercises further tested the Philippines' ability to analyze, respond, and collaborate with the ADMM-Plus to address common cyber-attacks.

106. The Philippines also actively participates in other regional efforts to address cybersecurity threats. At the 4th ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC) held in Singapore in October 2019, ASEAN Member States recognized the need for a formal mechanism to coordinate ASEAN cybersecurity efforts. As a response, ASEAN ministers and senior officials responsible for cybersecurity drafted the ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordination Mechanism Paper and agreed to endorse a recommendation for an ASEAN Cross Sectoral Coordinating Committee for cybersecurity. The proposal paper is being circulated to the relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies and the ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN) for further consideration.

107. The AMCC reaffirms the region's commitment to a rules-based international order in cyberspace, and seeks to work towards adopting and implementing voluntary, non-binding, and practical norms of state behavior in cyberspace, as enshrined in the 2015 United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (UNGGE) Report on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

108. The Philippines supports efforts aimed at strengthening regional capacity-building in cybersecurity, in particular, to support capacity-building initiatives at the ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence in Singapore and the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre in Thailand. ASEAN Member States welcome the partnership with the UN and ASEAN Dialogue Partners in this effort.

109. The Philippines also values the endeavors and commitment of the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Group (EWG) on Cybersecurity. Since its establishment in 2017, the EWG has been able to develop a point of contact directory for cyber incidents, a cyber-terminology glossary, and a draft communications plan to guide the escalation and communication of cybersecurity issues. In addition, the EWG has also established an information sharing portal, and has conducted a cybersecurity legal seminar for subject matter experts.

IV. Role of the ARF

110. The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) was one of the most notable additions to the evolving regional security architecture in the 1990s. Since then, it has become a key mechanism for active engagement in cooperative security in the Asia-Pacific. It has bolstered interstate cooperation and has continued to adapt to new security challenges in light of the evolving regional and international

environment. The ARF has also played a significant role in norms-building for maintaining regional stability and security in the region, and has provided states mutual assurance on issues of common interest.

111. Throughout the years, the ARF has increasingly and actively dealt with non-traditional security issues that require practical cooperation. However, the ARF should also seek to gradually defuse traditional security issues that may undermine peace and prosperity, such as unresolved territorial disputes. Equally important, the ARF should also carefully manage significant shifts in power relations to preserve peace, and ensure that the security interests of a few will not influence the overall trajectory of the institution.

112. The Philippines affirms its strong support for the ARF as a platform for confidence-building and preventive diplomacy towards regional peace and stability. It is committed to working with ARF partners towards the development of an effective and timely crisis management capacity through the utilization of existing institutional mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting-Plus. Enhanced coordination among these mechanisms will be crucial in addressing enduring and emerging security threats.

113. The ARF's role as a key driver of constructive dialogue and consultation on security matters in the region, rests on its ability to move towards the second stage of its main goal—the development of preventive diplomacy (PD) mechanisms. While the promotion of confidence-building measures (CBM) remains important, the Philippines supports, and is committed to, the full implementation of the PD Work Plan. The Philippines also urges the ARF to develop substantial measures that could bring immediate, long-lasting, and tangible benefits for the people of the region. An institution's strength resides not in written declarations or commitments, but in the practice and implementation of reached agreements.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

Despite growing interdependence and cooperation among countries in the region, fear for potential conflicts and tension still lingers. New and emerging challenges, such as ICT security threats, add pressure on the region to work together to jointly address and respond to both traditional and non-traditional security challenges and achieve peace and prosperity in the region.

Creating a stable security environment is a prerequisite for ensuring prosperity for people and sustainable development in the region. The Republic of Korea (ROK) has made incessant efforts to promote lasting peace not only on the Korean Peninsula but also throughout the region. The ROK's endeavor will contribute to the ARF vision which aims to foster constructive dialogue and consultation, confidence building, and preventive diplomacy in the region.

a. Korean Peninsula

The climate of peace on the Korean Peninsula created in 2018 continued in the following year. The leaders of the ROK, the US, and the DPRK reaffirmed their determination for complete denuclearization and the establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, through the Panmunjeom Declaration, the Pyeongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018, and the Singapore Summit Joint Statement. On 27-28 February 2019, the second US-DPRK summit took place in Hanoi, Vietnam to discuss the implementation of the commitments made in the previous year, albeit without reaching to an agreement.

Amid increasing concerns over the absence of further negotiations, top-down diplomacy by the three leaders rekindled the momentum for dialogue. On the occasion of President Trump's visit to the ROK, the leaders of the ROK, the US, and the DPRK gathered together in Panmunjeom on 30 June 2019, marking a historic moment. In particular, an agreement to restart working-level negotiations was reached between President Trump and Chairman Kim, which led to the resumption of long-awaited working-level talks between the US and the DPRK in Stockholm, Sweden on 5 October. Unfortunately, the US-DPRK working-level negotiation in Stockholm concluded without an agreement once again and following negotiations have yet to take place. As the stalemate in US-DPRK dialogue prolonged, inter-Korean relations did not see much progress either. Nevertheless, the ROK government continued its efforts to reignite the dialogue momentum in cooperation with the international community.

The ROK government strived for the advancement of the Peace Process on the Korean Peninsula by creating a virtuous cycle between inter-Korean relations and US-DPRK relations. The government endeavored to create a breakthrough and revive the momentum for dialogue by making efforts to proceed with inter-Korean cooperation projects agreed upon by the leaders of the two

Koreas and continuously sending out the consistent message to the DPRK and the international community that the peace process on the Korean Peninsula must continue. In his speech at the 74th session of the UN General Assembly, President Moon re-emphasized the firm commitment of the ROK government to the peace process by declaring the three principles for peace on the Korean Peninsula – zero tolerance for war, mutual security guarantees, and common prosperity – as well as the vision to transform the Demilitarized Zone of the Korean Peninsula into an international peace zone.

In 2020, in the New Year's address and on several other occasions, President Moon proposed ways to further advance inter-Korean cooperation such as i) reconnection of inter-Korean railroads and roads, ii) sports exchanges, and iii) transformation of the DMZ into an international peace zone and called for the DPRK's response. President Moon also suggested the DPRK to explore inter-Korean cooperation in the healthcare sector to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. The ROK government is of the view that the two Korea's joint response to COVID-19 is instrumental to developing inter-Korean relations into a "community of life" in which natural disasters, infectious diseases, and other environmental issues are jointly dealt with, thereby paving the way for a "community of peace".

Continued dialogue between the parties concerned based on mutual trust is essential to putting an end to the decades-long animosities on the Korean Peninsula and achieving peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue. It is the hope of the ROK that the DPRK returns to the sphere of dialogue at an earliest date with a view to implementing the agreements made at the inter-Korean summits and the US-DPRK summits. The ROK will spare no effort to make substantial progress toward the complete denuclearization of and the establishment of lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

b. The ROK's Visions for Regional Cooperation

Amid growing uncertainty over the global strategic landscape, the Republic of Korea has made continuous efforts to diversify its diplomatic ties and expand its diplomatic horizon. As part of these efforts, the ROK has launched the New Southern Policy (NSP) with the vision of People-centered Community of Peace and Prosperity in 2017 which aims to expand and deepen partnerships with various countries in the region, including ASEAN, India, and beyond. Under the NSP, the ROK has strived to improve its cooperation ties, especially with ASEAN and India. The most outstanding achievement in the last year was the hosting of the 2019 ASEAN-ROK Commemorative Summit and the 1st Mekong-ROK Summit in November in Busan. The summits served to create momentum for the elevation of ROK-ASEAN relations to new heights in all spheres including politics, the economy, and social and cultural exchanges and lay the foundation to enrich and develop the NSP in the long term.

The ROK has also been actively pursuing cooperation with other countries in implementing various initiatives and policies of respective countries to create synergies. Over the last few years, many countries in the region have presented multiple initiatives and strategies for stronger regional cooperation. The ROK is of the view that these concepts and policies in general share the principles of openness, inclusiveness, transparency, and respect for international norms, among others, so that

they can complement each other and facilitate cooperation for peace and prosperity in the region. The ROK will continue to explore synergies to the extent possible to realize peace and prosperity in this region as a whole. To that end, well-established ASEAN-led mechanisms including the ARF will provide a valuable platform for us to deepen cooperation. The ROK will continue to work with the ARF Participants in strengthening and expanding the scope of cooperation and contributing to regional peace and stability.

On the other hand, the aim of the New Northern Policy is to create future growth engines by enhancing connectivity with Eurasian countries in such areas as transportation, logistics, and energy and usher in the era of a northern economic community of peace and prosperity. The Strategies and Priority Projects of the New Northern Policy, unveiled by the Presidential Committee on Northern Economic Cooperation, seek to achieve peace in the Northeast Asian region as well as the entire Eurasian continent. The committee has set the following four objectives for the New Northern Policy: laying the foundation for peace in Northeast Asia, pursuing a shared strategic interest with the region, creating future growth engines, and promoting mutual understanding between people. In order to successfully achieve these objectives, the committee is working to strengthen minilateral cooperation in the region, build integrated networks, increase industrial cooperation, and expand cultural exchange.

In particular, the 9-Bridge Strategy that was agreed upon between the ROK and the Russian Federation involves multiple cooperative projects that are carried out simultaneously across the nine areas of electric power, gas, railways, fisheries, ports, the Northern Sea Route, shipbuilding, agriculture, and industrial complexes. The 9-Bridge Strategy Action Plan, which lays out the details of the strategy, was signed by both sides in February 2019. With regard to Central Asian countries, the Korea-Central Asia Cooperation Forum is playing a key role in deepening regional cooperation. The forum was first launched in 2007 as an annual vice-minister-level meeting. To further strengthen cooperation, member countries established the Korea-Central Asia Cooperation Forum Secretariat in 2017. The key function of the Secretariat is to facilitate the development of projects in six priority areas—transport and logistics; energy; modernizing and diversifying industries; climate change and the environment; health and medical services; and education and culture. The New Northern Policy does not conflict with other regional cooperation strategies, and the ROK is open to working together with other countries in implementing the policy.

The ROK Government has also exerted great efforts in strengthening the 'Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation (NAPC) Platform,' a multilateral cooperation framework in Northeast Asia. The Platform has served as a venue for regional countries to participate in and freely share their opinions on relevant issues, thereby cultivating a habit of cooperation and dialogue. Each year, the Korean Government held the 'Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Forum,' which brought together government officials and civil experts from key countries including China, Japan, the United States, Russia, and Mongolia, and dialogue partners such as Australia, New Zealand, ASEAN, the EU, NATO, the OSCE and the UN. The 'Inter-governmental Meeting,' held in parallel with the Forum, has also enlarged its scope of cooperation by having in-depth discussions on ways to deepen the regional dialogues. This year, the ROK Government will continue to encourage key countries and

dialogue partners within the region to participate in the NAPC Platform, so that the entire region can effectively address the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond as well as other transnational issues.

2. National Security and Defense Policy

a. Overview of National Security and Defense Policy

The ROK government has established and been promoting its National Security Strategy that includes the vision of a Peaceful and Prosperous Korean Peninsula in the security domain. While maintaining robust security, the ROK government is determined to realize denuclearization and establish permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula.

The ROK military has established and been promoting defense policies to realize the defense vision of Competent Security, Robust Defense. The ROK will maintain its robust security posture in support of the establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, and will continue its efforts in developing an advanced, elite, and strong military force built upon cutting-edge technologies. Furthermore, the ROK seeks to foster an advanced military culture in order to build a trusted military that stands by the people.

b. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register (as of 2019)

- i. **Defence expenditure (in KRW billions): 46,697**
- ii. **Defence expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product(GDP):2.51%**
- iii. **Defence expenditure per capita (in KRW billions): 0.0009**

3. National Contributions to Regional Security

i. Counter-terrorism

Terrorism and violent extremism continue to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. Although ISIS has been defeated from its stronghold in the Middle East, the threat of terrorism is continuously spreading to every corner of the world including Asia. The Republic of Korea is fully committed to the fight against terrorism and has been doubling up its efforts to combat terrorism at national, regional and global levels.

The ROK has been fostering global cooperation as technology-related issues such as terrorist threats utilizing ICTs, unmanned aerial system (UAS), and other emerging technologies are frequently noticed. In line with the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), the ROK launched the Asia ICT and Counter-terrorism Dialogue (2017-18) as a platform to find ways to tackle terrorists' internet exploitation and bolster public-private engagement. In the same context, the ROK co-hosted the 3rd Global Counter-Terrorism Forum (GCTF) Regional Workshop to counter

UAS threats in 2019. The workshop provided an opportunity to share perceived threat posed by UAS in Asia and develop best practices to counter the threat. In addition, the ROK hosted the 2019 International Conference on Emerging Security Threat in Seoul last December. The conference served as an opportunity to share each country's policies and to build networks among experts from public and private sectors.

While rigorously countering imminent terrorist threats, the ROK has been emphasizing the importance of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism (P/CVE), which is often noted as a fundamental cause of terrorism. Following the recommendations adopted by the UN General Assembly in July 2016, the ROK established its own National Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism in January 2018 and submitted to the UN in November. The Plan takes a "whole-of-government" approach and marks significant progress in combatting violent extremism in Korea. Moreover, the ROK organized the inter-regional conference on P/CVE with the OSCE in April 2018. The conference facilitated regional coordination by sharing best practices and identifying areas for possible cooperation in the field.

The ROK government is also working closely with the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (OCT) to build capacity in countries prone to be exposed violent extremism and funding the UN OCT's PVE programs such as the Global Program on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism. Under the program, Korean experts are participating in the efforts to develop the *UN global Guidelines on the Security of Major Sporting Events: Promoting Sustainable Security and Legacies*, based on Korea's experience of the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games.

Terrorist financing is one element creating a favorable environment for terrorism. As a member of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the ROK has actively participated in global efforts for countering terrorist financing. Serving as a FATF president from July 2015 to June 2016, the ROK gave its full support to the establishment of the FATF Training and Research Institute (TRAIN) in Busan, Korea. TRAIN has provided various training courses on countering terrorist financing for FATF-identified jurisdictions and actively organized numerous expert workshops and training courses as well.

ii. Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

As the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery continues to pose grave challenges to international peace and security, the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile programs remain a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. The ROK will continue to faithfully implement relevant UNSecurity Council Resolutions until the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula has been achieved.

Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the ROK reiterates its continuous commitment to maintaining and further strengthening the NPT regime. The ROK has actively participated in the 2020 NPT review process and will continue to work with other states parties for balanced progress across all of its three

pillars. In a bid to facilitate progress in nuclear disarmament, the ROK is also actively participating in the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament Initiative and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. The ROK will closely cooperate with its partners to achieve concrete deliverables. In addition, the ROK will continue to seek an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and to call for an immediate start of negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

In response to the growing risk of WMD terrorism, the ROK is working towards a full implementation of UNSCR 1540. As preventing WMDs and related materials from falling into the hands of terrorists is a vital task, the ROK has been making active efforts for the effective implementation of UNSCR 1540. Such efforts include chairing the 1540 committee for the 2013-2014 term, hosting industrial outreach conferences in September 2016 and September 2018, and providing financial assistance for the UNSCR 1540 online education program in 2018 and 2019.

As a member of all multilateral export control regimes, the ROK has actively joined in the international community's efforts to tackle related proliferation issues. The ROK served as the chair of the Nuclear Supplier's Group and Missile Technology Control Regime for the 2016-2017 term and has conducted bilateral and multilateral outreach activities to strengthen export control regimes. The ROK has also made constant efforts to keep non-member states well informed and provide all pertinent support.

As one of the original States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the ROK has actively participated in the international efforts to support and strengthen the regime and to prevent any use of chemical weapons. The ROK has been hosting the Seoul Workshops on the Peaceful Development and Use of Chemistry together with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to facilitate regional cooperation in the field of chemical safety and security since 2012. The ROK has also contributed to reinforcing the Biological Weapons Convention since its ratification.

As a reliable and long-standing supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the ROK is exercising strict control over illicit transfer and diversion of conventional arms, while respecting the principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Drawing on our advanced national control system and best practices, the ROK now serves as the chair of the ATT Working Group on Effective Treaty Implementation. Furthermore, to increase the number of states parties to the ATT, the ROK launched a project to translate the treaty guidelines into 10 different Asian languages. The ROK reaffirms its continuous commitment to establish the highest possible common standards governing arms transfers.

The ROK has relentlessly sought ways to boost global counter-proliferation efforts. In this regard, the ROK has been actively engaging in relevant international efforts such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The ROK has annually participated in the PSI Operational Experts Group meetings and Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation exercises. In July 2019, the ROK hosted Eastern Endeavor 19, in which regional experts discussed ways to strengthen counter-proliferation capacities. The ROK will continue to reach out to its PSI partners in the region to strengthen global counter-proliferation efforts.

Since 2002, the ROK and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs have co-hosted the annual ROK-UN Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues. At the 18th Conference in November 2019, disarmament and non-proliferation experts from governments, international organizations, the academia, and research institutes had in-depth discussions on the prospects and building blocks for the 2020 NPT Review Conference as well as ways to reinvigorate the review process.

The ROK will continue to seek ways to contribute constructively to the international community's discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. In this regard, a ROK-led resolution titled "Youth, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation" was adopted by the 74th UN General Assembly in December 2019, and the ROK will explore ways to further promote youth engagement in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation in the future.

iii. Transnational Crime

The ROK has been increasing efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers under the Criminal Act, thereby identifying and protecting the victims of human trafficking. The ROK amended its Criminal Act in 2013 to newly introduce a provision for trafficking as part of its efforts to meet the standards of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). In 2015, the ROK ratified the UNTOC and the Protocols thereto in addition to these legislative measures. In August 2016, the National Human Rights Commission developed the Indicators for the Identification and Protection of Trafficking in Persons, which were distributed to the relevant government branches and recommended for use as guidelines to identify and protect victims.

In 2019, the ROK participated as the co-sponsor of the EAS Leaders' Statement on Cooperation to Combat Transnational Crime, which was proposed by Australia and adopted at the 14th East Asia Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand. Through the Statement, the ROK reaffirmed its commitment to applicable international instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the development of effective policy, regulatory and operational responses to transnational crime.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

The Republic of Korea (ROK) actively responded to increasing humanitarian needs caused by emergency disasters, such as earthquakes, typhoons, infectious diseases, and protracted crisis in conflict-stricken countries, such as Syria, Iraq, and Myanmar. Considering the need for assistance to alleviate the suffering of the affected people and to minimize damage from disasters, the ROK government provided approximately 62 million US dollars in response to more than 60 humanitarian crisis in 2019.

In particular, the ROK government provided approximately 4.5 million US dollars in 2019 to respond rapidly to 20 sudden-onset disasters to save lives and protect human dignity in humanitarian emergencies. Also, in response to the growing humanitarian needs caused by protracted crisis, the

ROK provided approximately 13.5 million US dollars to the Syrian refugee crisis and approximately 5.5 million US dollars to the ongoing humanitarian situation in Rakhine State including its support for an ASEAN project in 2019.

Given that the Asia-Pacific is the most disaster-prone region globally and is exposed to unforeseen natural hazards, it is a key humanitarian task to foster regional cooperation. The ROK is to play a significant humanitarian assistance role in the region both as a donor country and as a humanitarian actor. During the co-chairmanship of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief with Thailand in 2018, the ROK contributed to drafting the ARF Work Plan for Disaster Relief 2018-2020. For example, this work plan is underpinned by a very clear guiding principle based on the ROK's humanitarian engagement that seeks to improve the quality and coordination of humanitarian efforts through regional mechanisms in strengthening disaster preparedness, response, and resilience.

Also, the follow-up to the work plan, the ROK has provided financial support to develop disaster risk reduction strategies in Bangladesh, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, the Philippines, and Vietnam in cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). It aims to share business models, best practices, and homegrown approaches to raise the awareness of potential disaster risks and to take further steps in establishing contingency measures at the local and national levels.

Furthermore, to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, the ROK revised its humanitarian assistance strategy in 2019, aiming to increase financial resources and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance, strengthen the efforts in ensuring the HDP nexus, and improve the humanitarian system.

Humanitarian efforts must be adapted to meet the different needs of people affected by different types of crises. The ROK will continue its relentless efforts to identify and narrow the gap between the increasing humanitarian needs and the resources available, and to ensure that the limited resources reach those in greatest need.

v. Maritime Security

Maritime security covers a wide range of issues, one of the most critical of which is countering and preventing piracy and armed robbery against ships. Toward this end, the ROK has actively participated in regional maritime security forums such as the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) and Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM).

The ROK became a contracting party to the ReCAAP in 2006 and has been closely cooperating with the ReCAAP Information Center (ISC) by sending Korean staff to the Center since 2007. Moreover, the ROK has made voluntary financial contributions to the ReCAAP to support regional capacity

building. Approximately 90,000 US dollars have been provided annually from 2008 to 2012, and 130,000 US dollars—a 50 percent increase—annually from 2013 onwards to broaden the ROK's role and scope in combating piracy in Asia.

The ROK continues to participate in the HACGAM as well, seeking to further facilitate cooperation between the coast guard agencies in Asia. Among the four pillars of the HACGAM's agenda, the ROK takes part in Preventing and Controlling Unlawful Acts at Sea (pillar 2) and Capacity Building (pillar 4). Most recently, the ROK Coast Guard attended the High Level Meeting (HLM) of the 15th HACGAM.

Furthermore, in order to take part in the global effort against piracy in Somalia, the ROK has deployed the Cheonghae (“pure sea” in Korean) Anti-Piracy Unit to the high seas off the coast of Somalia since 2009. The Cheonghae Unit has been conducting convoy missions as a part of the Combined Task Force (CTF) under the command of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), further participating in the European Union Naval Force's Operation Atalanta since February 2017, to carry out convoy missions to protect vessels of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), World Food Programme (WFP) and others.

Since 2009, The ROK has played an important role in the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS). Specifically, the ROK made financial contributions to the Group to expand the coastal states' capacity in countering piracy. The ROK's total contribution amounts to 1.7 million US dollars, including an additional contribution of 180,000 US dollars in 2019.

In addition, the ROK made financial contributions totaling 800,000 US dollars to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Djibouti Code of Conduct Trust Fund to strengthen Somalia and its neighboring countries' judicial capacity in tackling piracy from 2009 to 2017. In light of the recent rise in piracy attacks near West Africa, the ROK has made an annual contribution of 100,000 US dollars since 2018 to the IMO West and Central Africa Maritime Security Trust Fund. The ROK will continue to cooperate with the IMO and plans to host training programs to strengthen the capabilities of the region's maritime security personnel.

vi. ICTs Security

Information and communications technologies (ICTs) continue to provide immense opportunities for social and economic development and to grow in importance for the international community. However, with its dual-use nature, technological development has brought unprecedented challenges; not only have malicious activities using ICTs increased, but also their ways and means have highly advanced. This trend will inevitably cause serious impact on international peace and security.

As cyber threats can trigger transnational ripple effects, it is essential to forge a strong partnership with international partners to respond to malicious cyber activities. Cyber security cannot be adequately addressed single-handedly by any country alone, regional and international cooperation

in this field is of utmost importance for cybersecurity. Recognizing this, the ROK places a great deal of importance on building its own capacity and enhancing international cooperation on addressing cyber threats.

In order to set a course of action with a more strategic and systematic approach, the ROK launched the National Cybersecurity Strategy in April 2019. It declares the ROK's vision and goals in cybersecurity and outlines strategic tasks at individual, industry and government levels.

In the same vein, the ROK has been holding a series of bilateral and trilateral cyber policy consultations with a view to discussing potential steps for cooperation and strengthening the concerted response to cyber threats. In 2019, the ROK held bilateral consultations with Russia, Czech Republic, Poland and the EU and trilateral consultations among the ROK, Japan and China in November.

At the international level, the ROK has participated in four rounds of the UN Group of Governmental Group (GGE) on Developments in the Field of ICTs in the Context of International Security and contributed to its achievements. In 2019, the UN launched two processes of the GGE and the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) to discuss on responsible states' behaviors in the ICT environment. The ROK has been actively joining the relevant meetings of the OEWG process as well, among others, by submitting a working paper on the implementation of 11 norms agreed in the 2015 UNGGE report.

At the regional level, the ROK was one of the first countries to have raised ICT security issues and contributed to promoting cybersecurity with active discussions. For instance, the ROK held the ARF Seminar on Cyber Terrorism in October 2004 and ARF Seminar on Confidence Building Measures in Cyberspace in September 2012. Recognizing the importance of establishing Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the field of ICTs, the ROK has put great emphasis on their practices through the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Singapore in March 2019 and other relevant meetings. The ROK now welcomes the five CBMs suggested and adopted at the ISM and OESG and stands ready to implement and develop them in cooperation with ARF participants.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the importance of sharing policies and experiences on cyber confidence building measures between Asian and Europe, the ROK and the OSCE co-hosted the Second Inter-Regional Conference on Cyber/ICT Security in May 2019. Also, the ROK co-hosted the Warsaw Process Working Group on Cybersecurity with the United States and Poland in October 2019.

In addition, the ROK, viewing capacity building as one of the priority areas, has conducted diverse capacity building programs with partner countries in such fields as cybersecurity and cybercrime. For example, the ROK's Korea Internet & Security Agency (KISA) has organized annual conferences under the initiative of the Global Cybersecurity Center for Development (GCCD) in 2019 in order to

share information on cyber threats and joint responses with around 50 experts from 29 countries. The ROK is currently conducting a capacity building program on cybercrime investigations with Indonesia for 2018 to 2021.

4. Role of ARF

a. National Contributions to Enhancing ARF and Regional Security

As a founding member of the ARF, the ROK is committed to the Forum's visions of promoting confidence-building measures, developing preventive diplomacy, and elaborating approaches to conflicts in the region. Unfortunately, the ARF's various CBMs and PD activities, including the Inter-Sessional Support Group meeting on CBMs and PD, five Inter-Sessional Meetings and the meeting of ARF Experts and Eminent Persons, along with other CBMs and PD workshops and seminars, have been cancelled or postponed during the inter-sessional year of 2019-2020 due to the current COVID-19 situation. Despite the difficulties, the ARF Participants including the ARF chair have made efforts to sustain the ARF process. In full support for the efforts, the ROK government, in cooperation with Indonesia and Japan, has contributed to seeking ways to continue the ARF process as the co-chair of the ARF ISM on NPD in 2020.

The ROK government will deepen its engagement in the ARF's endeavors without pause and, in this vein, the ROK would like to co-chair the ARF ISM on ICT security in 2021 with Indonesia. The ROK looks forward to working closely with the ARF Participants in contributing to building confidence and securing peace and stability in this region.

b. Future of ARF

Since its establishment in 1994, the ARF has played an essential role as a unique intergovernmental forum for multilateral security in the region in promoting regional peace and stability. The ARF has served as an effective venue for exchanging views on common security threats and seeking joint responses to them, by facilitating dialogue among countries in the region and providing opportunities to freely exchange opinions on various security issues at the regional and international level.

At the same time, the ARF has carried out a multitude of Track 1 activities as part of confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy activities. These activities include measures to respond to emerging security challenges of non-traditional and transnational nature, such as natural disasters, terrorism, transnational crimes, and cyber threats.

The more sophisticated security landscape in the region necessitates the ARF harnessing its strengths to the fullest and working to build complementary relationships with other regional mechanisms, such as the ADMM+ and the East Asia Summit. Furthermore, it is essential that the

ARF Participants strive to make the Forum more efficient and effective by further streamlining the process of its meetings and strengthening the role of the ARF unit and the ARF chair.

Considering that the ARF can constantly change and evolve in accordance with the needs of the participating countries, the ARF Participants should relentlessly seek ways to further strengthen the mechanism while enhancing its efficiency. In particular, the ARF EEPs and other experts should be able to increase involvement in such process and provide expert advice on how to strengthen the mechanism.

The ROK notes that the ARF process has been effectively reinforced through active negotiations among the Participants. The ROK hopes to further strengthen the ARF process and see the visions of promoting confidence-building measures, developing preventive diplomacy, and elaborating approaches to conflicts in the region realized through continued discussions and cooperation within the ARF framework.

RUSSIA

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The Asia-Pacific region continues to be an important driver for global cooperation in a multipolar system of international relations. Multilateral associations focused on integration building and creative cooperation are actively working in this area, and a space of common interests is being formed with mutual respect for national specifics.

The COVID-19 pandemic has become an unprecedented challenge for the Asia-Pacific. Its socio-economic implications will seriously affect the overall dynamics of the regional development (according to the IMF estimates, the growth of aggregate GDP in 2020 will stall at zero). The coronavirus crisis and subsequent restrictive measures have de facto frozen some key sectors of the world economy, disrupted the global value chains, as well as led to the largest capital withdrawal from the developing countries in history. The growing confrontation between the major powers in these circumstances is fraught with new dividing lines and risks undermining the region-wide system of collective interaction.

Under the humanitarian slogan of responding to the epidemic, the selective cooperation schemes distant from the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and broad region-wide cooperation inherent to the ASEAN-led formats, are being introduced. Meanwhile, a substantial practical potential of such leading regional fora as the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) which prioritize the consolidation of the collective efforts stays idle. Herein lie the disruption risks for the pan-regional ASEAN-led system of mechanisms that secures a well-balanced level of interstate relations.

A particular danger is posed by the growing importance of force and the lowering ethical threshold of its use, as well as the certain countries' military build-up which may lead to a new arms race.

We note a slowdown in the political and diplomatic settlement of the situation on the Korean Peninsula, primarily due to the persistent differences in approaches between the United States and the DPRK to normalizing relations. We believe the parties should refrain from any steps leading to an escalation of tensions and continue to implement existing agreements between them. We consider it necessary to establish a reliable multilateral mechanism for peace and security in Northeast Asia, as reflected in the updated Russian-Chinese draft plan of action for a comprehensive settlement on the Korean Peninsula. We continue to consistently advocate the gradual easing of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council on Pyongyang provided that progress is made in denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, as well as the minimization of the negative humanitarian, social and economic impact of the current restrictions on the DPRK population.

The situation in the Asia-Pacific is adversely affected by developments in certain Middle East and North African countries, first of all, due to the spreading terrorist threat. The Russian Federation continues to help eradicate the remaining hotbeds of terrorism and extremism in Syria while making efforts to stabilize the situation in the country and intensify humanitarian assistance to all those in need without discrimination or preconditions. We support the advancement of the Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process with United Nations support, as set out in the UN Security Council resolution 2254. We attach great importance to the development of cooperation with Iran and Turkey as guarantor countries of the Astana Format that has proved its value and effectiveness in the comprehensive Syrian settlement based on respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The military and political situation in Afghanistan remains complex. Russia supports the implementation of the Doha Agreement between the United States and the Taliban movement, as well as the early start of inclusive intra-Afghan negotiations. The Moscow format consultations on Afghanistan, launched at the Russian initiative, as well as the expanded Russia-United States-China trilateral cooperation with Pakistan, have considerable potential for international assistance to these efforts. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure is the most important outpost in countering the threat of foreign terrorist fighters from Afghanistan spreading to other regions, including the Asia-Pacific. The surge in drug production in the country, including heroin, is also a matter of concern.

The situation in the South China Sea requires permanent monitoring. The parties to the territorial disputes should strictly respect the principle of non-use of force or threat of force and continue to seek for political and diplomatic solutions to the current problems in conformity with international law. The 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the instruments adopted by ASEAN and the People's Republic of China, namely the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct (DOC) of Parties in the South China Sea and the Guidelines for the Implementation of the DOC agreed upon in 2011, serve as a basis for resolving the situation in the South China Sea. Negotiations should be held between the parties directly involved in the disputes in the most efficient format determined by themselves. The Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea that is being drafted by the ASEAN Member States and China is intended to be an efficient mechanism for resolving disagreements.

A solution to the situation in Myanmar's Rakhine State and the problem of the return to the country of members of the Muslim community (Rohingya) temporarily sheltered in neighboring Bangladesh can be reached through a balanced and depoliticized approach. We view the situation in Rakhine State as Myanmar's internal affair. The key to ensuring the repatriation of displaced persons is the further promotion of direct dialogue, practical cooperation and implementation of the agreements previously reached between Nay Pyi Taw and Dhaka. We oppose outside interference in these matters.

Russia welcomes ASEAN's efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations in Rakhine State and to implement projects for social and economic rehabilitation of future returnees. We commend the work of the ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team in Rakhine State and its special mechanism for humanitarian assistance "on the ground".

2. Defence Policy of the Russian Federation and International Military Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific

The activities of the Russian Armed Forces in the Asia-Pacific are carried out in compliance with international norms and bilateral agreements, posing no threat to peace and stability in the region. Russia strictly adheres to the policy of non-interference in territorial disputes between third parties, while calling on the participants to resolve their issues through peaceful and diplomatic means.

Russia is focused on expanding bilateral and multilateral contacts within the armed forces, including by holding high-level negotiations, as well as organizing joint training and exercises.

Russia assigns a particular role in ensuring regional security to the ADMM-Plus and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Since 2020, Russia is co-chairing (with Myanmar) the ADMM-Plus Expert Working Group (EWG) on Counter-Terrorism. We place special emphasis on sharing the experience in the use of armed forces, primarily modern weapons, military and special equipment against terrorist groups in Syria.

Despite the suspension of active contacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian Ministry of Defence continues to develop cooperation with Asia-Pacific countries, primarily China, India and ASEAN Member States.

Russia-China military cooperation is based on the agreement between the defence ministries updated in 2019. A new roadmap of its implementation reflecting the strategic level of cooperation in this area is being drafted. In July 2019, the first joint air patrol was carried out in the Asia-Pacific. The defence agencies of the two countries ensured the delivery of humanitarian supplies and exchanged experience in fighting coronavirus infection.

In recent years, India has remained one of Russia's main partners in the field of military-technical cooperation, holding leading positions in terms of volumes of purchased Russian goods for military purposes. New Delhi is provided with assistance in developing its military-industrial complex, including within the "Make in India" national program. "Indra" joint Russian-Indian military exercises took place in India in December 2019. Indian and Chinese servicemen, among others, took part in "Centre-2019" strategic command and staff exercise in Russia.

In 2019, the Executive Agreement on Military Cooperation between the Russian Navy and the Philippine Navy was signed. Russia-Vietnam maritime exercise for the search and rescue of crews of submarines in distress was successfully held, as well as the first "Laros-2019" Russia-Laos military exercise. From October 2019 to March 2020, a unit of the International Mine Action Centre of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation completed the tasks of clearing the territory of the Lao province of Siengkhuang from unexploded remnants of the Indochina war.

Major importance is attributed to the friendly calls of Russia's Navy to the ports of ASEAN Member States (from October 2019 to May 2020 Russian naval ships visited the ports of Brunei Darussalam,

Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand). Russia and ASEAN are planning to organize a multilateral maritime exercise on joint search and rescue operations at sea, combating piracy and poaching.

The defence ties with the Asia-Pacific nations will be further strengthened through their participation in the International Army Games organized by the Russian Ministry of Defence in 2020, as well as in the International Military-Technical Forum "Army-2020".

3. Nuclear and Missile Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Security in the Asia Pacific

The Russian Federation makes a significant practical contribution to nuclear disarmament efforts. The role of nuclear weapons in the Russian military doctrine has been significantly diminished. Russia scrupulously implements the 2010 Treaty with the United States on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START), having reached the limits of warheads and delivery vehicles set by the Treaty. In order to avoid further deterioration of the international security situation, Russia has suggested extending the New START Treaty, which will expire in February 2021, as it was concluded and without preconditions.

Given the interrelationship between strategic offensive and defensive arms, stipulated, inter alia, in the New START, we are deeply concerned of the activities by the United States and its allies to install a global BMD system in the Asia-Pacific, in particular Japan's decision to deploy Aegis Ashore systems on its territory and purchase a new version of SM-3 interceptors, which threaten regional and global security and stability.

Russia did its utmost to retain the regime of the 1987 Treaty between the United States and the USSR on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), whose collapse could substantially complicate the situation in various parts of the world, including the Asia-Pacific region. In order to prevent a new arms race, the Russian Federation has declared a moratorium on the deployment of missiles banned by the INF Treaty in any region of the world before the placement of the relevant US weapons there.

The US has been invited to make commitments similar to the moratorium announced by Russia. This initiative is conveyed in the messages of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin to the leaders of a number of Asia-Pacific countries in September 2019.

In June 2019, a bilateral Joint Statement on Strengthening Global Strategic Stability in the Modern Era was signed at the Russia-China Summit in Moscow. The document calls for strengthening strategic stability and international security architecture and preserving the arms control system.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important tool for strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The status of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ)

has yet to be formalized. Russia reaffirms its readiness to sign with standard reservations the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty and is open to consultations between the P5 and ASEAN to institutionalize this nuclear-weapon-free zone as soon as possible.

The threat of an arms race in outer space and its becoming an arena for military confrontation is of serious concern. The draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects (PPWT), proposed by Russia and China, aims at countering these negative trends. At the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly, our resolution “No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space” (NFP) has been co-sponsored by 38 countries, including 10 nations of the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, Cambodia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam are full-fledged NFP participants, who made the relevant political commitment in bilateral statements signed with Russia.

4. Combating International Terrorism and Transnational Crime in the Asia-Pacific

The Russian Federation continues to consistently increase its cooperation with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, including in global and regional fora, on the full range of issues related to fighting terrorism, transnational crime, piracy, illicit drug production and trafficking. Consolidation of efforts is necessary to effectively counter ISIL, Al-Qaida and affiliated terrorist organizations, as well as to put a reliable roadblock to the cross-border movement of foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs), terrorism financing and the spread of terrorist and extremist ideology.

Following the Russian and Indonesian co-chairmanship of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) in 2019, the ARF Work Plan for CTTC for 2019-2021 was adopted. Intensive work is being done in this area within the ADMM-Plus and the ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Partnership. The draft ASEAN-Russia Work Plan on Countering Terrorism and Transnational Crime for 2020-2023 is being finalized.

The APEC Counter-Terrorism Working Group remains instrumental as it advances fundamental approaches to the promotion of international cooperation in this sphere. We consistently expand partnership relations with Asia-Pacific countries within the FATF and the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering to which Russia is an observer.

Given the increasing threats of terrorists using chemicals and biological agents as weapons, most Asia-Pacific countries continue to support the initiative to develop an international Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Chemical and Biological to counter WMD terrorism.

East Asia Summit Leaders' Statement on Combating the Spread of Illicit Drugs was adopted in November 2019 in Bangkok (co-sponsored by Russia, the United States and Vietnam). The document is aimed at building-up cross-border anti-drug cooperation in the Asia-Pacific. The 3rd ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters and Russia Coordination Meeting in August 2019 in Siem

Reap, Cambodia, showed the shared intention to expand cooperation in this field in an integrated manner, including the exchange of best practices and strengthening law enforcement capacity.

5. International Information Security in the Asia-Pacific

Despite the growing number of new and exacerbation of existing challenges to international information security (IIS), in 2019 the countries concerned successfully continued their collective work within the relevant regional mechanisms to ensure IIS in the Asia-Pacific region.

Within the ARF Russia focuses on further expanding regional confidence-building measures in the information space, countering the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for criminal and terrorist purposes and capacity building. We stand for a substantive discussion on Internet governance to internationalize it and to increase the role of States in this process, as well as for drafting IIS universal glossary. To this end, The Russian Federation introduced its concept of Dictionary of Basic Terms and Definitions in the field of security of ICTs at the 5th Open Ended Study Group on Confidence Building Measures to Reduce the Risk of Conflict Stemming from the Use of ICTs held in Kuala Lumpur in January 2020.

We consider the Singapore International Cyber Week (SICW) and the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity involving ASEAN Dialogue Partners as important fora for discussing key issues in ensuring IIS. The fourth edition of SICW in October 2019 focused on issues related to the fight against information crime, safe operation of new IT technologies, development of international cooperation in information security, primarily within the UN and ASEAN-led mechanisms.

We believe all regional IIS mechanisms should operate under the UN coordination and take into account the universal goal of drafting, under its auspices, a list of universal norms, rules and principles of responsible behavior of countries in the information space, as well as a mechanism for international legal regulation of the use of ICTs for criminal purposes. In this context, we are in favor of ensuring complementarity between the UN Open-ended Working Group of Experts on IIS and the UN Group of Governmental Experts on IIS.

6. Emergency Response in the Asia-Pacific

Russia continues to promote regional disaster management and humanitarian assistance cooperation. We place particular emphasis on building capacity for preparedness and emergency response in the Asia-Pacific, including the development of the Global Network of Crisis Management Centers (CMCs).

EMERCOM of Russia participates in regional command and staff exercises in the Asia-Pacific under the auspices of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Russian rescuers took part in the Asia-Pacific Regional Exercise of the UN International Search and Rescue

Advisory Group (INSARAG) in Thailand in December 2019. At this video exercise representatives of the Russian National Crisis Management Centre practised interaction between OCHA and national, regional and international crisis centers. In addition, experts of EMERCOM of Russia organized training courses and certification of the Indonesian search and rescue team using INSARAG methodology in November 2019.

Under the ADMM-Plus EWG on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Russia works towards the establishment of a regional unified emergency response system, including channels for the real-time exchange of information on the situation, humanitarian assets, medical and special equipment. With the spread of the COVID-19 infection, the Russian side aims at consolidating efforts and developing international cooperation, including by using the potential of the ASEAN Center of Military Medicine established with the assistance of the Russian Federation.

Priority is given to the development of practical emergency prevention and response cooperation with neighboring countries at the local level. In October 2019, the first meeting of the Joint Russian-Chinese Commission on cooperation in this area took place, resulting in adoption of a plan of collaborative activities of EMERCOM of Russia and China's Ministry of Emergency Management for 2020-2021. Intelligence sharing between CMCs, contacts at the local level and in the field of training are established. There is an ongoing exchange of information on the hydrological situation on the Amur River.

The Russian Federation continues to promote regional cooperation in the field of humanitarian assistance. Russia's special-purpose contributions to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) in 2018-2019 were used to provide humanitarian food aid to Afghanistan, the DPRK and Myanmar. Moreover, additional funds have been transferred to the WFP fund to support Laos.

7. Regional Security Architecture and Trends in Multilateral Diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific

The current challenges in the Asia-Pacific demand a consolidated response from the ASEAN-led mechanisms as the core institutions of the regional security architecture. They present a viable and stable foundation to build strong ties between the nations on the principles of equality, pragmatism, consensus, use of political and diplomatic instruments to settle international problems.

The most suitable platform for this collective work is the East Asia Summit. The relevant consultations held under its auspices help promptly respond to the risks of the emergence of dividing lines in the Asia-Pacific, address challenges to the ASEAN-centered system of regional security and cooperation. Russia consistently advocates the efforts to further strengthen this multi-layered configuration, improve its capabilities, expand the areas of practical interaction.

An important factor to ensure secure and sustainable development of the broader Eurasian space, to build all-encompassing routes of the continent-wide connectivity is the integration unfolding here

rapidly. This is a streamline of the Russian initiative to launch the Greater Eurasian Partnership which is based on the idea of the «integration of integrations».

The synergy of the ASEAN and the Eurasian Economic Union potentials along with the promotion of the ASEAN ties with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization serve as a firm foothold for the cross-platform collaboration. These organizations have accumulated considerable experience in integration and help safeguard not only regional, but global stability. The fundamentals of the three are similar – focus on the mutually beneficial cooperation, balance of interests and equality of all nations.

SINGAPORE

I. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The COVID-19 pandemic has magnified and accelerated global challenges that were already in motion, including major power rivalry, nationalistic and protectionist tendencies, and a weakening of the multilateral rules-based order. COVID-19 is also exacting a heavy toll with serious economic, political and social consequences. It is all the more important that ASEAN and its partners continue to make use of ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus Three (APT), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), East Asia Summit (EAS), and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to strengthen mutual confidence and trust, and enhance practical cooperation among the key stakeholders of our region. ASEAN can only be relevant and effective as a regional bloc if it is 'Cohesive and Responsive', and remains at the core of the regional architecture. It must stay innovative and continually reinvent itself to meet the needs and aspirations of our citizens. The ASEAN Smart Cities Network is one example of how ASEAN can work intra-regionally and with its external partners to foster an integrated and interoperable regional architecture which can bring about tangible benefits to the people of the region. Singapore will continue to work towards strengthening ASEAN-related initiatives and mechanisms with ASEAN Centrality as our guiding principle.

II. National Security and Defence Policy

Singapore's defence policy is built on the twin pillars of deterrence and diplomacy. Singapore believes in the need for a strong defence to ensure that we enjoy peace and security. A strong defence also provides us with the political space and freedom to act in the best interests of our people. This is why Singapore has invested steadily and prudently in defence over the years to build up a professional and capable Singapore Armed Forces (SAF). To overcome our small size and lack of resources, Singapore makes use of technology as a force multiplier to augment our well-educated conscript force and to train our soldiers to fight effectively. The SAF has also played an important role in assisting in domestic contingencies, such as supporting Singapore's COVID-19 response efforts by supplementing civilian frontline services. Singapore's defence expenditure in FY2019 stood at 2.9 per cent of our Gross Domestic Product.

III. National Contributions to Regional Security

As a small country, Singapore's security and prosperity are highly dependent on regional peace and stability. Through extensive bilateral and multilateral cooperation, Singapore seeks to establish strong and friendly ties, with defence establishments and armed forces regionally and globally. Singapore also believes that regional security and stability are best served by a robust, open and

inclusive security architecture that encourages countries to engage constructively in dialogue and practical cooperation. Hence, Singapore actively participates in various multilateral fora and arrangements, including ASEAN platforms like the ADMM, ADMM-Plus, EAS, ARF, Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD), and Five Power Defence Arrangements.

The ADMM is the highest defence consultative and cooperative mechanism in ASEAN and a key component of the regional security architecture. Established in 2006, the ADMM aims to promote regional peace and stability through dialogue and practical cooperation in defence and security matters.

The ADMM has also contributed to ASEAN's efforts against the pandemic. At the ADMM Retreat in February 2020, Singapore co-sponsored the **Joint Statement (JS) on Defence Cooperation against Disease Outbreaks**. The JS demonstrated that militaries can assist in public health and social cohesion, including leveraging the Network of ASEAN Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) Defence Experts to promote scientific collaboration for pandemics. Singapore hosted a virtual workshop of the Network of ASEAN CBR Defence Experts on "Promoting Scientific Cooperation to Manage Infectious Disease Outbreaks" on 30 June 2020.

This year, the ADMM-Plus commemorates the 10th year since its inaugural meeting in 2010. A significant component of the ADMM-Plus is practical cooperation among the 18 ADMM-Plus countries through the Experts Working Groups (EWG). Singapore is highly encouraged by the good progress achieved in the seven ADMM-Plus EWGs in the areas of maritime security (MS), HADR, peacekeeping operations (PKO), counter-terrorism (CT), military medicine (MM), humanitarian mine action (HMA), and cyber security (CS). Singapore co-chaired the EWG-MS with the Republic of Korea (ROK) during the third EWG cycle from 2017 to 2020. The co-chairmanship sustained the momentum of practical military-to-military cooperation and promoted maritime security norms based on respect for international law. A key outcome was the ADMM-Plus Navies' agreement to collectively adopt the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES). CUES was practiced during the EWG-MS Field Training Exercise, which was successfully conducted in May 2019 involving 19 ships, 10 aircrafts and approximately 700 personnel.

Under the ARF, Singapore also co-chaired the 23rd ARF HDUCIM with Pakistan in 2019. These engagements provide a platform for the ARF defence colleges to network and share best practices.

The SLD is held annually in Singapore and organised by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). Since its inception in 2002, the SLD has established itself as the foremost defence and security conference in the Asia-Pacific region. The 18th SLD was held from 31 May to 2 June 2019, and was attended by participants from 41 countries in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, Americas and the Middle East, with 34 Ministerial-level attendees. PM Lee Hsien Loong delivered the keynote address and participants exchanged candid views on pertinent security issues, including how to ensure a resilient and stable Asia-Pacific.

The SLD Sherpa Meeting, also organised by the IISS, supplements the SLD process by providing an inter-sessional platform for senior officials to engage in frank discussions on security issues. The eighth SLD Sherpa Meeting was held from 19 to 21 January 2020, and was attended by about 100 delegates from over 25 countries. Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Defence Mr Heng Chee How delivered the keynote address.

III. (i) Counter-Terrorism

Terrorism and its underlying ideologies pose complex and long-term challenges. Continued vigilance and international cooperation are vital to deal with this threat.

Since the 1997 Declaration on Transnational Crime, ASEAN's counter-terrorism efforts have made much progress. Singapore was one of the first AMS to ratify the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism (ACCT), which was adopted at the 12th ASEAN Summit in 2007 and is the first regional legally-binding anti-terrorism pact. The ACCT entered into force on 27 May 2011, and has been ratified by all 10 AMS since January 2013. Recognising the importance of preventing violent extremism conducive to terrorism, Singapore supported the adoption of the Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism and the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism 2018-2025 in 2017 and 2018 respectively. More recently, Singapore actively contributed to the drafting of the Work Plan of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism 2019-2025 ("Bali Work Plan") and supported its adoption at the 13th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime in November 2019. Singapore welcomes these significant achievements by ASEAN, which enhance regional cooperation and commitment to the global strategy on counter-terrorism.

In support of regional capacity building, under the auspices of the ASEAN-Japan Counter-Terrorism Dialogue, Singapore has hosted a number of counter-terrorism workshops and initiatives relating to: (i) Border Security; (ii) Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives; (iii) Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism; (iv) Crisis Management in Post Attack Scenarios; and (v) Aviation Security.

Singapore is committed to strengthening the regional counter-terrorism security architecture. In November 2018, the 12th ADMM noted Singapore's 3R Concept (Resilience, Response, Recovery), which aims to foster greater regional counter-terrorism cooperation. Singapore also hosted a Track 1.5 symposium, the *2018 Southeast Asia Counter-Terrorism Symposium: Building a Collective Approach*, in October 2018. The symposium brought together cross-sectoral perspectives on how we can strengthen the region's collective efforts against terrorism. We also continue to support regional efforts to strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation. This includes the ASEAN "Our Eyes" (AOE) initiative that was adopted by the 12th ADMM in 2018. The AOE is a platform to enhance strategic information exchange on counter-terrorism among ASEAN defence establishments. At

the military level, we support the ASEAN 365 Information Sharing Platform that was established in October 2018 as an online portal for ASEAN military intelligence agencies to share information on counter-terrorism.

In April 2019, Singapore seconded a senior Police Officer to kick-start the work of the INTERPOL Regional Counter-terrorism Node (RCTN) for Asia and South Pacific located in the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI), Singapore. The RCTN will work with police units in the Asia-Pacific region to encourage the transfer of intelligence concerning terrorist activities. The RCTN will have access to 18 INTERPOL databases that provide information including on foreign terrorist fighters, the social media platforms that terrorists use, and their travel patterns and mode of transport. Singapore has been actively engaging INTERPOL to shape the RCTN and its mission in four main areas: (i) intelligence; (ii) border management and operations; (iii) capacity building; and (iv) incident response. In fact, Singapore's senior Police Officer seconded to the RCTN was appointed the mission leader of the INTERPOL Incident Response Team to support the Sri Lankan authorities in their investigations into the Easter Sunday Bombings that took place in Sri Lanka in May 2019.

III. (ii) Non-Proliferation, Counter-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Singapore is active in combating the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). We ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1976, and concluded a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1977. Singapore also ratified the IAEA Additional Protocol (AP) and adopted the modified Small Quantities Protocol in March 2008. Singapore supports the universalisation of both the CSA and the AP, and works closely with the IAEA on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Singapore serves regularly on the IAEA's Board of Governors (BOG), most recently from September 2016 to September 2018. Singapore supports the IAEA's work by hosting regional workshops on topics such as emergency preparedness and response, nuclear regulatory law, and nuclear safety. Singapore is also party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and supports efforts to promote its early entry into force. To promote a more robust nuclear non-proliferation regime in our region, Singapore hosted a "Regional Seminar on Developing Effective State Authorities for Nuclear Safeguards Implementation" in January 2020, which was organised by the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

Singapore joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in May 2010 and subscribed to The Hague Code of Conduct against the Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles in August 2011. In September 2014, Singapore acceded to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), and accepted the 2005 Amendment to the CPPNM. Singapore ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Nuclear Terrorism in September 2017.

Singapore strongly supports multilateral counter-proliferation initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), and recognises the importance of preventing rogue groups, such as terrorist organisations, from acquiring WMD. Singapore has actively participated in the PSI since its establishment in 2003. Singapore is the only country in Southeast Asia to be in the PSI Operational

Experts Group (OEG), and has hosted PSI exercises and meetings as part of the Asia Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER). Singapore has participated in PSI activities, such as the OEG Meeting in Canberra, Australia in September 2019, Exercise Eastern Endeavour in Busan, Korea in July 2019 and inaugural PSI Southeast Asia Workshop in December 2019.

Singapore fully supports the efforts of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to further develop capabilities and readiness against the threat of chemical weapons. We participated in the 24th Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in November 2018, and the Conference on State Parties (CSP-24) meeting in November 2019. Pursuant to Article X, Singapore has been conducting the Emergency Response to Chemical Incidents training course on a biennial basis since 2009. The sixth instalment of the course was conducted in December 2019, which benefitted 24 participants from 10 of the OPCW Member States in Asia. The course has been a platform for the sharing of experiences on the management of hazards. In addition, Singapore values the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Scientific Advisory Board of the OPCW as a participant of the Temporary Working Group on Investigative Science and Technology, and to contribute an expert to serve on the Technical Requirement Team of the OPCW ChemTech centre since February 2020. Since 2012, Singapore has also been submitting returns on the Biological Weapons Convention's (BWC) CBMs annually.

In addition, Singapore values the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Scientific Advisory Board of the OPCW as a participant of the Temporary Working Group on Sampling and Analysis and Verification. Since 2012, Singapore has also been submitting returns on the Biological Weapons Convention's (BWC) CBMs annually.

Singapore signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first legally-binding international instrument that regulates the international transfer of conventional arms, on 5 December 2014. This reaffirms Singapore's commitment to the elimination of the threat posed by the illicit arms trade and to international disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives that promote global peace and security.

As a reflection of our commitment to prevent WMD proliferation, Singapore adheres to a robust and enhanced export control regime. The Strategic Goods (Control) Act controls the transfer and brokering of goods capable of being used to develop, produce, operate, stockpile or acquire WMD, along with strategic goods and related software and technology. The Act's control list is regularly updated to ensure that it keeps abreast of technological developments and remains aligned with the four multilateral export control regimes. In May 2018, Singapore Customs organised the Customs Competent Authority Seminar to enhance awareness of the trading community on the regulatory requirements for various controlled goods and recent developments.

Singapore regularly organises the annual Joint Industry Outreach Seminar on Strategic Trade Management with the US Department of State's Export Control and Related Border Security Program (EXBS), the US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), and Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). The most recent seminar was held in October 2019. The Seminar keeps the industry abreast of the latest developments in export controls

and best practices for improved compliance. Since 2011, Singapore has participated in the Annual Asian Export Control Seminars (AECS) held in Tokyo, which addresses domestic industry outreach and international collaboration. Singapore also participates regularly in the Asian Senior-level Talks on Non Proliferation (ASTOP) in Tokyo, including the most recent meeting in March 2019.

Singapore supports the EU's Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Centre of Excellence (CBRN CoE) initiative in Southeast Asia. Our agencies and experts have been involved in numerous CBRN CoE projects and activities. Singapore has contributed regional bio-risk experts to develop training materials and conduct workshops on laboratory design, engineering and operations in several regional countries under Project 46. Singapore's Public Utilities Board (PUB) also participated in Project 61, which addresses the sound management of chemicals and their associated wastes.

III. (iii) Transnational Crime

In today's world, security challenges are increasingly transnational and non-traditional in nature. These cannot be adequately addressed by individual countries' domestic policies. Singapore has therefore actively worked towards facilitating a concerted regional effort to combat transnational crimes.

The Singapore Police Force (SPF) has forged a strategic partnership with the payment card industry to generate merchant awareness in payment card crime prevention. SPF's Commercial Affairs Department is also represented at the Singapore Card Security Group, which comprises various card-issuing banks and companies. The SCSG meets frequently to share fraud-related intelligence and develop joint strategies to prevent and counter card fraud related activities. It has also conducted several joint merchant education programmes targeting specific retail sectors.

Under the aegis of the ASEAN Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings on Transnational Crime (AMMTC & SOMTC), Singapore is the ASEAN Voluntary Lead Shepherd for international economic crime (IEC). Singapore conducted an annual IEC Course to equip relevant investigators with competencies required for the investigation of commercial crime. These workshops reviewed the latest trends, threats, and challenges facing law enforcement agencies in the area of commercial crime and seeks to provide updates on the latest developments in white-collar crime.

Singapore takes a serious view of trafficking-in- persons (TIP) crimes. An inter-agency taskforce, jointly led by Singapore's Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Manpower, was formed in 2010 to coordinate whole-of-government strategies to fight TIP. The Taskforce works closely with the law enforcement agencies and embassies of countries that victims may originate from. Information-sharing and upstream enforcement against human traffickers also prevent the exploitation of the innocent.

Singapore supports regional and international efforts to combat TIP. Singapore cooperates with other AMS through platforms such as the AMMTC and SOMTC, which oversees the region's effort to combat TIP. In 2019, Singapore attended the 5th Ministerial Breakfast Meeting hosted by the GOF in

New York on the sidelines of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Singapore also co-sponsored an event organised by Belarus on behalf of the GOF in Geneva on combatting TIP in the context of armed conflict held on the sidelines of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2019.

Singapore worked closely with other AMS on the development of the ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP) which was signed by ASEAN Leaders at the 27th ASEAN Summit in November 2015. The ACTIP has since come into force on 8 March 2017. Following the signing of the ACTIP, Singapore also worked closely with other AMS on the development of the ASEAN Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons (APA) and the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan, which were endorsed in 2015 and 2016 respectively. The APA and Work Plan complement the ACTIP by outlining specific actions and policies to address the challenge of combatting TIP.

Beyond ASEAN, Singapore works with partners such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as well as the Group of Friends United Against Human Trafficking (GOF) in New York and Geneva, to explore more effective ways to combat TIP. Singapore is also a party to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (UN TIP Protocol), which seeks to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons while protecting victims and promoting cooperation among State Parties.

III. (iv) Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Disasters can affect any country without warning. As a good neighbour and friend, Singapore provides assistance where we can, undertaking HADR missions when the need arises.

In 2019, Singapore deployed two officers to be part of two separate seven ASEAN Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) missions. The first mission was in support of the AHA Centre's efforts to conduct preliminary needs assessment to identify possible areas where ASEAN could support the repatriation process in the Rakhine State. The second mission was to support the Myanmar Delegation's 2nd High Level Visit to Bangladesh in December 2019.

Beyond participating in overseas operations, Singapore seeks to build regional capacity for HADR. Singapore launched the Changi Regional HADR Coordination Centre (RHCC) in September 2014 to provide a platform for military-to-military coordination in HADR, and to support the military of a disaster-affected State. The RHCC contributes by: (i) providing partner militaries with a comprehensive picture of the disaster's impact, assessed needs, and requests and offers of assistance, in order to facilitate decision-making by minimising duplication and gaps; (ii) enhancing information-sharing and operational coordination between partner militaries to facilitate a multinational military response; and (iii) deploying a forward coordination unit into the disaster-affected State, to support HADR efforts on the ground. The RHCC's focus on military coordination complements existing disaster response institutions – such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the AHA Centre. Singapore is appreciative of like-minded countries that have supported and partnered with the RHCC. These countries include Australia,

Brunei, Canada, China, France, India, Lao PDR, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, the ROK, Russia, Thailand, the UK, the US and Viet Nam, which have attached International Liaison Officers (ILOs) to the RHCC or exchanged contact points for disaster relief. In addition, the RHCC has also signed two Memoranda of Understanding with the US Center of Excellence for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) and the US Pacific Disaster Center (PDC), which facilitate bilateral cooperation and operational linkages.

From 2 to 4 April 2019, the RHCC/SAF partnered the Bangladesh Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, the Bangladesh Armed Forces Division, and the US CFE-DM to co-organise a multinational HADR Table-Top Exercise, Exercise Coordinated Response (COORES) 2019. COORES built military linkages, enhanced mutual understanding and interoperability, and strengthened military cooperation in disaster relief. COORES involved 25 militaries from across the Asia-Pacific region and Europe and 19 international organisations, governmental agencies and non-government organisations.

Since 2015, Singapore has been hosting the annual Strategic Policy Dialogue on Disaster Management (SPDDM) to chart long-term strategies for the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and sharpen ASEAN's policy direction, strategic engagements, and thought leadership in disaster management. In addition, Singapore organised the ASEAN Senior Executive Programme in Disaster Management, targeted at nurturing the planning and crisis management capacities of the senior leadership cadre within each AMS' National Disaster Management Organisation. Singapore is the Lead Shepherd for the development of the AHA Centre's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) capabilities, with funding support from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

III. (v) Maritime Security

As a maritime nation, Singapore has a strong interest in keeping the international sea lines of communication open, safe, and secure. Singapore takes a serious view of any threats to the freedom and safety of navigation. To this end, Singapore works with like-minded countries to uphold international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and plays an active part in fostering regional maritime security cooperation and enhancing port security.

As a major hub port and one of the top ten ship registries in the world, Singapore is committed to the security of seaborne cargo. As one of the first States to implement the International Maritime Organization (IMO) International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, Singapore has contributed actively to capacity building programmes at various regional forums to assist countries in their implementation of the ISPS Code. Singapore is also party to the IMO's International Convention for the Safety of Life At Sea (SOLAS), the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention 1988), and the 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms located on the Continental Shelf (SUA FFP 1988).

Given the existence of vital sea lines of communication in the region such as the South China Sea (SCS), the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS), the Lombok Strait and the Sunda Strait, Singapore cooperates closely with key stakeholders to uphold maritime security and freedom of navigation. To this end, Singapore remains fully committed to the following three principles which have gained broad consensus amongst regional stakeholders: (i) primary responsibility for the security of regional waterways lies with the littoral States; (ii) the international community, including major user States and bodies, like the IMO, have an important role to play; and (iii) new cooperative measures should be developed in line with UNCLOS and other international conventions. These principles have translated into cooperative efforts at a regional level. The Malacca Strait Patrols (MSP) is a joint undertaking by the littoral States of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, to enhance maritime security in the SOMS. The MSP comprises the Malacca Strait Sea Patrol, the “Eyes-in-the-Sky” maritime air patrols, and the Intelligence Exchange Group. Since its inception in July 2004, the MSP has substantially reduced the incidence of piracy and armed robbery against ships occurring in the SOMS.

Singapore is also supportive of ASEAN’s approach towards the maritime issues encapsulated in the Bali Concord II, signed in October 2003, which reiterates the transboundary nature of maritime issues and the need to address them in a holistic, integrated and comprehensive way.

Apart from conducting air and sea patrols, Singapore also believes in enhancing maritime awareness and ensuring systematic and timely exchanges of information to keep sea lanes safe. In this regard, the Information Fusion Centre (IFC), which was established in 2009, seeks to advance inter-agency and international cooperation in maritime information-sharing through its linkages to operations centres and network of ILOs. The IFC’s partnerships and the pooling of various information-sharing and analytical systems in one location have enabled the IFC to cue operational responses to a wide range of maritime security issues, including piracy, hijacking, search and rescue, weapons proliferation, and human/arms trafficking, and smuggling. The ASEAN ILOs in IFC also serve as the Permanent Secretariat of the ASEAN Navy Chiefs Meeting. As at May 2020, the IFC has established links with international maritime centres, operational centres and agencies from 40 countries. A total of 170 ILOs from 26 countries have been deployed at the IFC since its establishment. As at May 2020, 20 ILOs have been accredited to the IFC from 19 different countries: Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, the ROK, Thailand, the UK, the US, and Viet Nam. In May 2019, the IFC hosted the 2019 Maritime Information Sharing Exercise as well as the ADMM-Plus EWG-MS Field Training Exercise, to advance information-sharing and sense-making among navies, coast guards and other relevant maritime agencies and operations centres.

Singapore is a Contracting Party to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP); the first intergovernmental initiative that promotes and enhances cooperation against piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia. Singapore is also the host State of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) since its formation in 2006. As of May 2020, a total of 20 States are Contracting Parties to the ReCAAP, namely, Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Denmark, India, Japan, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Norway,

the Philippines, the ROK, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the UK, the US, and Viet Nam. Over the years, the ReCAAP ISC has established itself as an authority on trends and analyses of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia, and continues to play an instrumental role in disseminating timely and accurate information for governments and industry members alike. The ReCAAP ISC has collaborated with partner organisations and the industry to produce useful practice guides for the maritime community, such as the Regional Guide to Counter Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships in Asia launched in February 2016 and more recently, Guidance on Abduction of Crew in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and Waters off Eastern Sabah in July 2019. The ReCAAP ISC has also supported numerous capacity building efforts to improve the capability of regional governments to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships in the region. The ReCAAP is held up as a successful model of regional cooperation in combating piracy and armed robbery against ships by the IMO and has inspired other similar initiatives, such as the Djibouti Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (GoA).

Beyond regional cooperation, Singapore also shares the international community's deep concern over the scourge of piracy threatening key sea-lines of communications in other parts of the world like the GoA. To this end, Singapore has been contributing to the multinational counter-piracy efforts under the ambit of Combined Task Force (CTF) 151 since 2009. The SAF has deployed five Task Groups, including one Landing Ship Tank with two Super Puma helicopters on a Frigate with a Naval Helicopter as well as a Maritime Patrol Aircraft, to the GoA. At the request of the Combined Maritime Forces, Singapore took command of the CTF 151 in 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, and 2018.

III. (vi) ICTs Security

Cyber threats are a transboundary and cross-cutting challenge to all AMS. At the same time, cybersecurity is also a key enabler of economic progress, job creation and better living standards as AMS enter into a digital future.

The first ever ASEAN Leaders' Statement on Cybersecurity Coordination was endorsed by Leaders in April 2018 during Singapore's ASEAN Chairmanship. The Statement reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to a secure and resilient rules-based cyberspace and tasked Ministers to: (i) recommend feasible options for coordinating cybersecurity efforts across the three pillars of ASEAN; and (ii) identify norms of State behaviour in cyberspace that ASEAN can adopt and implement, taking reference from the 2015 UN Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (UNGGE) Report. Since 2016, Singapore has hosted the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC), held on the side-lines of the Singapore International Cyber Week (SICW). At the 3rd AMCC held in 2018, the participants subscribed in-principle to the 11 UNGGE norms, making ASEAN be the first regional organisation to do so, and agreed for the AMCC to continue to be the non-formal interim ASEAN platform for cross-cutting cyber discussions. At the 4th AMCC in October 2019, the participants agreed to establish a working-level committee to consider the development of a long-term regional

plan to ensure the implementation of the norms, including in the areas of Computer Emergency Response Team (or CERT-CERT) cooperation, protection of Critical Information Infrastructure (CII), and mutual assistance in cyber security.

Singapore hosted the inaugural ASEAN Senior Officials Roundtable on Cybercrime (SORC) in June 2013, which was attended by ASEAN SOMTC Leaders and their cybercrime experts. In addition, the SORC comprised an industry briefing segment, where global experts and academia briefed the meeting on the latest regional threats and challenges in cybercrime. The 6th SORC was held in July 2018.

The Cyber Security Authority of Singapore (CSA) has obtained formal endorsement from ASEAN Network Security Action Council (ANSAC) and ASEAN Digital Senior Officials Meeting (ADGSOM) to study the ASEAN Coordination Mechanism on Cybersecurity with the aim to coordinate cybersecurity efforts across ASEAN. This was in follow-up to the task set by the ASEAN Leaders in their 2018 Statement on Cybersecurity Cooperation. Singapore surfaced a proposal for discussion at from the ASEAN Telecommunications and IT Ministers Meeting (TELMIN).

Following discussions at the last TELMIN [now renamed ASEAN Digital Ministers (ADGMIN)] meeting in October 2019, the meeting endorsed the recommendation contained in the proposal paper, proposing the set-up of an ASEAN Cross-sectoral Coordinating Committee. The proposed coordinating committee would coordinate and facilitate discussions on regional cybersecurity policy issues, including the areas of incident response, protection of CII, the implementation of cyber norms, as well as cyber capacity building in the short term. The committee shall comprise representatives from relevant sectoral bodies to strengthen cross-sectoral coordination on cybersecurity while preserving the exclusive work domains of the sectoral bodies. The committee's objective is to (a) facilitate alignment of regional cybersecurity policy and diplomacy positions to operational consideration; (b) develop considered responses to recommendations made on these topics at international fora; and (c) to speak on behalf of ASEAN on these cross-cutting issues. The Term of Reference (TOR) of the Coordinating Committee has been drafted and is currently being circulated to the relevant sectoral bodies for their input. Singapore has also been tasked by ANSAC to study the feasibility of establishing an ASEAN Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT), and is leading the study for each AMS to conduct a self-assessment of its CERT's capability gaps.

In our capacity as the ASEAN Voluntary Lead Shepherd on Cybercrime, Singapore has been working closely with other AMS and key stakeholders, such as INTERPOL, to identify priority areas of common interest to harmonise ASEAN's competencies in combating cybercrime. Singapore has also organised a number of training programmes and meetings for AMS to encourage information sharing and build a close network of cyber experts within the region. The initiatives proposed to combat cybercrime are in close alignment with the objectives in the ASEAN Political Security Blueprint 2025. On 28 November 2019, Singapore was formally appointed a permanent member of the INTERPOL Cybercrime Directors Workshop during the Workshop's 10th edition. The other

members of this Workshop include China, Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. Members would convene twice a year to exchange operational information and experience in tackling various types of cybercrimes and cyber threats in the region. The 11th Cybercrime Directors Workshop took place on 23 April 2020 via video conference and focused on the sharing of information about cybercrime and cyber-enabled cases in relation to COVID-19 in their respective countries.

In order to bolster our regional efforts to effectively address the growing cybercrime threat, Singapore spearheaded the operationalisation of the ASEAN Cyber Capability Desk (ASEAN Desk) in the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation (IGCI). Singapore secured unequivocal support from SOMTC and AMMTC on this initiative in 2017. With this endorsement and firm commitments from Singapore and Brunei to second officers, INTERPOL launched the ASEAN Desk to focus on driving regional cybercrime operations on 25 July 2018. The ASEAN Desk currently has seconded officers from Singapore, Brunei and Vietnam as of January 2020.

In February 2020, the ASEAN Desk published its inaugural ASEAN Cyber Threat Assessment Report. The report identified botnets, phishing campaigns, business email compromise, banking malware, ransomware and cryptojacking as prominent cyber threats in the region in 2019.

We have also contributed to other capacity and awareness building efforts. All AMS supported and participated in the ASEAN Cyber Capacity Development Project (ACCDP) which was funded by the Japan-ASEAN Integrated Fund (JAIF) 2.0. All AMS participated in the National Cyber Review (NCR), which was conducted in 2018 to assess each state's competencies to address cybercrime. The 3rd ASEAN Cybercrime Prosecutors' Roundtable Meeting (ACPRM) was also organised in conjunction with the SICW in September 2019, and provides a platform for cybercrime prosecutors and law enforcement officers to share best practices and chart the way forward for better cooperation in this domain.

In the second half of 2019, the JAIF 2.0 funding was obtained for two key cybercrime projects proposed by Singapore and to be implemented by INTERPOL for the AMS.

Firstly, following the success of the ACCDP, the ACCDP Phase II, with JAIF 2.0 funding of approximately US\$1.8 million over two years, aims to enhance regional cooperation by strengthening the capability of AMS to combat cyber and cyber-enabled crime, closing regional capability gaps as identified in the respective NCRs in Phase 1, promoting enhanced strategic frameworks and improving handling of digital evidence. This will result in increased self-sustainability for each AMS to combat cybercrime within the country and beyond.

Secondly, the ASEAN Joint Operations on Cybercrime (AJOC) to be implemented by the ASEAN Desk, with JAIF 2.0 funding of approximately US\$1.2 million over two years, aims to achieve the following key deliverables:

- The institutionalisation of an “ASEAN Coordination Framework to Combat Cybercrime” that caters to the unique challenges and needs of law enforcement agencies in the ASEAN region;
- To ensure that all points-of-contacts from the region’s cybercrime units to be connected to a “Virtual Collaboration Platform”;
- To ensure enhanced delivery of actionable cybercrime intelligence and cybercrime alerts to AMS; and
- The creation of an archive of operation concepts and reports in order to increase the quality of investigation and intelligence collation, as well as to forge better understanding of the modus operandi of complex hi-tech cybercrime.

Alongside Malaysia and Japan, Singapore currently co-chairs the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ARF ISM on ICTs Security). The ARF ISM on ICTs Security and its Open Ended Study Group (OESG) focus on the adoption of CBMs to facilitate communication, information sharing as well as the exchange of know-how and best practices. In so doing, we can reduce the risk of cyber conflict, and build inter-country trust and confidence in cyberspace.

In terms of capacity building, Singapore launched a SGD 10 million ASEAN Cyber Capacity Programme (ACCP) in 2016. To date, the ACCP has trained 400 ASEAN officials in various aspects of cybersecurity policy and incident response. Singapore launched the SGD30 million ASEAN-Singapore Cybersecurity Centre of Excellence (ASCCE) in October 2019. The ASCCE is an expansion of our existing ACCP, and will run cyber-capacity-building programmes out of a physical facility. The ASCCE will engage top cyber experts and trainers, and collaborate with AMS, key industry and academic institutions, and other international partners from the public and private sectors in designing and delivering cybersecurity capacity building programmes.

Singapore has also been convening an annual ASEAN CERT Incident Drill (ACID) for the last 14 years to strengthen the cybersecurity preparedness of AMS, reinforce regional coordination drills, and enhance regional cooperation. All 10 AMS, as well as five ASEAN Dialogue Partners – Australia, China, India, Japan and the ROK – participated in the ACID.

Singapore has been an active participant in key international platforms facilitating discussions on cyber norms, capacity building, and CBMs. Singapore is deeply committed to continuing discussions on international cyber rules and norms at multilateral fora, such as the UNGGE and Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) resolutions at the UN General Assembly in 2018. Singapore is committed to supporting both UN processes as they offer countries big and small an opportunity to engage in and enhance cyber cooperation, as well as to play a key role in the development of rules and norms in cyberspace to maintain international peace and security.

IV. Role of ARF

Since its inception in 1994 as an open and inclusive forum to discuss key political and security issues the ARF has evolved from Stage I Promotion of CBMs to Stage II Development of Preventive Diplomacy (PD) mechanisms. As the 2010 Hanoi Plan of Action (POA) to implement the ARF Vision Statement expires this year, ARF Participants are developing a new POA (2020-2025), which will guide ARF's progress in the years to come in accordance with universally recognised norms and principles of international law. This is a timely initiative as the world grapples with the political, economic and social consequences of a global pandemic.

Against this backdrop, we should be prepared to face more complicated regional security challenges. More than ever, recovery and success would depend on greater confidence and trust among ARF Participants, fostering closer collaboration and candid dialogue, as well as responding collectively to the complex post-pandemic landscape. ASEAN will have to ensure our continued centrality and unity through initiatives, including at the ARF, that assert our relevance. The regional architecture is constantly in flux and COVID-19 has intensified some centrifugal forces. The ARF must be vigilant and renew our value as an open, inclusive platform for engaging all friendly partners. To this end, Singapore remains fully committed to the ARF and its role as a key pillar in the multi-layered regional security architecture.

SRI LANKA

SRI LANKA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE REGIONAL SECURITY

1. Being situated in very a strategically important location in the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka's contribution towards the maintenance of peace and the security in the region has been very significant and vital throughout the history and even during the present geopolitical scenario. A slight disturbance in the region would impact not only the regional security, but also the global security at large. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every single nation in the region to take every possible measure to ensure the regional security, which could include individual measures as well as collective measures.

2. Sri Lanka has clearly identified its role in ensuring the peace and security in the region and therefore, a number of initiatives have been put in place over the years as individual measures and as cooperative measures since there is no alternative to international cooperation and coordination. Many of the new security challenges are transnational in origin and nature, and no nation can combat them alone. Sri Lanka has committed to the preservation of good order at sea and land that serves for regional security concerns in the Indo-Pacific region.

Regional Cooperative Initiatives

3. Having understood the requirement of global cooperative initiatives the Government of Sri Lanka initiated number of discussion forums in the year 2010, following the defeat of LTTE terrorism in the year 2009, to share its unique experience with the regional and global community. This initiative has created a forum for the regional and global community to discuss and deliberate issues of global and regional nature. The discussions made over a decade, has produced very productive results and has been able to bring the scholars, experts, professionals over the globe into one forum and share their well-researched knowledge and findings with the global community.

a. **Galle Dialogue International Maritime Conference.** The Galle Dialogue; International Maritime Conference was inaugurated by the Sri Lanka Navy since 2010 under the patronage of the Ministry of Defence. The purpose of this conference is to provide a common platform for stakeholders of national and international repute to discuss and deliberate maritime related issues. Moreover, specifically enhance the cooperation of maritime security and sharing of knowledge and information amongst them. The participation of more than 100 foreign participants including high level delegations in the forum was an illustration of the interest in regional and extraregional stakeholders on the maritime affairs of the region.

b. **Colombo Defence Seminar.** The Sri Lanka Army aspires to bring together a global network of defence partners for critical discussions towards formulating a collective and assertive approach to repel security threats on nations as an annual event since 2011 and with the scope of a better understanding and sharing of knowledge in:

- (1) Comprehensive and effective counter-terrorism strategy
- (2) Operational and tactical level lessons covering; engineering, medical, and operating behind enemy lines
- (3) Evolution of tactical level training intelligence, field
- (4) The role of Human Rights in Counter Insurgency operations
- (5) Rehabilitation programmes to integrate ex-combatants into society and measures taken to mitigate factors that might lead to resurgence of violence
- (6) Political reforms to accommodate all ethnic communities and nation building
- (7) The need to revisit the traditional model for counter insurgency and benchmark the Sri Lankan experience

c. **The Colombo Air Symposium.** The Colombo Air Symposium was initiated in the year 2015 and largely evolved since, establishing a solid platform for the experts and the scholars in the military field to expand the multiple aspects of applying Air Power with a futuristic vision. The symposium attracted an increasing number of local and foreign delegates, extending the aspirations of a forum which would stem the knowledge that paves the way for a better and united world Air Power. Presently the Colombo Air Symposium has marked as one of the major events in the global calendar and a profound ground of knowledge transferring in the fields of defence and strategic application of Air Power.

4. In a global world, security issues in a one country have the potential to affect not only its immediate neighbours but also the other countries within its geographic region. This is very distinct especially in the maritime environment where the porosity and expense of the maritime borders mean that illegal activities can sometimes go undetected despite the best effort put in place by the national maritime enforcement agencies to identify, monitor and respond to such incident. Therefore, sharing information swiftly with concerned local, regional and global authorities would facilitate to initiate collective effort against the crimes of regional and global nature. Therefore, having understood the importance of information sharing Sri Lanka made following initiatives to share information with its neighbours.

a. **IFC Colombo Sri Lanka.** Establishment of an Information Fusion Centre in Colombo, Sri Lanka, is in the process with the assistance of the United Nations Office of the Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Information sharing mechanisms within the own stakeholders will be commenced as initial stage and subsequently it is intended to extend its service to the region.

b. **IFC Singapore.** Sri Lanka joined the IFC Singapore since its establishment and contributes to achieve its aim and objectives. The process of attachment of a Sri Lankan representative at the IFC Singapore as international Liaison Officer (ILO) is in progress. Further, Sri Lanka Navy represents the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), ISC and share valuable information with the maritime fraternity.

c. IFC IOR. Sri Lanka also shares information with the IFC Indian Ocean Region established by the Indian Navy at Gurugram, India. Sri Lanka Navy will attach an ILO for the better sharing of information.

5. Effective understanding of anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact the security, safety, economy, or environment also improves the maritime and thereby the regional security. The Sri Lanka has initiated number of MDA initiatives together with its neighbours in addition to its own MDA initiatives.

a. **Trilateral Agreement.** Sri Lanka, India and Maldives has signed an agreement on sharing of MDA information amongst each other. Based on the agreement each member state shares information on white shipping, AIS, LRIT and much other information related to the maritime security.

b. **SAGAR Initiative.** India seeks to deepen economic and security cooperation with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their maritime security capabilities through SAGAR initiatives. India would cooperate on the exchange of information, coastal surveillance, building of infrastructure and strengthening their capabilities . Sri Lanka will also ensure to maintain the regional security by being a partner in the SAGAR initiative of India.

6. Bilateral and Multi National exercises enhance the interoperability, mutual understanding and the capacity and the capability of respective nations. In addition, it ensures the reediness to face any security challenges of regional and global nature. Sri Lanka Navy also take part in number of bilateral, multilateral naval exercise organized by the regional and extra regional navies.

a. **Bilateral Naval Exercises.** The Sri Lanka Navy take part in following bilateral Naval exercises with its neighbouring countries.

(1) **SLINEX.** Sri Lanka Navy and Indian Navy exercise conducted annually and alternatively in Sri Lanka and India.

(2) **LION STAR.** Sri Lanka Navy and Pakistan Navy exercise conducted biennially in Pakistan and in Sri Lanka when Pakistan Naval ships visit Sri Lankan ports.

b. **Trilateral Exercises.** Sri Lanka, India and Maldives take part in Tri Lateral exercise 'DOSTI' conducted by the Maldives National Defence Force for Coast Guards of respective countries in the Maldives biannually.

c. **Multinational Naval Exercises.** Sri Lanka Navy takes part in undermentioned Multinational exercise regularly.

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| (1) Milan | - Conducted by Indian Navy |
| (2) Kakadu | - Conducted by Australian Navy |
| (3) Aman | - Conducted by Pakistan Navy |
| (4) IDEX | - Conducted by UAE Navy |
| (5) LIMA | - Conducted by Malaysian Navy |
| (6) IMDEX | - Conducted by Singapore Navy |
| (7) Komodo | - Conducted by Indonesian Navy |

(8) International Fleet Reviews - Conducted by Thailand, India, Vietnam.

7. Capacity Building and Sharing of Experience. Capacity building fosters a sense of confidence, so that the participants gain greater control over the situation and act according to the rules and regulations. Keeping that in mind, Sri Lanka Military forces initiated number of capacity building programmes for regional security forces to share its hard-earned experiences gained over the conflict period and the experience at sea operations.

a. **Counter Maritime Crime Course.** The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) together with the Sri Lanka Navy conduct Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) course at the Sri Lanka Navy Base in Trincomalee. The exercise is part of a VBSS Boarding Officer training course for the officers of regional coastguards.

b. **Asymmetric Warfare Course.** Twelve-week-long training engagement will enable course participants from different parts of the globe to get the maximum exposure of SLN's hard-earned Asymmetric Warfare experience.

8. Regional Forums. Regional forums also facilitate to address regional security issues and concerns. Sri Lanka is one of the lead coordinators in the following International organizations and forums.

- a. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)
- b. Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)
- c. Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)
- d. ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)
- e. Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS)
- f. Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS)
- g. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

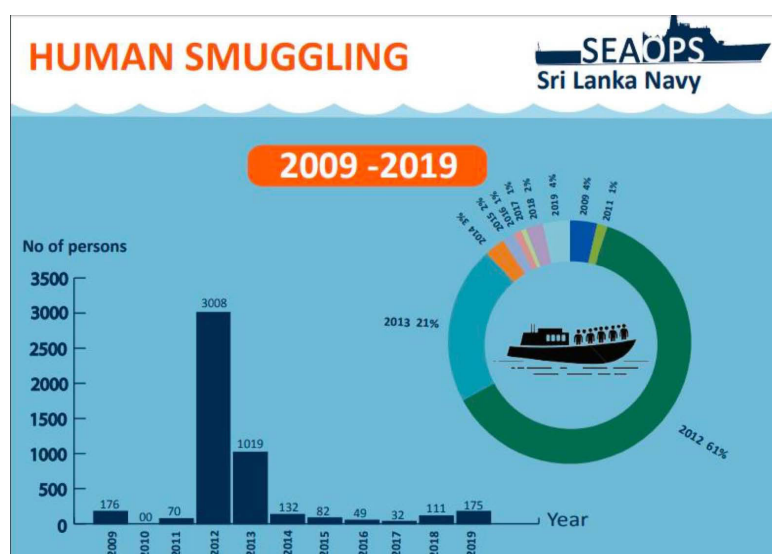
National Initiatives

9. Sri Lanka has seen terrorism in its many facades; the LTTE a separatist movement that fought for 30 years in a prolonging conflict but on a lost cause and militarily defeated in 2009. Thereafter, the Government of Sri Lanka focused more towards the maintenance of the peace

and security over the Island and the ocean space around. One of the main focus was to ensure the freedom of Navigation and the ocean space is free of traditional and non-traditional maritime threats. Following proves the Sri Lanka’s effort in ensuring regional security.

a. **Drug Trafficking.** Drug trafficking is a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws and pauses a great maritime security threat. The Sri Lanka Navy is playing a vital role to block the drug supply networks in high seas, by means of major ships in its arsenal, and it has turned out to be a priceless force in the national programme to eradicate drug menace from the island. In the recent past Sri Lanka Navy has been very successful in the Southern Indian Ocean in foiling efforts of drug trafficking networks mainly operating from Makran Coast. The lack of total MDA allows trafficking networks to operate freely in the midst of busy shipping lanes and regularly transship consignment at sea by innocent looking fishing vessels. SLN has apprehended 761.415 kg of heroin during year 2019 and 641.963 kg of heroin, 659.69 kg of Crystal Methamphetamine (ice) and 581.034 kg of Ketamine during the first half of 2020 from those fishing vessels.

b. **Human Trafficking.** Human trafficking is the trade of humans for the purpose of forced labour, sexual slavery or commercial sexual exploitation for the trafficker or others. Human trafficking at sea poses yet another maritime security threat. Sri Lanka has also demonstrated very effective capacity in preventing illegal migration to Australia through maritime routes via or from Sri Lanka. The Australia- Sri Lanka joint cooperation on human smuggling is a success story. Following graph signifies the Sri Lanka’s effort in countering human smuggling in the ocean space around it.



Source: www.navy.lk

c. **Transnational Crimes.** Transnational crimes are crimes that have actual or potential effect across national borders and crimes that are intrastate but offend fundamental values of the international community. Following are the other key concerns of Transnational Crimes that impinge on regional Maritime Security. The Sri Lanka Navy counter these threats by deploying its patrolling units around the ocean space to ensure it is free of crimes.

- (1) Illegal, Unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU)
- (2) Smuggling of Arms
- (3) Maritime Piracy
- (4) Maritime Terrorism

10. A comprehensive MDA shall obtain a maritime picture of littoral seas by radars, HSWR, electro optical of day and night vision, AIS GSM coverage to envelop monitoring of all vessels, fishing, recreational and coastal merchant vessels. An MDA is void if does not cover the ocean picture virtually monitoring through celestial coverage to monitor all AIS illuminated shipping and high sea fishing fleet. Any dark vessel which does not illuminate position could be traced through satellite imagery and full access to tracking systems such as Marine Traffic and Sea Vision and even inputs from Long Range Maritime Air Reconnaissance provide a comprehensive picture. Beyond the systems are importantly the human interface that could analyze MDA activities through multiple sources and sharing with other users to keep oceans safe, unexploited and regulated. Moreover, MDA and Information Fusion Centre in one enhance Marine Rescue Coordination by presenting real time updated maritime picture of adjacent seas and Ocean area of a coastal state.

11. In the traditional setting of Countering Terrorism Sri Lanka has placed regulatory and legal frameworks emulating many international treaties, conventions and instruments that Sri Lanka is a party, to empower military and law enforcement agencies in responding to violent extremism.

Conclusion

12. Security threats have no boundary and do not limit to a particular nation, ethnic group or religion, and a single isolated incident can badly affect a region at times the function of the entire world. Therefore, no single country is able to mitigate security threats of global nature alone. Hence, cooperative and collaborative security mechanism is needed to address the security threats of global nature.

13. Sri Lanka being strategically situated in the middle of the Indian Ocean has a significant role to play in maintaining regional peace and security. Having well understood the fact that the Government of Sri Lanka, has taken a number of initiatives individually and as well as regionally to assure its responsibility towards the maintenance of regional security.

THAILAND

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

The Asia-Pacific region was the first to encounter the emergence of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in December 2019 which later became the global crisis the world has ever faced. This unprecedented non-traditional security challenge has severely threatened human security, particularly human health, and entailed far-reaching socio-economic impacts. The World Bank projected the global economy to shrink by 5.2 percent in 2020, representing the deepest recession since World War II and triggering a dramatic rise of extreme poverty. After the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020, inward-looking policies, including lockdowns, curfews, travel restrictions, border closures and limitations on economic activities and public life, are in place to curb the spread of the virus.

From a security perspective, COVID-19 has evidently accelerated existing tensions between the major powers in the Asia-Pacific region. ASEAN, as a regional grouping comprising small and medium sized countries, would not wish to see Southeast Asia become a theatre of competition and confrontations, but rather a region of cooperation. Thailand is of the view that ASEAN can play a central role in building strategic trust and confidence to avoid resumption of conflicts, and focus global efforts on socio-economic recovery in the post COVID-19 era.

On Thailand's part, the Royal Thai Government places health security as top priority and enforces measures to bring the pandemic under control. Measures include the issuance of a National Emergency Decree; "Stay Home, Stop the Disease, for the Nation" campaign; providing transparent and accurate information to the public; "Thai Chana" contact tracing platform and utilising more than one million existing village health volunteers nationwide. As of 30 June 2020, there were approximately 3,000 confirmed cases with less than 60 fatalities. The situation of the outbreak has improved gradually without any local infections for more than two months.

The Royal Thai Government has also exerted efforts and measures to mitigate socio-economic impact of COVID-19. An economic stimulus package of 1.9 trillion baht (58 billion USD) has been approved; of which 1 trillion baht would be used to fund public health improvement efforts and for economic and social rehabilitation, and 900 million baht would be used to support MSMEs and to help stabilise the financial market.

At the regional level, Thailand also supports ASEAN's cohesive response to the pandemic. The COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund, initiated by Thailand, was officially launched at the 36th ASEAN Summit on 26 June 2020. The Fund provides support to ASEAN Member States in the detection, control and prevention of COVID-19 transmission and in protecting the safety of medical professionals and health workers as well as wider population. The Fund will also be utilised to

procure medical supplies and equipment to ASEAN Member States and support research and development of anti-viral medicines and vaccines. COVID-19 demonstrates that the effects of crises do not respect boundaries and multilateral response is required. Indeed, ASEAN's collective efforts reaffirm the power of multilateralism.

Furthermore, cooperation and partnerships between ASEAN and external partners have been enhanced and strengthened in various areas such as food and energy security, public health emergencies, digital economy, vaccines development, contributing to building strategic trust and maintaining the Asia-Pacific region as an area of peace, security and prosperity. ASEAN has provided platforms for other external partners to engage with and share best practices through a number of meetings at the leaders, ministerial and senior officials levels by utilising video conferences.

ASEAN Centrality in the Evolving Regional Architecture

The COVID-19 crisis presents a litmus test to multilateralism on the one hand. On the other hand however, it offers ASEAN an opportunity to strengthen the ASEAN-centred regional architecture. The strengthening of such architecture is supported by shared norms and principles of international law, as embodied in key instruments such as the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), Declaration of the East Asia Summit on the Principles for Mutually Beneficial Relations, among others. With wider recognition of its governing principles in inter-state relations in response to security challenges in the uncertain geo-political environment, the TAC has become ever more valid and relevant. Reinforcing the TAC and its principles which will strengthen regional norms and the promotion of peace and stability.

The long-term goal is to realise a Strategic New Equilibrium that will be conducive to peace, security and prosperity for all in the Asia-Pacific region, and from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. The 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok in November 2019 adopted the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific which is "ASEAN's Vista" on the evolving regional geo-strategic landscape anchored on existing norms and principles including those enshrined under the TAC, and on engagement with its dialogue partners. It aims to promote win-win cooperation in areas that are mutually beneficial, based on the principle of inclusiveness and the 3Ms: Mutual Trust, Mutual Respect, and Mutual Benefit.

The ASEAN-centered regional architecture comprising the ASEAN Plus One, the ASEAN Plus Three, the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has provided ASEAN with a strong regional convening power and a multi-layered platform to establish rules and norms for a regional order. These fora have provided venues for key players to engage in dialogue for the enhancement of strategic trust, the strengthening of confidence-building measures and the promotion of preventive diplomacy, focusing on win-win cooperation and concrete deliverables. They will ultimately contribute to attaining "sustainable security" within the ASEAN region and beyond.

Regional Security Environment

While the regional security environment appears to be stable, the COVID-19 outbreak has brought about geopolitical uncertainties and confrontations between major powers in the Asia-Pacific region. Increased competition and more complicated geo-strategic dynamics have arguably put pressure on countries in the region to take side. Any resumption of conflicts and tensions would undermine peace, security and prosperity in the region, in particular efforts to recovery from COVID-19 and long-term sustainable growth.

On the South China Sea, growing tensions and provocative incidents have undermined the positive momentum gained in 2019, including the negotiations to develop an effective and substantive Code of Conduct (COC). Strategic trust should be nurtured through practical confidence-building measures and continued dialogue. In this regard, Thailand has put forward a Paper on “Best Practices and Non-Binding Guidelines for Cooperative Activities on Marine Environmental Protection in the South China Sea” to help promote win-win functional maritime cooperation in areas of mutual interest such as plastic and marine debris, address current emerging challenges which will ultimately transform the South China Sea into a Sea of Peace, Stability and Sustainable Development. Meanwhile, all parties concerned should exercise self-restraint to create an environment conducive to the peaceful resolution of disputes on the basis of international law, including UNCLOS 1982. It is pertinent to pursue full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and properly implement measures, thus ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea.

In the maritime domain, maritime security and cooperation have assumed greater importance for Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Therefore, challenges that would compromise safety and security of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) need to be countered effectively. Other increasingly crucial maritime issues, such as marine resources management, including combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Fishing), transnational crime at sea, piracy and armed robbery, people smuggling and wildlife smuggling also require closer cooperation. To complement these efforts, practical cooperation, maritime domain awareness (MDA), information-sharing and intelligence exchange must also be enhanced.

The region has become more vulnerable to the threats and exploitation of transnational organised crime groups, including trafficking in persons and people smuggling, irregular migration and illicit drug trafficking. More importantly, COVID-19 has exacerbated and brought to the forefront the systemic and deeply entrenched economic and societal inequalities that are among the root causes of terrorism. This landscape requires ASEAN to enhance its border management cooperation through enhanced coordination in all aspects, from information sharing and intelligence exchange, implementing appropriate measures to ensure safety and security from land, air and sea border challenges, to catalysing joint action to help address multifaceted dimensions of transnational crime. On the one hand, there is a need to ensure a balanced approach between safety and security,

including health security, and cross-border trade facilitation and the seamless movement of goods and people on the other.

Against the backdrop of COVID-19, lockdowns and travel restrictions have prompted the region to adapt to the “new normal” way of life, which is more dependent on digital technology. This demonstrates the increasing importance of cooperation in cybersecurity to prevent transnational organised crime groups from taking advantage of the pandemic. It is necessary to seek an appropriate balance between security and convenience to ensure a secure and resilient cyberspace where all can benefit from digital technology and digital economy while remaining protected. The main tasks for ASEAN, in this regard, include the identification of a coordinating mechanism related to cybersecurity and development of a list of voluntary, practical norms of state behaviour in cyberspace, to ensure that such challenges areas are addressed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. Equally important is training and capacity-building, and this is where the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre plays an important catalytic role to promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment in the region.

The threat of terrorism and violent extremism is likely to persist in 2020. ASEAN needs to address the significant security risks posed by returning combatants of nationals to the region from other regions affected by terrorism and violent extremism. Collective efforts involving ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), the ASEAN Directors-General of Immigration Departments and Heads of Consular Affairs Divisions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGICM), the EAS, and the ARF, should be further strengthened to undertake a comprehensive and coordinated action in countering terrorism and radicalisation. Combatting terrorism requires a sustainable approach in addressing the root causes and the conditions conducive to the spread of radicalised ideologies. This would include poverty eradication, encouraging tolerance and utilising the moderation agenda, and promoting inter-faith and intra-faith dialogues in the region, in line with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The situation on the Korean Peninsula remains a pressing security issue in the region. Increased tensions and the deterioration of the Inter-Korean relations could undermine denuclearization and global nuclear non-proliferation efforts. Concerned parties should therefore insert their best efforts to resume dialogue and revive their contacts and interactions with a view to continuing peaceful dialogue and work towards establishing lasting peace and stability in a denuclearized Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration and the Joint Statement by the leaders of the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Meanwhile, implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions remains an obligation of the international community. In this connection, the ARF, as an ASEAN-led platform, can be an appropriate platform for trust and confidence building and creating a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue.

2. National Security and Defense Policy

Overview of National Security and Defense Policy

In relation to Thailand's national security and defense policy, the Ministry of Defense has published its policy statement in an effort to promote transparency and to enhance trust and confidence between Thailand and ASEAN Member States, as well as other partners within and beyond the Asia-Pacific. The mission of the Ministry of Defence covers wide range of issue including, among others, enhancing defense cooperation with neighbouring nations, ASEAN Member States and international organisations, both at bilateral and multilateral levels, enhancing the integration of strengths and capabilities with every sector, maintaining capability of the armed forces and national defense system, increasing armed forces capability in order to counter non-traditional threats and strengthening defense industry.

In addition, the Ministry of Defense attaches great importance to participation in cooperation frameworks which will provide opportunities for the armed forces of the region to engage in practical cooperation to promote mutual interest of participating countries and enhance capabilities for the future, such as the activities of the ADMM's initiatives and the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups, which includes the enhancement of defence establishments' role in supporting border management to collectively respond to transnational challenges, and strengthening maritime security cooperation to build trust and confidence as well as practical cooperation in the maritime domain of the region.

The ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM), as a subsidiary body under the ADMM in Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter, has added value to the overall humanitarian assistance and disaster relief framework of the region, as well as complement the work of the ASEAN Coordination Centre of Humanitarian Management (AHA Centre) in improving the region's response and coordination mechanism. During the COVID-19 outbreak, the ACMM plays an active role in monitoring and responding to the COVID-19 situation.

3. National Contribution to Regional Security

Joint Exercise

Cobra Gold is one of the largest multinational exercises in the Asia-Pacific region which has been held annually in Thailand since 1982. It is known to be one of the largest theater security cooperation exercises in the Asia-Pacific, which aims to strengthen military ties, and improve capabilities and interoperability of participating countries, through planning and conducting combined and joint operations over a range of both civic and military activities, including enhancing maritime security, preventing and mitigating emerging disease threats, and responding to large-scale disasters.

The 39th iteration of the Cobra Gold theater exercises took place during 24 February - 6 March 2020 in Thailand, featuring five main activities: (1) Command Post Exercise (CPX) (2) Humanitarian Civic Assistance (HCA) (3) Field Training Exercise (FTX) (4) Landmine Disposal Exercise (LMD EX) and (5) Cyber FTX. Sixteen ARF Participants (Thailand, the United States of America, Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, India, Australia, Canada, the Philippines, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, Myanmar and Pakistan) participated in the exercises, contributing to strengthened regional cooperation and collaboration and increase in the ability to address shared security concerns.

Peacekeeping

Thailand has been committed to the cause of UN peacekeeping since 1950. Over 27,000 Thai military and police personnel, men and women, have served in more than 20 peacekeeping and related missions of the UN. Currently, Thailand contributes an engineering company of 270 personnel to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), as well as military and police officers to three UN peacekeeping missions, namely UNAMID in Darfur, UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan, and UNMISS in South Sudan, totaling 299 personnel. As meaningful part of peace process, Thailand has also been consistently sending female military and police officers to join UN peacekeeping missions worldwide. In 2020, 14 female military and police officers are being deployed in three UN peacekeeping Missions, namely UNAMID in Darfur, UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan, and UNMISS in South Sudan.

As part of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the Thai Horizontal Military Engineering Company (HMEC)'s main responsibilities include road reconstruction and building infrastructure. Apart from the mandates, Thai peacekeepers also endeavour to promote development initiatives and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) initiated by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej to assist in achieving sustained peace which complements Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions. Thai peacekeepers have successfully utilized this approach in previous missions in Timor-Leste and Darfur.

For capacity building programmes, the Thai Peace Operations Center remains in close cooperation with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF to design a regional training course on Children and Armed Conflict. Furthermore, the Thai Peace Operations Center annually hosts the United Nations Staff Officers Course (UNSOC), in which representatives from ASEAN countries are invited to participate. In 2020, representatives from Indonesia, Lao PDR, Singapore, Vietnam, and Malaysia took part in the UNSOC with instructors from Australia, Malaysia, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of Korea.

The Thai military has also been active in promoting enhanced cooperation within ASEAN and with partner countries on peacekeeping training. In this regard, Thailand has initiated and continues to support the ASEAN network of peacekeeping centres and an Expert Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations to promote training and capacity-building of peacekeeping personnel.

Counter-terrorism

The number of terrorist attacks worldwide has been decreasing for the fourth consecutive year (2016-2020) due to the loss of the Islamic State (IS) stronghold. International terrorist groups' strategies have changed from planning large-scale sophisticated plots to inspiring Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs), local terrorist groups and extremist ideology adherents to stage attacks in their home countries by employing rudimentary means. They also suggested their sympathisers avoiding any contacts or communication through electronic devices or social media in order to evade detections. However, the issue of FTFs repatriation remains contentious for many countries of origin and this may create a vacuum for FTFs to escape from current detention and relocate unchecked.

Thailand's efforts focus on a comprehensive and sustainable solution to terrorism which includes addressing root causes through soft and hard approaches in a balanced and holistic manner, encouraging international cooperation as well as promoting interfaith dialogues, values of moderation and peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies.

In order to tackle this, Thailand has continued to implement counter-terrorism measures on preventing and countering violent extremism such as the implementation of the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2017-2021) to continuously improve capabilities on prevention, response and rehabilitation, the ratification of 2 additional UN convention and protocol on counter-terrorism, bringing the number to 12 in total out of 19 existing conventions and protocols. In addition, Thailand has also organised several activities, including the International Symposium on Violent Extremism: For Better Understanding of Public Sector on 4 - 5 July 2019 in partnership with UN Development Programme (UNDP) and Special Lecture on Challenges of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism in Southeast Asia in 4.0 Society on 15 August 2019 in partnership with Hedayah PCVE Centre of Excellence.

At the regional level, ASEAN Member States have adopted several documents on counter-terrorism which help lay groundwork for regional efforts to enhancing capacity in counter-terrorism in ASEAN, namely, the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Our Eyes Initiative which aims at promoting strategic information exchange on terrorism at the 13th ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting on 11 July 2019, the ARF Statement on Preventing and Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism Conducive to Terrorism, the ARF Work Plan for Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime 2019-2021 at the 26th ARF on 2 August 2019 and the Work Plan to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2018-2025) at the 13th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime on 27 November 2019.

Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Thailand continues the policy not to develop, acquire or proliferate any kind of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, as well as fully observes commitments and obligations on non-proliferation of WMD.

On nuclear disarmament, as one of the first three countries to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 20 September 2017, Thailand looks forward to its early entry into force. At the same time, Thailand reaffirms the importance of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone for nuclear non-proliferation and recognizes the complementarity between the TPNW and the NPT, as both share the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the national level, Thailand has continually worked towards the advancement of its capacity for non-proliferation, in terms of both policy and implementation. Dedicating more of national budget towards non-proliferation efforts and peaceful use of nuclear technology, Thailand is developing its research and laboratory facilities, building up human resources, and strengthening legal framework.

With the Nuclear Energy for Peace Act enacted in February 2017, Thailand is pursuing ratification and accession to all relevant nuclear non-proliferation treaties and conventions. As a result, to date, Thailand has ratified or acceded to the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Its 2005 Amendment, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Most recently, Thailand has ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) on 2 May 2019.

At the regional level, Thailand played a leading role in the establishment and the implementation of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), or the Bangkok Treaty of 1995, and in initiating the cooperation of the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM). Thailand is committed to supporting and advancing both initiatives, including with the nuclear weapon States on the signing of the SEANWFZ Protocol and with ASEAN Member States and friends on cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, as its contribution to promote ASEAN non-proliferation efforts.

Thailand welcomes the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament under the 'Securing Our Common Future' concept and its three outlined priorities on the control and disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and remaining vigilant of new and emerging technologies and their effects on peace and security. In this connection, Thailand looks forward to tangible cooperation and meaningful engagement between all UN agencies, Member States, and other stakeholders in realizing this Agenda. Thailand stands ready to facilitate the exchange of views and best practices on disarmament and non-proliferation issues and will continue to act as a bridge-builder between ASEAN and other regional and international groupings to bring about a safer and more secure world.

Transnational Crime

The Asia-Pacific region continues to encounter threats posed by transnational organised crime groups who exploit higher degree of interconnectedness amongst countries and regions as well as the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The acute upsurge of illicit drug trafficking remains one of top priorities considering that the amount of seized synthetic drugs in Southeast Asia has increased eightfold in the last decade. This phenomenon underlines challenges facing law enforcement agencies in the region which includes transnational organised crimes' resilience and agility, existing law enforcement gaps amongst countries and insufficient regional coordination to effectively monitor and control precursor chemicals.

In addition, Thailand and the region are still facing other types of transnational crime such as people smuggling and human trafficking, illicit wildlife and timber trafficking and cybercrime. Cybercrime, in particular, has become more sophisticated and wide-spreading due to technological advancement and its utility in facilitating other crimes. It is also important to acknowledge that many transnational organised crimes such as fundraising, weapon supply and counterfeiting travel documents are strong supporters and facilitators of terrorism.

The implementation of the Strategy to Prevent and Combat Transnational Organised Crimes (2015-2021) plays a central role in Thailand's efforts to combat transnational crimes, particularly in 5 identified priority areas, namely, terrorism, illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber, infringement of intellectual property rights, trafficking in persons and drug trafficking.

Thailand has continued to engage with ASEAN Member States in the development of the Concept Paper entitled "ASEAN Border Management Cooperation Roadmap". Thailand is of a firm belief that this document will help lay an important groundwork in advancing cooperation on border management as well as addressing transnational crime in ASEAN as reflected in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 with the ultimate goal being the establishment of an ASEAN-wide border management cooperation arrangement to ensure border security and facilitate trade in tandem.

Thailand is committed to continuously implement measures and enforce laws to counter trafficking in persons and forced labour, as well as in improving the working conditions of workers, particularly in the fisheries sector. These include the ratification of the 2014 Protocol to the ILO's Forced Labour Convention 1930 (P29), the Royal Decree on the Amendment of the Anti-human Trafficking Act B.E. 2551 (2008), B.E. 2562 (2019); and the ratification of the ILO's Work in Fishing Convention No. 188, 2007 (C188).

Currently, Thailand is undertaking a pilot project with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) entitled "OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chain" which is a project under Thailand-OECD Country Programme "Fostering Responsible Business Conduct". This pilot project aims to create a better understanding and exchange of best practices on responsible agricultural supply chain among companies from 3 other ASEAN Member States,

namely Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam. Seven Thai companies are participating in the project and a baseline report is expected to be published within 2020.

Irregular migration has become a major challenge for the region. This requires cooperation among affected countries and relevant stakeholders to address the issue effectively and comprehensively, under the principle of international responsibility sharing. As a major country of transit and destination, Thailand has been affected by mass influx of irregular migrants from within and outside the region. Although Thailand is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Thailand has long been committed to humanitarian cause and will continue to work closely with the UN Office on drugs and Crime (UNODC), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization Migration (IOM).

Illicit drug trafficking remains a grave challenge for ASEAN due to an increase in opium cultivation, heroin production and methamphetamine tablets and crystalline methamphetamine manufacturing in the Golden Triangle. Thailand is therefore fully committed to implementing the 4-year Mekong Drug Control Joint Operation Plan (2019-2022), in collaboration with Lao PDR, Myanmar, Cambodia, Viet Nam and China. The Plan is a continuation of the Safe Mekong Operation launched in 2015 with an aim to comprehensively address illicit drug production and distribution in the Golden Triangle area. Thailand also hosts Safe Mekong Coordination Center (SMCC) in Chiang Mai and together with Australia established the “Taskforce Storm” in 2016 to oversee joint operations in suppressing illicit drug trafficking, money laundering and transnational crimes. This Taskforce has succeeded in arresting several drug syndicate criminals and seizing their proceeds of crime. The mandate of this taskforce has been extended until 2021.

As a lead shepherd for illicit drug trafficking, under the SOMTC, Thailand will continue to promote cooperation and activities in a concerted manner according to the ASEAN Cooperation Work Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle (2017-2019), which has been extended until 2022 by the decision of the 6th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters.

Thailand also serves as a lead shepherd for illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber and therefore, has taken great efforts to tackle wildlife and timber trafficking at both national and regional level. Following the issuance of the “Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade”, Thailand hopes to continue working with ASEAN Member States in 4 main areas, including cracking down on wildlife smuggling, reducing demand for illicit wildlife consumption, strengthening law enforcement and tackling illegal online wildlife trade. In addition, Thailand's new Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act, which took effect in November, 2019 carries harsher penalties of up to 10 years in prison and/or a maximum fine of 1 million baht for wildlife trafficking.

Since the endorsement of the illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber as a new area of transnational crime at the 10th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), Thailand, as lead shepherd, has been tasked to develop a strategy to promote regional cooperation on this issue. Thailand has since hosted 2 meetings of the Working Group on Illicit Trafficking of Wildlife and

Timber (WG on ITWT) in Bangkok in 2018 and 2019. The meetings focused on activities implemented under the Work Programme 2016-2018 and discussed the draft Work Programme 2019-2021 to combat ITWT as well as the need to enhance law enforcement agencies' operational capacities and coordination.

Ensuring cyber security remains a priority of the Royal Thai Government to ensure an open, secure, stable, accessible and resilient cyber space that will support Thailand in pursuing an innovation-driven economy "Thailand 4.0" policy and propelling the ASEAN digital economy. Accordingly, the Cybersecurity Act B.E. 2562 (2019) was enacted on 24 May 2019, leading to the establishment of the National Cybersecurity Commission to be chaired by the Prime Minister. The new legislation aims to combat cyber threats and equip law enforcement personnel with the ability to protect national Critical Information Infrastructure (CIIs). Furthermore, the Personal Data Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) was enacted on 27 May 2020, to protect individual personal information both in the government and private sector against the backdrop of competitors copying products, mirroring algorithms, and pirating employees.

In recognition of the growing sophistication and transboundary nature of cyber threats, Thailand attaches great importance to enhance regional cybersecurity cooperation through a feasible cross-pillar cybersecurity coordination mechanism. Accordingly, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (MDES) proposed the establishment of the "ASEAN Cybersecurity Coordinating Committee (ASEAN-Cyber CC)" which was agreed at the 4th ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC) held on 2 October 2019 in Singapore, and subsequently endorsed at the 19th ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Ministers Meeting (TELMIN) held on 24-25 October 2019 in Lao PDR. Moving forward, the draft TOR of the ASEAN-Cyber CC has been developed and will be considered by relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies soon.

The ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) has continued to actively serve as a training centre for authorities and information infrastructure companies in ASEAN since its establishment in September 2018 in Bangkok. As part of programmes, two Cyber SEA Games (ASEAN Cybersecurity Competition) were conducted on 21 November 2018 and 20-22 November 2019, respectively, to enhance cybersecurity capacity among youths in ASEAN. In 2020, the AJCCBC would carry on planned training sessions during the course of 2018-2019 on three issues: Cyber Defence Exercise with Recurrence (CYDER), digital forensics and malware analysis.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

As the Asia-Pacific region is the most disaster-prone region in the world, it is necessary to promote closer cross-sectoral coordination and closer collaboration of efforts regarding humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) across ASEAN sectoral bodies as well as between ASEAN and other regional frameworks such as the ARF, EAS, and ADMM-Plus. In this regard, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and its Work Programme 2016-2020, with the new draft Work Programme 2021-2025 is underway, remain the basis for cooperation among ASEAN Member States to prepare and respond to disaster

emergencies in concerted manner. The signing of the “ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, one Response” in 2016 confirms that AADMER is the common platform for the Declaration. Thailand, as a Party to the AADMER and a member of the Governing Board of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), will continue to strengthen ASEAN’s efforts in the area of disaster management and reaffirm its support to an active role of the ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) and other ASEAN tools to deal with HADR challenges. As Co-Chair of the Working group on prevention and Mitigation, Thailand will strengthen the work of the Working Group to further enhance ASEAN’s efforts in disaster prevention and mitigation.

Thailand supports regional efforts to enhance capacity in disaster response and disaster management in line with the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on Disaster Health Management, adopted at the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila. Thailand officially launched an ASEAN Satellite Warehouse in Chai Nat Province during the 34th ASEAN Summit in June 2019. The warehouse will enhance the mobilisation and distribution of relief items rapidly to disaster-affected areas. The country is also committed to strengthening regional collaboration on public health at the national and regional levels in line with the AADMER through the operationalisation of the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration and the Phase 2 Plan of Action of the ASEAN Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (ADRFI). This would support the provision of disaster risk financing and insurance solutions in the region with a view to close ASEAN’s protection gap and reinforce disaster resilience.

As ASEAN is currently facing with the COVID-19 pandemic, ASEAN Leaders at the 36th ASEAN Summit in June 2020 encouraged the utilisation of ASEAN reserve warehouses to support the needs of ASEAN Member States in public health emergencies as well as strengthening the capacity of existing ASEAN’s emergencies response network, which includes the AHA Centre.

Maritime Security and Cooperation

The Asia-Pacific region continues to face maritime challenges, including piracy, armed robbery against ships and various forms of transnational crime as well as issues related to marine environmental protection and IUU fishing. A slight increase in the number of incidents in Asia in 2019 in comparison to 2018 reflects that piracy and armed robbery against ships remain a prevailing security concern in Southeast Asia. Such incidents result from active criminal activities in several areas and vulnerability of important sea lines of communication, notably the Straits of Malacca which connect the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. With ships and offshore units becoming increasingly connected and reliant more on software systems, cyber security has become an emerging new threat to maritime and shipping industry. This underscores the need for cooperation on awareness raising and sharing of best practices and experiences in order to mitigate cyber risks on maritime security.

Given the complex and wide-ranging nature of maritime security issues, Thailand enacted the Maritime National Interests Protection Act B.E. 2562 (2019) in order to promote better coordination

and consolidate responses to deal with emerging threats. By this law, Thailand Maritime Enforcement Coordinating Center has been upgraded to become Thailand Maritime Enforcement Command Center (THAI-MECC) with augmented role and greater authority in the management of maritime interests.

At the regional level, Thailand has participated in the Malacca Straits Coordinated Patrols since 2008, the air patrol “Eyes in the Sky” since 2009, as well as the secondment of rotating officers to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC). Moreover, Thailand has actively taken part in regional maritime security and cooperation fora such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Defence Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF) and the Expanded AMF (EAMF) with a view to pave the way towards substantive cooperation, particularly in the areas of capacity building, maritime domain awareness and maritime connectivity, through dialogues and discussions.

Thailand has embarked on a comprehensive reform of the fishery sector, resulting in the European Union’s lifting of a yellow card for import ban of seafoods products from Thailand in 2019. Thailand will continue in the fight against IUU fishing which includes the complete overhaul of the archaic legislation on fisheries and fishing vessels, putting in place effective monitoring, control and surveillance system, implementing credible traceability as well as enhancing law enforcement. Building on such success, Thailand continued to promote cooperation towards sustainable fisheries by means of strengthening ASEAN-led mechanisms and looks forward to the establishment of the ASEAN Network for Combating IUU Fishing (AN-IUU) in 2020.

Furthermore, Thailand has implemented and been part of developing several policy frameworks on a voluntary basis. These include the Regional Code of Conducts on Responsible Fisheries (RCCRF), the Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region, Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020. The implementation of these policy frameworks has been supported by the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) located in Thailand under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) mechanism. Accordingly, several fisheries cooperative frameworks have been developed by SEAFDEC in collaboration with AMS to facilitate cooperation toward the integration of the ASEAN Community.

On forced labour, Thailand has undertaken a significant step as part of the effort to improve labour protection standards in the fisheries sector by ratifying the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention No. 188, 2007 (C188) on 30 January 2019, becoming the first country in Asia to ratify the Convention. The Convention has come into force since 30 January 2020.

This underscores Thailand’s strong commitment in the prevention and suppression of forced labour, ensuring that the working conditions in domestic fishing industry meet ILO standards.

Promoting marine environmental protection, particularly on marine debris issue, has been Thailand's priority. Following the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Debris in ASEAN Region and the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris during the 34th ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, a great number of workshops and activities to implement the Declaration have taken place, including the Joint Inception Workshop for Supporting Marine Debris Reduction in ASEAN Member States – Drafting a Regional Action Plan, and Designing National Action Plans on Marine Debris on 29-30 October 2019 in Thailand and three workshops under the Joint Inception Workshop held in Singapore and by utilising video conferences in 2020.

4. Role of the ARF

National contributions to enhance the ARF and regional security

The ARF remains a primary forum to foster constructive and meaningful dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern in the Asia-Pacific region. Thailand takes note of the implementation rate of the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement as well as the challenges encountered due to unmeasurable action lines and limited expertise and human resources. In this regard, Thailand has actively engaged in the drafting of the Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025) and looks forward to the drafting of the ARF Work Plans under the respective priorities areas within the ARF process with a view to reaching more actionable outcomes and supporting their effective implementation.

In midst of evolving regional security dynamics, uncertainties, and security challenges both traditional and non-traditional, it is now more necessary than ever for the Asia-Pacific region to maintain and indeed strengthen cooperation. As for the Inter-sessional Year 2020-2021, Thailand looks forward to co-chairing the following activities in accordance with ARF's purposes and principles: (1) ARF Workshop on Women, Peace and Security (2) ARF Enhancement Training on Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Capacity Building and Comprehensive USAR Drill (3) ARF Training on Ferry Safety Capacity Building and (4) ARF Seminar on Marine Debris – Solid Waste Management and Scalable Solutions.

Future of the ARF

Through consistency and persistence, the ARF has been able to promote shared norms and lay out foundations for cooperation and better understanding of ARF Participants' views in the vast and diverse Asia-Pacific region. Overtime, the ARF has shown its potential to create political space for a more profound transformation. Thailand remains convinced that a central function of the ARF involved the adoption and implementation of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and stepping further to Preventive Diplomacy (PD) and conflict resolution. In this connection, concerted efforts to maintain momentum towards implementing PD is key to realising the ARF's full potential. PD has to

be implemented in line with universally recognised norms and principles of international law as well in tandem with ongoing efforts on CBMs, to ensure that the ARF moves ahead in order to be more effective, yet at a pace comfortable to all.

With the diverse expertise of the Participants, the ARF can serve as an inclusive platform for concrete and practical cooperation on issues affecting regional security, including public health emergencies, cybersecurity, maritime security, terrorism, transnational crime and disaster relief. Sharing of best practices and capacity-building activities should be encouraged to enable ARF Participants to respond to these challenges in a more timely and effective manner and help contribute to sustainable security in the Asia-Pacific region.

In addition, there is a need to strengthen coordination and streamline complementarities between the ARF and other ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ADMM-Plus and the EAS, so as to minimise duplication of work. The ARF can also exchange experiences with other regional security organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). More interactions between Track 1.5 and 2 entities, including ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs), the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), and the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) should be encouraged. This would allow ARF Participants to explore better ways to road-test approaches to entrenched problems.

Looking ahead, the ARF needs to effectively manage its three core priorities of promoting CBMs and PD, nurturing a culture of cooperation on practical security issues, and encouraging closer civilian-military dialogue and cooperation. In doing so, the ARF would be a testament to ASEAN's vision and determination in contributing to regional peace and security through inculcating norms, facilitating the gradual alignment of security perspectives, forging trust and confidence, and ultimately making full use of preventive diplomacy to cope with the region's emerging security challenges. As such, the ARF should continue to be an important component of the ASEAN-centred regional architecture and be able to cope with the region's familiar and emerging challenges.

UNITED STATES

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

For over 20 years, the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** has worked to advance stability and cooperation within the **Indo-Pacific** region. Traditional and non-traditional security concerns continue to pose a challenge to peace and stability in the region, making ongoing engagement through the ARF valuable. The ARF has been successful over time using open dialogue, tangible cooperation, civil society, **inclusivity, and results-driven initiatives** to find common understandings and solutions to emerging challenges. Through our membership in the ARF, the **United States affirms its commitment to finding inclusive and consensus-based solutions in accordance with respect for international law, human rights, and mutually shared values. ASEAN centrality** plays an essential role in the ARF process, and the United States fully supports a constructive, action and results-oriented ARF with ASEAN at its core. Furthermore, the United States believes that clearly defined, proactive approaches in the ARF process will yield the largest benefits to long-term **regional stability**. Therefore, we pledge to support the ARF to advance its goal of advancing from **Confidence Building to Preventive Diplomacy to Conflict Resolution**. Furthering coordination between the various ASEAN-centered multilateral fora and streamlined and focused engagements will continue to help the ARF progress to achieve its goals. Therefore, the United States urges all ARF participants to **engage with deliberateness, understanding, and vision** to deepen our cooperation and advance peace in the **Indo-Pacific region** for decades to come.

The United States-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security is a cornerstone of our strategic engagement in the Indo-Pacific. The partnership built under this treaty has promoted seamless cooperation on a wide range of regional and global security issues, leveraging the presence of United States forces to respond to security threats. The close cooperation between the Japanese Government and the United States in responding to the region's natural disasters demonstrates the importance of our relationship and our exceptional capabilities to respond quickly. We have taken steps to expand our security cooperation by revising the Guidelines for United States-Japan Defense Cooperation to ensure that the bilateral alliance continues its vital role in deterring conflict and advancing peace and security. We are also moving forward with the Japanese Government to implement our military base realignment and consolidation plan. Progress on force realignment will help us to establish a geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable force posture in the Indo-Pacific region – critical to United States national interests. We continue to work closely with the Japanese Government to address emerging challenges in space and cyberspace, and to strengthen our missile defense capabilities to counter threats from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In the ARF, Japan has played an active and strong leadership role on ICT and cyber issues, including as a co-chair of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Information and Communications Technology Security (ARF ISM on ICTs Security). The United States commends Japan for its strong commitment to add the collective voice of the influential G7 nations to discussions on maritime security challenges, humanitarian and disaster relief efforts,

peacekeeping operations, global economic resiliency, climate change, cyber policy issues, global health system improvements, and human rights policies in the Indo-Pacific.

Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) is the linchpin of regional security and represents our ironclad commitment to the defense of the ROK. We will continue to enhance ongoing work within the Alliance to deepen our comprehensive strategic partnership based on our common values and mutual trust. This past year continued diplomatic efforts to achieve the final, fully verified denuclearization of the DPRK and bring a lasting peace to the Korean Peninsula. We continue to make progress in advancing United States-Japan-ROK trilateral cooperation and enjoy a well-established cooperation in the area of missile defense. We continue to support trilateral information sharing on DPRK missile and nuclear capabilities. The United States has also prioritized efforts to enforce the multiple UNSCRs on the DPRK, while leading a multinational effort to counter illicit North Korean maritime activity. The United States and the ROK relationship has evolved into a global partnership. We are working together, not only on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, but also in places such as Lebanon, South Sudan, and off the coast of Somalia. This collaboration includes global health security, peacekeeping activities, stabilization and reconstruction activities, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) efforts.

Last year marked a highpoint in the United States-Australia relationship anchored by a number of events, including the highly successful September visit of PM Morrison to Washington DC, during which he and President Trump reaffirmed the importance of the alliance and deepened their relationship as likeminded leaders. The Australia-New Zealand-United States (ANZUS) security treaty is the foundation of defense and security cooperation between the United States and Australia. Interoperability with United States forces is a foundational part of Australia's military modernization across all domains (Air, Sea, Land, Space, and Cyberspace). The United States and Australia continue to work towards full implementation of the Force Posture Initiatives announced by President Obama and Prime Minister Gillard in 2011. Rotations of United States Marines and United States Air Force aircraft in Australia's Northern Territory improve interoperability and capacity through opportunities to train and exercise both bilaterally and multilaterally in the region. In a milestone, the number of United States Marines in Darwin reached 2,500 in 2019; their presence has evolved from a bilateral training activity into a force for conducting multilateral engagement with countries such as Tonga, Fiji, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, New Caledonia, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea, and Sri Lanka. The United States-Australia-Japan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) – which met at the minister level in August 2017 and again in August 2019 – also plays a positive role in enhancing regional stability and security. Talisman Sabre 2019, the largest ever bilateral defense exercise at more than 34,000 troops, showcased the breadth and depth of the Australia-United States mil-to-mil relationship and featured a ship visit to the USS Ronald Reagan by Prime Minister Morrison.

The United States-New Zealand bilateral relationship continues to strengthen and mature. Following the November 2016 visit of the USS SAMPSON, the first United States military vessel to pull into port in New Zealand in thirty years, the United States continues sending ships to New Zealand, most recently the USCGC POLAR STAR in early 2020. Our two nations conduct

joint military exercises more frequently and we continue seeking new opportunities to increase our interoperability. The annual Strategic Dialogue is the United States' top-level regular policy discussion with New Zealand. The two sides began holding formal defense policy dialogues in 2013 – most recently meeting in December 2019. The United States continues to value its partnership with New Zealand in advancing the ARF's capacity to address regional security challenges through Preventive Diplomacy; New Zealand's leadership on this issue is critical to maintaining the ARF's effectiveness and relevance as a regional security body.

The United States-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty continues to promote stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Our bilateral cooperation continues to contribute to regional peace and stability, with particular focus in the areas of maritime security, disaster response, and counterterrorism, countering violent extremism, peacekeeping operations and non-proliferation. The United States-Philippines Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, signed in 2014, supports a joint commitment to advancing mutual security interests by increasing our interoperability, supporting the Armed Forces of the Philippines' defense modernization plans, and improving our ability to respond to natural disasters in the region. The United States will continue to advance this enduring strategic alliance through high-level dialogues, such as the Bilateral Strategic Dialogue. Opportunities for progress also exist where we share a common interest in expanding regional defense and security cooperation through the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM)-Plus and other vehicles. The United States continues to support Philippine participation in joint exercises with other partners in the Southeast Asia and Pacific regions, as well as encouraging the Philippines to invite participation by neighboring countries in bilateral military exercises, such as Exercise Balikatan.

The United States and Thailand have been treaty allies for over 60 years and we continue to collaborate to address humanitarian and security issues such as counterterrorism, counternarcotics, disaster relief, health and infectious diseases, nonproliferation, and maritime security. The United States is committed to our enduring friendship with Thailand and the Thai people, and we welcome Thailand's role in Southeast Asia and the Mekong region. Our security partnership with Thailand is bilateral and regional in scope. The US-Thailand Joint Vision Statement 2020, signed by the two defense leaders last November, outlines the joint strategy between the two militaries to achieve our mutually shared goals into the next decade. In support of this strategy, Thailand and the United States co-host Cobra Gold, the Indo-Pacific region's largest annual multilateral military exercise. Since 1950, Thailand has received United States military equipment, essential supplies, training, and assistance in the construction and improvement of facilities. As part of our mutual defense cooperation, we have developed a joint military exercise program that engages all the services of each nation and counts an annual slate of more than 400 military exercises and engagements.

The United States and Indonesia are closely aligned in addressing strategic challenges as partners. In 2015, the United States and Indonesia forged a Strategic Partnership to expand cooperation on shared strategic interests in the region. As part of this partnership, our Defense Ministers signed a Joint Statement for Comprehensive Defense Cooperation that serves as a guide

to expand defense collaboration. The statement covers the following pillars of defense engagement: maritime cooperation, peacekeeping, HA/DR, defense joint research and development, countering transnational threats, and military professionalization. To commemorate the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2019, our Defense Ministers signed a Joint Statement that underscored our continuing strong partnership. To build capacity and readiness, the United States and Indonesian militaries conduct regular exercises, such as the Army-to-Army Exercise Garuda Shield, Air Force fighter jet exercise Cope West, and the Navy-to-Navy exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) in Indonesia. The United States also participates in the Indonesia-hosted multilateral naval exercise Komodo. In 2020, both countries agreed to hold 200 bilateral activities. The United States military values its close partnership with Indonesia in areas that closely align with United States security interests, in areas such as maritime security, counterterrorism and HA/DR. Indonesia continues to focus its professional military education on sending students to the United States National and Service War Colleges, United States Service Command and General Staff Colleges, and Maritime Security and Defense Professionalization courses. Over the last five years, the United States has invested over \$5M in institutional capacity building, providing over 400 hours of workshops and engaging 1,700 military and civilian officers to improve defense strategy, planning, budgeting and acquisition processes. For several years, the United States Coast Guard and Indonesian Maritime Security Agency have been closely working together on maritime security. As we look to the future, the United States aims to normalize relations with KOPASSUS Unit 81, invite Indonesia to joint training with the Australians in Darwin, and continue to provide top-of-the-line United States military equipment to fulfill Indonesian requests.

Singapore is a strong partner of the United States and an active participant —regionally and globally—to ensure peace and stability. Our two countries have close and long-standing defense ties with our militaries participating in several bilateral and multilateral exercises each year. In addition, Singapore hosts the rotational deployment of United States military aircraft and ships to conduct a variety of maritime patrol activities to counter piracy and terrorism, as well as provide HA/DR in the region. Singapore trains approximately 1,000 military personnel in the United States each year. Singapore was the first and only Asian country to have contributed both assets and personnel to the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Additionally, the Singapore Navy has commanded Combined Task Force 151 in the Gulf of Aden on numerous occasions. In 2019, we made significant progress in our bilateral relationship, including President Trump and Prime Minister Lee renewing the 1990 MOU governing our presence in Singapore; signing the Guam MOU to establish Singapore's training presence there; and congressional notification of Singapore planned F-35 purchase. In 2018, we further broadened our relationship by re-signing a memorandum of understanding for the Third Country Training Program (TCTP), an ASEAN capacity building initiative jointly managed by the United States and Singapore. Aimed at bridging development gaps in the region, the TCTP has provided technical assistance and training to over 1200 officials through more than 40 workshops since its inception in 2012. The TCTP curriculum includes non-traditional security threats such as cybersecurity and cybercrime. In October 2017 and again in September 2019, United States President Donald Trump and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong affirmed the strong and enduring partnership between the two countries. Recognizing the transboundary nature of cybersecurity threats, the two leaders affirmed the progress made under the 2016 MOU on

Cybersecurity Cooperation and their commitment to work together during Singapore's 2018 ASEAN chair year to secure the digital economy as a key engine for future economic growth. In the ARF, Singapore has played an active and strong leadership role on ICT and cyber issues, including as a co-chair of the newly established ISM on ICTs Security. As a like-minded partner on terrorism issues and as a co-chair of the ADMM-Plus Expert Working Group on Counterterrorism along with Australia, Singapore plays an important role in facilitating regional efforts against violent extremism. As the world's largest transshipment port, we work closely with Singapore on trade security and counter proliferation efforts, and Singapore continues with its three-year trial of the World Customs Organization's Cargo Targeting System (CTS).

The relationship between the United States and Malaysia has reached new heights in recent years, and the United States is eager to continue working with our Malaysian partners to increase regional and global security. A robust slate of bilateral and multilateral military exercises has enhanced our respective capabilities to promote regional security and respond to humanitarian disasters. The United States values Malaysia's past contributions to the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan, and we are working closely on maritime security and counter terrorism issues, including stopping the flow of foreign terrorist fighters joining ISIS. Malaysia also an important nonproliferation partner and the United States seeks to increase cooperation. The United States looks forward to working closely with Malaysia in advancing our shared priorities and interests in the context of promoting regional cooperation, peacekeeping capacity building, respect for international law, ASEAN centrality, and the maintenance of peace and stability. In the ARF, Malaysia has played an active and strong leadership role on ICT and cyber issues, including in the newly established ISM on ICTs Security. Malaysia also plays an active role in the ISM on CTTC, and hosted a United States-funded ARF workshop on aviation security and information sharing in July 2019.

United States and Vietnam relations have undergone a dramatic transformation since we normalized ties in 1995, and Vietnam has emerged as one of our strongest partners in the Indo-Pacific. Our robust partnership with Vietnam on political, security, economic, and people-to-people ties through a healthy set of annual dialogues spanning issues from human rights to security and defense relations, the United States and Vietnam are cooperating in areas such as security, peacekeeping operations, trade, nonproliferation, health, the environment, science and technology, education, and human rights. Defense ties in particular have grown rapidly over the past several years, embodied by the lifting of the lethal weapon sales ban in 2016 and the historic March 2018 and March 2020 visit of United States aircraft carriers to Danang. In 2019, the United States and Vietnam signed an MOU strengthening cooperation and joint efforts to combat wildlife trafficking as a serious transnational crime. Criminal justice sector ties have also developed rapidly since 2016, with numerous trainings, exchanges, and workshops to increase Vietnam's capacity and interoperability to combat transnational crime, effectively and fairly prosecute crimes, and enhance maritime security in support of a more free and open Indo-Pacific.

The United States-India strategic partnership stands upon shared values and complementary visions of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. In accordance with the National Security Strategy,

the United States Government (USG) views India as a leading partner in safeguarding a free and open Indo-Pacific. During his June 2019 visit to New Delhi, Secretary of State Pompeo outlined his priorities for deepening bilateral and regional cooperation with India. The United States holds regular consultations with India, including bilaterally, trilaterally with Japan, and in a quadrilateral format with Australia and Japan. President Trump met with Prime Minister Modi in India in February 2020 and the two leaders elevated the relationship to a “Global Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.” The December 2019 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, led by the Secretaries of State and Defense alongside their Indian counterparts, significantly deepened defense and strategic cooperation. These leader-level meetings and cabinet-level engagements are supported by more than 30 additional high-level dialogues and working groups ranging from defense, regional security, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and peacekeeping to trade, energy, oceans, health, cybersecurity, and education. The United States and India are collaborating to promote mutual prosperity and sustain the rules-based global order. United States-India defense cooperation continues to expand following the 2016 designation of India as a Major Defense Partner and we have finalized additional agreements to facilitate even greater military-to-military cooperation and interoperability such as collaboration on MDA information sharing as demonstrated by the assignment of a liaison officer to the Indian Navy Fusion Center for the Indian Ocean Region. The United States and Indian militaries are increasing the scope, complexity, and frequency of joint military exercises, including through the joint services TIGER TRIUMPH exercise which was held for the first time in November 2019. The U.S.-India-Japan MALABAR naval exercise regularly features joint maritime reconnaissance operations, carrier operations, and anti-submarine warfare exchanges. India has deepened its involvement with the biennial Rim-of-the-Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise hosted by U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and we welcome its continued participation. We also look forward to working with India and likeminded partners to deepen humanitarian and disaster relief cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and joint peacekeeping capacity-building efforts.

The United States seeks a constructive, results-oriented relationship with China. The United States does not seek to contain China, and does not believe in any so-called “clash of civilizations.” Rather, the United States recognizes that countries’ interest mesh and conflict over time. Therefore, we seek cooperation with China where our interests align, such as establishing a fair and reciprocal trade relationship. In other areas, we will compete to defend American interests and values like transparency, the rule of law, market-based economic competition, freedom of navigation and overflight, human rights, and religious freedom. We remain concerned with China’s articulated national strategy of military-civil fusion, which seeks to develop the Chinese military into the world’s most capable military, in part through exploitation of its access to the international science, technology and innovation ecosystem, in order to develop the hard power capabilities to press its regional agenda. China has openly committed to upholding these and other principles that underpin security and prosperity for the Indo-Pacific. The United States asks that China stand by its word and protect the rights of its people, rather than detaining over one million ethnic Muslims in Xinjiang, making unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, and engaging in disruptive trade practices. With regards to the South China Sea, the United States has a vital national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, respect for international law, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peace and stability. The Chinese military’s provocative reclamation

and militarization of disputed outposts in the South China Sea, its attempts to coerce and intimidate, and planned deployments of floating nuclear power plants in areas of competing maritime claims, threaten the sovereignty of other nations and undermine regional stability. The United States urges all claimants, including China, to manage and resolve disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. The United States-China economic relationship is very important, and the United States is committed to reaching meaningful, fully enforceable commitments to resolve China's structural issues.

United States defense engagement with Brunei continues to increase. In addition to our annual bilateral Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise, Brunei hosted the first exercise between United States and Bruneian land forces, Pahlawan Warrior in 2018. Brunei has also consistently participated in the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) multinational maritime exercise, and last year, Brunei joined the ASEAN-United States Maritime Exercise, along with the other ASEAN Member States. United States military officers have attended the Royal Brunei Armed Forces Staff College since January 2014, with the seventh student, a United States Army officer currently enrolled. We continue to look for ways to expand our military-to-military cooperation, including through increased rotational P-8 deployments and information sharing. On the back of diplomacy and defense cooperation, the promising United States-Brunei relationship aims to help secure mutual security interests in Southeast Asia.

The United States has cooperated with the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) in areas of mutual concern ranging from international peacekeeping, defense reform and professionalization to humanitarian assistance and disaster response. In early 2017, the Royal Cambodian Government suspended all military-to-military exercises with the United States. Since then they have conducted three joint military exercises with the People's Liberation Army. In response to democratic backsliding, we suspended the delivery of four Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) and have carefully considered the pace of restoring our military-military relationship until we see progress. In January 2019, DASD Felter participated in a Defense Policy Dialogue in Cambodia. In March 2019, INDOPACOM hosted the most recent Bilateral Defense Dialogue laying out the plans for limited cooperation in HA/DR as well as peacekeeping. We continue to cooperate in peacekeeping operations, humanitarian mine action, medical research, and United States Missing in Action personnel accounting.

United States defense engagement with Burma remains limited given legislative and policy restrictions. Engagement remains focused on academic exchanges in the areas of defense institution building and security sector reform, promoting civ-mil relations and protections of human rights, inclusion in the multilateral space, and key leader engagement. Other areas of engagement include humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, military medicine, maritime security, countering violent extremism, humanitarian de-mining, and peacekeeping operations to improve the country's capabilities in these areas.

Laos' chairmanship of ASEAN and the signing of a Comprehensive Partnership between the United States and the Lao PDR in 2016 provided new opportunities for bilateral engagement.

While we continue to address legacy issues, like the important Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) accounting mission and helping Laos manage contamination from unexploded ordnance (UXO), we are building a new relationship for the 21st century. The many facets of our cooperation - which include health, law enforcement, trade, education, environmental protection, military issues, cultural preservation, disaster preparedness, trafficking-in-persons and illegal drugs, entrepreneurship, energy, rule of law programs, and more - address the country's most critical and systemic needs.

The United States values defense cooperation with Timor-Leste in areas of mutual concern ranging from HA/DR response to maritime and border security to defense reform and professionalization.

During the 2018 Bilateral Defense Discussion, Timor-Leste's Minister of Defense requested United States assistance with rehabilitating Baucau Airfield. Timor-Leste demonstrated commitment to regional security by participating in a number of multinational exercises. In 2018, Timor-Leste participated in Pacific Angel with the United States Air Force, which included medical and engineer civil action projects. Timor-Leste also participated in Cooperation and Readiness Afloat (CARAT), which enhances their maritime security efforts. The Hari Hamutuk exercise enhances Timor-Leste's interoperability by partnering the F-FDTL with the United States, Australia, and Japan. In 2019, Timor-Leste participated in Pacific Partnership with the United States Navy, which included a HA/DR simulation exercise and symposium. A Navy Seabee detachment has an enduring presence in Timor-Leste since 2009 and partners with the F-FDTL, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education. The detachment recently completed its 95th construction project. The United States hosts a number of military officers and ministerial civil servants as part of the International Military and Education Training (IMET) program. This year, Timor-Leste will celebrate its first United States Army Command and General Staff College graduate. Timorese IMET graduates continue to fill roles of prominence and enhances defense professionalization. Additionally, the United States sponsors an English language-training course in Timor-Leste, which trains 40 military personnel each year.

Papua New Guinea (PNG)'s strategic location makes it a critical partner for the United States and allies in preserving the freedom of navigation in the South Pacific and in advancing other priorities of the Indo-Pacific Strategy.

PNG possesses the land area, population, and endowment of natural resources and relatively diversified economic base to serve as a policy bellwether within the South Pacific. PNG's security challenges include maritime domain awareness; border security; logistics and resourcing; and policing in districts experiencing high rates of crime, gender-based violence and/or intercommunal violence. The United States contributed to preparations for conducting the 2019 Bougainville referendum, which advanced the process launched by the 2001 Peace Agreement between Bougainville and the National Government. The United States continues to engage with partner countries, civil society organizations, and government officials as the National Government and the Autonomous Bougainville Government negotiate the referendum's results. United States and PNG security forces worked together on security planning and logistics throughout 2018, PNG's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) host year, and that engagement opened the door to additional defense cooperation in 2019. Since APEC, PNG and United States forces participated in regional exercises, worked to locate missing American World War II personnel, and advanced opportunities to plan for unexploded ordnance (UXO) removal.

Exchange opportunities ranged from conferences and workshops on common priorities like fisheries enforcement and port security – PNG will host an upcoming port security training in 2020-2021 as part of an ASEAN Regional Forum series – to leadership programs like Ranger School and the staff colleges. In 2019, the United States Department of Defense established a permanent Defense Attaché Office at the United States embassy in Port Moresby, and Papua New Guinea sent its first cadet to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York. Actions taken under the Indo-Pacific Strategy's security pillar complemented other activities that focus on economics (developing a welcoming climate for United States investment and development initiatives) and promote shared Western values (delivering opportunities for women; implementing people-to-people education and cultural exchanges; supporting the fight against HIV and polio; protecting environmental equities in PNG's rich biodiversity; and encouraging resiliency and disaster risk reduction).

The United States and the European Union are deepening collaboration with Asian partners to advance regional security and development, and to build regional institutions and support for the rule of law. The United States and the EU share common goals to promote human rights, freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, and respect for international law in the East China Sea and South China Sea. We are working together to encourage China to deepen its engagement with the international community, act in accordance with international law and standards, and participate responsibly in the global economic order. We are also coordinating our messages to condemn dangerous and unlawful DPRK provocations, uphold UNSC Resolutions, and pressure the regime to address its egregious human rights abuses. United States-EU cooperation has also played a critical role in supporting Myanmar's ongoing democratic transition, we joint-sponsored in March a UNHRC resolution calling for the creation of a fact-finding mission. We regularly collaborate with the EU through the Friends of the Lower Mekong mechanism as well as other senior-level forums. As Co-Chair of the ARF Intersessional Meeting on Maritime Security, the EU demonstrated a commitment to strengthening a regional MDA architecture using technology and fusions centers as a means to counter IUU fishing and to strengthen the international maritime rules based order; these efforts are aligned with United States capacity building and policy goals in Southeast Asia. As we rebalance our interests and investments to the Indo-Pacific, we look forward to continually expanding our coordination with the EU through the ARF and other regional fora.

The DPRK's UN-proscribed nuclear and ballistic missile programs remain a serious threat to international peace and security. Despite the DPRK's intransigence, the United States continues to try to set the conditions for the two countries to fulfill President Trump and Chairman Kim's shared commitment to the complete denuclearization of North Korea made in Singapore in 2018. The United States remains in close contact with the ROK and Japan to coordinate our DPRK engagement; our alliances remain ironclad, and ensure peace and stability in the region. Sanctions remain in full effect until North Korea denuclearizes. The full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions by the international community brought us to this moment, and will ensure a successful outcome of this process.

Additional global security issues, such as transnational crime (drug, human, and wildlife trafficking and other conservation crimes), the security situations in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan, the

threat posed by foreign terrorist fighters and violent extremists returning from the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, and global climate change, all continue to threaten regional and international stability. Many of these issues are transnational in nature and require concrete multilateral and national responses from ARF participants. Results-oriented cooperation has proven to be the best course of action for promoting peace and prosperity in the region. The continued strengthening and growth of the ARF's institutional capacity, enhanced bilateral and multilateral relationships, and burden-sharing efforts provide the best solution to these security concerns.

U.S.-Bangladesh relations have strengthened under the Indo-Pacific Strategy, which has increased U.S. support for maritime security. The United States is the largest donor in the Rohingya crisis response, providing \$820 million since 2017. U.S.-Bangladesh counter terrorism cooperation has improved security within the country, and the United States also continues to support Bangladesh's considerable contributions to international peacekeeping. There are four annual dialogues between the United States and Bangladesh - the Partnership Dialogue and the Security Dialogue led by the Department of State, Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement led by USTR and the Defense Dialogue led by INDOPACOM. In December 2019, then-Assistant Secretary of Defense Randal Schriver expanded the defense policy exchange as the highest ranked U.S. defense official to visit Dhaka in many years. The ARF is an important forum for the United States and Bangladesh to raise the welfare of one million Rohingya in Cox's Bazar and pressure Burma to create the conditions for voluntary, safe and dignified returns.

The U.S.-Sri Lanka security and economic relationship continues to grow. Key security activities include U.S. Navy port calls, a partnership with the Sri Lanka Navy to establish a Sri Lankan Marine Corps, and exercises with the Sri Lankan Navy and Air Force to build cooperation on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and maritime security issues toward a safe and prosperous Indo-Pacific. Following the tragic 2019 Easter bombings where ISIS-inspired terrorists targeted international hotels and churches and killed over 250 people, the United States assisted Sri Lanka to investigate and prosecute those involved and strengthen counterterrorism cooperation more broadly to prevent recurrence. Additionally, former U.S. Coast Guard cutters, now SLNS Samudura and SLNS Gajabahu play a vital role in combating illegal narcotics trade and protecting Sri Lankan sovereignty. U.S. advisors and assistance continues to assist Sri Lanka in promoting transparency procurement processes, enhance the rule of law, and support government and civil society efforts to promote good governance, accountability, justice, reconciliation, and human rights.

2. National Security and Defense Policy

Since 2017, the United States has engaged with the region through its Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy. As stated in the 2017 National Security Strategy, the United States focuses on four vital, national interests-organized as the strategy's four pillars:

1. Protect the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life
2. Promote American prosperity
3. Preserve peace through strength
4. Advance American influence

The NSS and its four themes are guided by a return to principled realism.

The strategy is realist because it is clear-eyed about global competition: It acknowledges the central role of power in world affairs, affirms that sovereign states are the best hope for a peaceful world, and clearly defines our national interests. It is principled because it is grounded in the knowledge that promoting American values is key to spreading peace and prosperity around the globe.

As the United States continues to pursue the four themes, it will continue to work with allies and partners to manage the challenges we see throughout the Indo-Pacific:

- The ongoing threat of the DPRK's WMD and ballistic missile nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs and proliferation and its dangerously provocative behavior;
- Longstanding disputes over territory, associated maritime zones, and resources, including in the South China Sea and East China Sea;
- The menace of terrorism and its trans-regional networks – including foreign fighters returning from and departing to conflict zones away from the Asian-Pacific region, terrorist financing, and violent extremist messaging. Addressing the problem of terrorist radicalization and recruitment is a fundamental component of a holistic strategy;
- To limit the spread of both homegrown and international terrorist groups;
- The great human and economic toll of natural disasters like the April 2015 Earthquake in Nepal, the 2015 flooding in Myanmar, and the 2016 earthquake in Aceh, Indonesia.
- Illicit trafficking in persons, weapons, drugs, and dangerous materials including weapons of mass destruction;
- The global threat of pandemic disease that can spread around the world;
- Environmental degradation and the threat posed by climate change;
- Disruptive and potentially destructive activities by State actors in outer space; and
- Malicious activities by state and non-state actors in cyberspace.

Ensuring that the United States is prepared to prevent conflict requires a combination of defense, diplomacy, and development. These tools of statecraft enable the United States to strengthen the capability of its allies and partners to help preserve stability. The United States remains committed to retaining security capabilities to deter conflict, reassure allies, and if necessary, defeat potential adversaries. These objectives require the United States to be capable of responding to a broad range of challenges that are likely to employ a mix of approaches and capabilities.

Resources:

<http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/2017.pdf>

a) Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

A broad range of data is publicly available from the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller) at <http://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/Budget2017/>

i. Total defense expenditure on annual basis

a) The Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Total Defense Budget Request was \$639.1 billion, which is \$33.1 billion (about 0.5 percent) more than the FY 2017 enacted level of \$606 billion, to finance base and overseas contingency operations.

b)

Figure 1-1. Department of Defense Budget

\$ in billions	FY 2016	FY 2017/ ¹ Request	FY 2018 Request	FY17 - FY18 Change
Base	521.3	521.8	547.5	+52.8
OCO	58.9	65.0	64.6	-0.4
Total	580.3	586.7	639.1	+52.4

Discretionary budget authority

Numbers may not add due to rounding

^{1/} includes the Continuing Resolution, Military Construction and Family Housing Enactment, and the Security Assistance Appropriations Act. Does not include adjustment to reflect the March for Additional Appropriations.

The FY 2018 budget request is designed to protect capabilities that are most closely aligned with the defense strategy’s objectives to protect the homeland, build security globally, and project power and win decisively. The budget also maintains a ready force, continues to take care of service members and their families, extends enterprise reforms that control costs, and seizes opportunities to build the future force by developing new and innovative operational concepts and dominating technological frontiers including undersea, cyber, space, electronic warfare, and other advanced capabilities. In developing the FY 2018 budget and planning for future years, the Department supports progress toward achieving and maintaining full-spectrum combat readiness by all four Military Departments.

Further information regarding the DoD National Defense Budget can be found at:

http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/fy2018_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf

ii. Defense expenditure as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

The budget for national defense was 3.3% of GDP in FY 2018.

Table 7-7: DEFENSE SHARES OF ECONOMIC AND BUDGETARY AGGREGATES (Continued)
(Percentages of Indicated Totals)

Fiscal Year	% of Federal Spending		% of Net Public Spending (Federal, State & Local)		DoD as % of Public Employment				DoD as % of Total Labor Force	% of Gross Domestic Product	
	DoD	National Defense	DoD	National Defense	Military & Civilian		Civilian Only			DoD	National Defense
					Federal	Federal, State & Local	Federal	Federal, State & Local			
2009 Base	14.0		9.0							3.4	
2009 Total	18.1	18.8	11.6	12.1	51.3	9.1	25.4	3.1	1.4	4.4	4.6
2010 Base	14.6		9.4							3.4	
2010 Total	19.3	20.1	12.4	12.9	51.4	9.4	26.3	3.3	1.4	4.5	4.7
2011 Base	14.6		9.4							3.4	
2011 Total	18.8	19.6	12.1	12.6	52.6	9.6	27.7	3.5	1.5	4.4	4.6
2012 Base	14.9		9.4							3.3	
2012 Total	18.4	19.2	11.7	12.1	52.6	9.6	27.9	3.5	1.4	4.1	4.2
2013 Base	14.7		9.2							3.1	
2013 Total	17.6	18.3	10.9	11.4	52.3	9.4	27.4	3.4	1.4	3.7	3.8
2014 Base	14.3		8.9							2.9	
2014 Total	16.5	17.2	10.3	10.7	51.9	9.2	27.2	3.3	1.4	3.4	3.5
2015 Base	13.2		8.4							2.7	
2015 Total	15.3	16.0	9.6	10.1	51.5	9.1	27.1	3.3	1.3	3.1	3.3
2016 Base	13.3		8.5							2.8	
2016 Total	14.7	15.4	9.4	9.8	50.4	8.9	26.3	3.3	1.3	3.1	3.2
2017 Base	12.7		8.2							2.7	
2017 Total*	14.0	14.8	9.1	9.6	50.7		26.7			3.0	3.1
2018 Base	13.7		8.9							2.8	
2018 Total	14.8	15.9	9.5	10.2	51.1		27.0			3.0	3.3

* Department of Defense figures for FY 2017 consist of continuing resolution funding, the military construction/family housing enactment, and the Security Assistance Appropriations Act. They do not include the Request for Additional Appropriations.

NOTES:

Beginning in FY 2001, some labor force data are not strictly compatible with earlier data, due to population adjustments and other changes.

These figures are calculated from data in the OMB Historical Tables, past Economic Reports of the President, U.S. Census Bureau data, and data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Certain non-Defense data were not available past 2016.

All fiscal years 2007 and prior include any enacted war or supplemental funding.

Further information can be found at:

http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/FY18_Green_Book.pdf

iii. Total number of personnel in national armed forces and its percentage in population

Table 3-2: MILITARY PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATIONS
(End Strength)

	FY 2016	FY 2017 ¹			FY 2018		
		Base	OCO	Total	Base	OCO	Total
Active Military Personnel²							
Authorization Request	1,301,444	1,305,900		1,305,900	1,314,000		1,314,000
Enacted Authorization	1,301,444	1,305,900		1,305,900	To Be Determined		
Current Estimate							
Army	475,400	476,000		476,000	476,000		476,000
Navy	324,557	323,900		323,900	327,900		327,900
Marine Corps	183,604	185,000		185,000	185,000		185,000
Air Force	317,883	321,000		321,000	325,100		325,100
Total Active Military	1,301,444	1,305,900		1,305,900	1,314,000		1,314,000
Selected Reserve Personnel							
Authorization Request	811,668	813,200		813,200	815,900		815,900
Enacted Authorization	811,668	813,200		813,200	To Be Determined		
Current Estimate							
Army							
Army Reserve	198,395	199,000		199,000	199,000		199,000
Army National Guard	341,589	343,000		343,000	343,000		343,000
Total Army	539,984	542,000		542,000	542,000		542,000
Navy	57,980	58,000		58,000	59,000		59,000
Marine Corps	38,453	38,500		38,500	38,500		38,500
Air Force							
Air Force Reserve	69,364	69,000		69,000	69,800		69,800
Air National Guard	105,887	105,700		105,700	106,600		106,600
Total Air Force	175,251	174,700		174,700	176,400		176,400
Total Selected Reserve	811,668	813,200		813,200	815,900		815,900
Total Current Estimate of Military Personnel Authorizations	2,113,112	2,119,100		2,119,100	2,129,900		2,129,900

1. FY 2017 reflects authorized end strength, and does not include projected end strength submitted in the Request for Additional Appropriations.

2. Does not include full-time Guard or Reserve end strength.

Further information can be found at:

http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/FY18_Green_Book.pdf

3. National Contributions to Regional Security:

The United States remains committed to promoting peace, stability, and consensus in the region by contributing support and participating in a broad range of security activities. The United States specifically focuses on contributing to the following regional issues:

i. Counterterrorism

The United States is actively engaged in multilateral and regional efforts to strengthen regional partners and allies and to promote continued regional cooperation on counterterrorism measures. The human atrocities and extreme acts of violence committed by ISIS are not isolated to the Middle East. ISIS has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to direct and inspire attacks in Europe and Asia, including the horrific attacks in Indonesia, Philippines, and Sri Lanka. It is critical that United States and coalition partners cooperate purposefully to counter ISIS and its violent extremist outgrowths.

The Indo-Pacific is not immune to terrorist influence either; therefore, the United States seeks to encourage and support strategic counterterrorism policies in the region. This approach places a premium on building the institutional capacities of states to promote the rule of law and eliminate the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

The United States is deeply concerned about ISIS's continued influence in recruiting followers from Southeast Asia and the terrorist group's ability to inspire attacks in the region. We encourage ASEAN member states to increase both internal and external information sharing on known and suspected terrorists (KST), particularly by requiring the provision and use of Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record (API/PNR) data on all airline passengers and by connecting all points of entry to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system (I-24/7). To help ensure passenger screening against INTERPOL I-24/7 law enforcement databases, the United States is prepared to assist ASEAN member states in connecting priority ports of entry and automating the reporting of stolen and lost travel documents to INTERPOL. The United States encourages global commitment to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 2396 on countering terrorist travel and addressing the challenges of returning and relocating (UNSCR) 2396 on foreign terrorist fighters and their accompanying families, which includes obligations to strengthen border security, watchlisting, and information sharing.

The United States encourages states to implement the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy and the recommendations of the Secretary General's Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism, including developing national action plans to take a whole-of-society approach to combating this security threat. The United States works closely with regional partners at the United Nations and in regional fora such as the ARF, ADMM-Plus, Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG), and APEC to strengthen counterterrorism capabilities. These include efforts to support regional implementation of the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy and international instruments related to countering terrorism. The United States also cooperates closely with many regional partners in the APEC Counter Terrorism Working Group (CTWG), which contributes to regional security by conducting capacity building projects on issues including countering foreign terrorist fighter travel, strengthening border security, critical infrastructure security and resilience and soft target security, and countering the financing of terrorism. The USG, through USAID, supports ASEAN to establish a comprehensive, multidisciplinary work plan for the implementation of the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism under the Manila Declaration, called the PCRVE Work Plan (2019-2025). USAID provided technical experts to work closely with the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime Working Group on Counterterrorism (SOMTC WG-CT) to draft the work plan. The drafting process included two regional consultations amongst relevant ASEAN stakeholders (14 ASEAN Bodies) at a meeting in Bali, Indonesia April 4th -5th and amongst civil society organizations in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia July 2nd -3rd (involving 21 CSOs from the region).

The United States also serves with the Russian Federation as the Co-Chair of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). The GICNT is a voluntary partnership of 89 nations and six official observers, and its mission is to strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond

to nuclear terrorism. To advance its mission, the GICNT has conducted 11 senior-level meetings and more than 100 other multilateral activities, including workshops and tabletop exercises, across the GICNT focus areas of nuclear detection, forensics, and response and mitigation. The Republic of Korea hosted the GICNT Beacon Fire Workshop in October 2019. Through panel discussions and a tabletop exercise, law enforcement, medical response and public health, and crisis communication experts from 21 countries, including 6 ASEAN partners, and the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) addressed sectoral and cross-sectoral radiological policies and procedures for preparing for and responding to a radiological dispersal device (RDD) terrorist attack.

The ARF Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Work Plan contributes to regional security through work in its priority areas – Illicit Drugs; Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN); and Counter Radicalization. The United States is co-leading efforts to combat illicit drugs and CBRN. In February 2017, the United States partnered with the Philippines to sponsor an ARF workshop on medium and long-term support for victims of terrorism. We aspire to see the progress made at both of these workshops continue in the future. Building upon the United States-Philippines-Canada co-sponsored March 2018 CBRN Risk Mitigation workshop, the United States will partner with the Philippines and ROK to conduct an ARF TTX on Response Capabilities to CBRN Incidents in 2020.

The United States Department of State works closely with the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the FBI-administered Terrorist Screening Center (TSC) to support its mission in protecting the United States by promoting effective aviation and border security screening with our foreign partners through enhanced information sharing. For example, an important effort in our counterterrorism work is Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6 (HSPD-6), an initiative on domestic and international information sharing signed following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Through HSPD-6, the State Department works with the TSC to negotiate the exchange of KST identity and encounter data with foreign partners to enhance our mutual border screening efforts. HSPD-6 arrangements establish institutionalized operational mechanisms for the reciprocal sharing of unclassified, biographic KST identities between the United States and select foreign partners. They also facilitate the reporting of encounters with these identities, such as consular and border screening events, between partners. Such arrangements mutually enhance United States and foreign partners' border security by helping prevent and interdict the travel of KSTs while further strengthening our counterterrorism cooperation at a strategic policy level in line with obligations established under UNSCR 2396.

The TSC, as the United States government entity that manages the United States watchlist, implements these arrangements once signed with foreign partners. These arrangements allow partners to screen identities against a subset of United States government-sourced KST data, which can help detect and prevent terrorist travel by creating an extra layer of security on top of the data a country may otherwise use for screening. HSPD-6 arrangements are a pre-requisite to participate in the Visa Waiver Program. To date, the United States has almost 80 such arrangements in place. The United States Department of State also works closely with its partners at the United States Department of Homeland Security to strengthen global aviation security by engaging foreign

partners in bolstering aviation screening at last point of departure airports with direct flights to the United States to identify and prevent known or suspected terrorists from boarding commercial flights. The United States has also provided bilateral counterterrorism financing for capacity building assistance to several nations in the region, including the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia. The United States continues to support the enabling of its partners and allies to secure the region effectively from potential terrorist threats.

ii. **Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament**

The United States seeks to strengthen the objectives and obligations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in ways that are safe, secure, and supportive of the nonproliferation regime. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure, and effective arsenal to deter potential adversaries and assures United States treaty allies and other security partners that they can count on the extended deterrence commitments undertaken by the United States. In this context, the United States is also committed to arms control that advance United States, allied, and partner security and believes nuclear arms control agreements for a new era must expand in terms of both the countries and weapon systems involved.

While the United States has reduced the number and salience of nuclear weapons, Russia and China did not follow our lead. They have moved in the opposite direction. China, in particular, is implementing a rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal, which will likely at least double in size this decade. This is why the United States is attempting to engage China bilaterally, and in trilateral arms control with Russia, to strengthen stability and predictability, increase mutual understanding and confidence, and prevent the development of an arms race that would benefit none and endanger all. China's continuing refusal to reduce nuclear risks through dialogue with the United States and unwillingness to alter its non-transparent nuclear build-up call into question its intentions, and have necessitated a renewed focus on our deterrence and defense posture in the Indo-Pacific.

The NPT remains critical to our common security. In this NPT review cycle, we seek consensus on the need to strengthen and maintain the NPT as the cornerstone of an effective nonproliferation regime that allows for the possibility of further progress on nuclear disarmament and expanding access to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We seek the universalization of the Additional Protocol to ensure that IAEA safeguards remain effective and robust and to uphold the Treaty's integrity by addressing noncompliance.

In 2019, representatives from 43 countries participated in the first two meetings of the United States organized Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) Working Group (CEWG). During these meetings, the participants deliberated on ways to address challenges in the security environment and improve prospects for disarmament negotiations. As a result of these deliberations, the CEWG participants established three subgroups to identify ways to improve the international security environment in order to overcome obstacles to further progress on nuclear disarmament. The United States supports the long-term goal of creating an environment conducive to further nuclear disarmament negotiations and fashioning a world in which nuclear weapons are

no longer necessary to deter aggression and maintain global strategic stability. The CEWG provides a forum for the meaningful and realistic dialogue that is necessary to address the underlying security concerns that cause countries to rely on nuclear weapons for their security and to pursue effective measures that will help create such an environment. This approach stands in contrast to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which ignores the security concerns that make nuclear deterrence necessary, contains no provisions for verifying nuclear disarmament, and will only further polarize the international community on matters of nonproliferation and disarmament. The United States does not support the TPNW, which will not lead to the elimination of a single nuclear weapons, nor enhance any state's security. The five NPT nuclear-weapon states (P5) have met regularly to discuss nuclear policy, promote mutual confidence, and discuss issues related to the fulfillment of the NPT.

The United States supports the expansion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy in conformity with the NPT and according to international standards of safety, security, and nonproliferation) and believes it can be a clean, reliable source of energy for states seeking to meet increasing energy demands. The next generation of reactors, including small modular reactors (SMRs), offer a new nuclear power pathway for countries. These technologies have economic and safety advantages, can be right sized for the grid capacity, and offer a range of applications beyond electricity generation. The United States will continue its technical outreach and partnership to raise awareness of SMRs' benefits, diverse applicability and related nuclear security, safety and safeguards considerations. As part of this effort, the United States will continue to raise awareness among regional partners of nuclear nonproliferation and security concerns, including but not limited to the anticipated deployment of floating nuclear power plants in the Indo-Pacific region. Starting in 2020, United States capacity-building cooperation with agreed ASEAN partners in this topical area proceeds under newly launched pilot projects as part of the Foundational Infrastructure for Responsible Use of SMR Technology (FIRST) program.

We maintain, however, that such efforts must be conducted in a transparent manner and in full cooperation with the IAEA. The application of nuclear technologies via IAEA technical cooperation programs can also stimulate development in the areas of food security, hydrology, and human health. We believe that adopting the IAEA's Additional Protocol (AP) to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement is an important step that states can take to strengthen IAEA safeguards and the global nuclear nonproliferation regime. We call upon all ARF participants who have not yet done so to sign and ratify the AP and, as appropriate, to modify or rescind any Small Quantities Protocol based on the original outdated model. We stand ready to help states build capacities to fully implement the AP. As noted in the November 2013 Joint ASEAN-United States Leader's Statement, the ARF also can play an important role in helping states comprehend the AP and overcome any challenges to its implementation.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, as well as illicit spread of related materials, threaten the security of the entire international community. The United States seeks to strengthen partner capacity development and implementation of strategic trade control (STC) systems, detect and target illicit procurement networks that utilize regional ports

to obtain strategic goods. Principally, the United States will continue to build key relationships and partner capacity on implementing sanctions implementation, enforcing export controls to secure the strategic supply chain, securing key ports of entry/transit, and disrupting illicit activities in the financial, cyber, and maritime shipping arenas. In 2019, the United States partnered with Singapore to host a regional tabletop exercise on how to disrupt DPRK proliferation networks in order to better understand and counter proliferation techniques. Additionally, the United States supports regional workshops for ASEAN countries to help each government make tangible enhancements to the legal-regulatory foundations of their STC systems that can positively contribute to STC licensing and enforcement, as well as nonproliferation sanctions implementation. These improvements will help reduce risks of illicit proliferation in each country and throughout Southeast Asia.

An additional avenue that the United States uses to support regional approaches in addressing global proliferation challenges is raising awareness about UNSCR 1540 requirements. The resolution's provisions involve protecting WMD, their means of delivery, and related materials from unregulated acquisition by non-state actors, and detecting the unregulated transfer of these goods between national borders. The United States and its main regional allies have taken measures to meet all of their obligations under UNSCR 1540, measures and their implementation continue to improve as witnessed in their submissions to the 1540 Committee. Additionally the United States will continue to partner with other donor countries and entities to build capacity in those countries that request cooperation to implement UNSCR 1540. The United States has also supported efforts in the ARF toward this end and has promoted greater cooperation between the ARF and the UN Security Council 1540 Committee to ensure that regional partners are able to fulfill their UN obligations.

One international effort that helps states to meet the goals of UNSCR 1540 is the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which to date, 107 countries have endorsed. Many ARF participants have already endorsed the PSI, profiling their concrete commitment to regional peace and security to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials in the region. South Korea hosted the PSI Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER), Exercise Eastern Endeavour, in July 2019. This exercise built on the momentum from the Japan PSI APER Exercise Pacific Shield. The United States encourages all countries concerned with the threat WMD proliferation poses to international peace and security to endorse the PSI.

The United States has partnered with ASEAN members in the past year to support implementation of UNSCRs through joint law enforcement investigations, information sharing, the exchange of expertise and best practices, and capacity building engagements. In particular, in September 2019 in Singapore, the United States and Singapore co-sponsored the third Expert Meeting on Maritime Security and DPRK Sanctions and jointly conducted outreach to the maritime industry on compliance with UN sanctions. The United States has and will continue to engage public and private sector counterparts in ASEAN countries to implement national- and institution-level strategies to limit, detect, and disrupt DPRK money laundering and defend against DPRK cyber actors that seek to exploit financial institutions.

iii. Transnational Crime

The United States augments the capabilities of regional actors and supports the region on a broad range of transnational crime issues through United States federal, state, and local experts and international and nonprofit organizations. These programs include capacity building for law enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges to investigate and prosecute transnational crime cases, cooperate during interdiction efforts on land and in maritime environments, and to facilitate international legal cooperation. Capacity building efforts often focus on specialized topics such as combatting drug, human, and wildlife trafficking; corruption; money laundering; and financial crimes; as well as supporting reforms to implement international standards, such as the UN Convention against Corruption and UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. In addition, the United States has taken steps to protect the economic interaction in the region against cybercrime and intellectual property piracy, and to disrupt the financial activities of transnational criminals and facilitators.

The International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Bangkok, Thailand continues to deliver a platform for developing relationships with United States law enforcement officers through advanced training for civil law enforcement development to ASEAN member states and other members. The ILEA is an important platform to address areas of mutual concern, including transnational organized crime, cybercrime, financial crimes, corruption, and all forms of trafficking. The ILEA promotes regional law enforcement networks among our partner states, builds relationships with the United States law enforcement community, and increases institutional capacity in an effort to address the aforementioned threats and promote the rule of law. Alumni often serve at the respective countries' highest ranks in the criminal justice sector, including senior police and prosecutors, Supreme Court justices, and parliamentarians. Since 1999, ILEA Bangkok has trained over 16,000 law enforcement professionals throughout Southeast Asia, thus creating and strengthening international operational networks. The ILEA Bangkok alumni are part of the global ILEA alumni network of over 70,000.

Illicit drug production and trafficking are also challenges for all ARF member nations. There are vast networks of highly organized drug trafficking organizations that span the region and threaten regional and United States national security through their production and trafficking of illicit drugs and their precursors. The United States government supports partner nation capabilities to disrupt the use, production, and trafficking of these substances by sharing best practices for demand reduction programs, and providing training to improve capacity to detect and interdict them. These efforts ensure countries can fight international drug trafficking and related criminal activities in their home countries. In 2019, the East Asia Summit leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to effectively address and counter the world drug problem through a statement on combating the spread of illicit drugs. We further encourage all countries who have not yet done so to implement the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1953, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, which constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing has direct food, economic and environmental security impacts on coastal communities and their nations' rule of law, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. The Indo-Pacific region houses the world's most productive and biodiverse marine ecosystems that provide food and income to over 200 million people in the region; however, unsustainable fishing practices threaten the region's biodiversity, food security and livelihoods. IUU-fished seafood accounts for as much as 30 percent of the global seafood harvest. In Southeast Asia, severely overfished waters in the Gulf of Thailand have made it almost impossible for vessels to operate in their historic fishing grounds. Since 1961, the average catch in Thai waters has decreased by 81 percent. Fishing operations have moved increasingly farther out to sea - and remain there for longer periods. Fisheries depletion raises the cost of fishing and exerts downward pressure on wages. Fewer people are willing to work under these conditions, which promotes human trafficking for fishing operations. To further the fight against IUU fishing, the United States is working with international partners to improve global fisheries enforcement by strengthening efforts to detect, identify, interdict, and adjudicate illegal fishing activity and the illicit networks that support it through enhanced cooperation and information-sharing. In 2018 and again in 2019, the United States and Indonesia co-chaired workshops on law enforcement coordination and maritime data analysis tactics and techniques to identify unusual and potentially illegal fishing and vessel activity to enable countries to utilize analytical tools and processes to combat IUU fishing and crime that may be associated with IUU fishing. Another model of this type of effort is the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI), a partnership between the United States Coast Guard, Navy, and local law enforcement agencies in Oceania. OMSI bolsters maritime domain awareness, increases law enforcement presence, and expands at-sea law enforcement capabilities by matching available Navy ships with Coast Guard law enforcement expertise and local enforcement authorities. The Oceans project, supported by USAID, strengthens regional cooperation to combat IUU fishing, promotes sustainable fisheries and conserves marine biodiversity in the Asia-Pacific region. Through this project, the US works with public and private sector partners to strengthen electronic catch documentation and traceability (eCDT) that ensures fisheries resources are legally caught and properly labeled. The USG and partners trained over 1,200 regional stakeholders across 12 ASEAN and Coral Triangle countries in program technical areas, including electronic catch documentation and traceability, sustainable fisheries management, public-private partnership development, and human welfare and gender equity. The partnership has leveraged over \$1.4 million in public and private sector partner funding for increased sustainability of program interventions, including from the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, Thai Union, and Inmarsat. In addition, the USG is conducting comprehensive research to identify and assess opportunities for ASEAN to support the advancement of a regional multi-sectoral strategy to address the challenges associated with forced labor in the fishing industry and to propose ways in which development partners might best support those opportunities. The report from the study is currently under review and it will be finalized this year so the consideration for recommended interventions for ASEAN can be proposed in 2021.

In collaboration with the Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center, USAID supported a workshop to explore how existing catch documentation and seafood traceability data could be exchanged within the region to prevent illegitimate trade.

The United States commends progress on the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons (ACTIP), especially women and children, which entered into force on March 8 following ratification by the Philippines. Now that ACTIP has come into force, we urge all member states to follow the lead of those who have already ratified and promptly deposit instruments of ratification. We also encourage all countries to ratify and to implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. The United States and ASEAN enjoy a strong partnership on combating trafficking in persons – a partnership that we look forward to continuing. We seek to continue this partnership and have presented proposals for future collaboration to the SOMTC. We are still committed to assisting member states in developing and implementing victim compensation schemes and funds, as prescribed under ACTIP. The USG continues to support ASEAN on the implementation of the ACTIP through its technical cooperation on developing the ASEAN Regional Guidelines and Procedures to Address the Needs of Victims of TIP, which was launched in April 2019. In collaboration with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), USAID supported the drafting of a Regional Model Toolkit (RMT) to provide guidance to practitioners across ASEAN. The RMT has been translated into six ASEAN countries languages (Burmese, Indonesia, Khmer, Laotian, Thai and Vietnamese) and presented at the ACWC in early 2020. The RMT in the AMS language will be the main source to conduct national-level capacity building efforts in select AMS start from this year.

Through the USAID Asia regional Counter Trafficking In Persons (ASIA CTIP) program and country-specific activities in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, the USG addresses transnational and regional challenges to combat trafficking in persons, building upon existing USG-supported CTIP activities in the region. The program strengthens regional platforms for governments, NGOs, and service providers to effectively cooperate across borders and ensures that assistance and support can be provided and accessed in countries of transit and destination. USAID also partners with United States companies to promote industry-wide adoption of practices that reduce opportunities and incentives for cheap, exploited, and trafficked labor.

We encourage all countries to ratify and to implement the Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

In 2017, the United States supported a regional migration project, implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), to build the capacity of national and local governments in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and Malaysia to contribute to the protection and increased resilience of vulnerable in vulnerable situations, including those in crisis situations. Objectives include helping government and non-government stakeholders to identify migrants' needs and deliver tailored, protection-oriented support; empowering migrants to avail themselves of humanitarian assistance; and building governments' capacity to implement harmonized and evidence-based policies and collaborate through regional mechanisms.

In 2017, the United States continued to support a Secretariat and capacity-building activities in Southeast Asia (as well as Central America) implemented by IOM Headquarters in Geneva to

encourage countries to adopt and implement the “Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster” (“Guidelines”). The Guidelines were the culmination of the 2014-2016 Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative, co-chaired by the United States and the Philippines, and assisted by a working group of countries and stakeholders, including, among others, Australia, Bangladesh, and the European Commission. The Guidelines are the product of extensive consultations with a wide range of governments, civil society, international organizations, and the private sector; they are a voluntary tool that States and others can follow in situations where migrants become stranded because of conflict or a serious natural disaster.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

ARF Dialogue Partners experience a variety of natural disasters, such as typhoons, floods, and earthquakes, as well as manmade crises, including civil conflict, which often result in significant financial and human costs. In response to these events, the United States continues to provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations in the region, while simultaneously working to reduce disaster vulnerability in communities and building national response capacities. In Fiscal year 2018, the U.S Agency for International Development’s Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) responded to thirteen natural disasters in Asia, and to complex emergencies in three ARF countries, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Pakistan, and worked with agencies from across the USG to meet the immediate needs of vulnerable populations.

In Pakistan, USAID/Food For Peace (USAID/FFP) provided \$57 million to World Food Programme (WFP) for food assistance activities in Pakistan. Out of this total, WFP used \$13.5 million to support the local and regional procurement and distribution of food and \$43.5 million for ‘twinning’—the milling, fortifying, and distribution of GoP-provided wheat. WFP assisted over 2.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), and returnees in northwestern Pakistan, including highly sensitive and volatile areas along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border. The U.S Department of State provided more than \$22 million to support health and protection programs for conflict-affected Pakistanis. USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$14 million in FY 2015 for emergency relief in Pakistan, an ARF participant since 2004. Furthermore, USAID/OFDA provided \$5.7 million of funding for Responding to Pakistan’s Internally Displaced (RAPID)—a response fund used countrywide to respond to disaster and conflict-related displacement. USAID/OFDA supported livelihoods, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance to drought and flood-affected people. USAID/OFDA also provided logistics, shelter, and WASH assistance to IDPs and refugee returnee populations.

In Myanmar, USAID/FFP supports WFP to distribute locally and regionally purchased food or cash based-transfers to approximately 172,000 conflict-displaced persons and other vulnerable communities in Rakhine, Kachin, and Northern Shan States. 146,000 beneficiaries are targeted with general food distribution and 26,000 beneficiaries will receive relief cash-based transfers in the areas with accessible markets and functioning cash infrastructure. USAID/FFP’s support through WFP includes targeted distribution of fortified blended foods to children under five and pregnant and lactating women. In FY 2016 and 2017, USAID/FFP contributed \$13.4 million to WFP to support food assistance activities benefiting IDPs and vulnerable communities – including those affected by the Summer 2016 floods. In Myanmar, USAID/OFDA provided over \$18 million

in FY 2018, which supported agriculture and food security, economic recovery, health, nutrition, protection, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) initiatives; distribution of relief supplies; and humanitarian coordination, information management, and logistics operations benefiting conflict-affected populations in Rakhine, Kachin, and northern Shan states. Between FY 2012 and FY 2018, USAID/OFDA provided nearly \$49 million to address humanitarian needs resulting from the ongoing complex emergency.

To mitigate the effects of future disasters on vulnerable populations, the United States supports disaster risk reduction (DRR) programs aimed at saving lives; protecting livelihoods, assets, and infrastructure before, during, and after a disaster; and increasing community resilience to natural hazards. The United States supports regional and country-specific DRR programs. The United States Department of State, INDOPACOM, and USAID/OFDA collaborate on support to the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management and the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance (AHA) Centre by building its capacity for disaster monitoring and response. In 2019, the USG through USAID/OFDA supported the AHA Center to establish and convene a working group for disaster management training and curriculum development, manage disaster-related information, develop assessment tools, and assist in the development of a Regional Joint Disaster Response Plan. Instruction on the implementation of the incident command system (ICS) by the United States Forest Service strengthened the decision-making capabilities of partner countries. Supported by USAID Regional Advisors in Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines, this training focuses on building regional capacity through train-the-trainer courses. In 2019, regional DRR support includes emergency operations center (EOC) and multi-agency coordination trainings, basic and intermediate courses on ICS, the development of online training modules, and the adaptation of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The USAID/ASEAN office supported the AHA Center for an English Language Training for ASEAN on Disaster Management where 19 young disaster management professionals from all ten ASEAN Member States participated in the English Language Training in Jakarta, Indonesia from July 3rd through July 20th, 2019 to improve confidence and strengthen capacity in technical communication necessary to coordinate disaster response and management. This activity was conducted in partnership with the AHA Centre, OFDA, the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterrey, and the U.S Embassy Regional English Language Office - Jakarta.

The United States sponsors and/or participates in numerous HA/DR-related exercises with regional partners every year, including the ARF Disaster Relief Exercise, East Asia Summit (EAS) HA/DR Exercise, the ADMM-Plus HA/DR, exercise Cobra Gold with Thailand, exercise Balikatan with the Philippines, Gema Bhakti with Indonesia, and Angkor Sentinel with Cambodia. In addition, the United States sponsored Disaster Relief Exercise and Exchanges (DREEs) through the Lower Mekong Initiative, further enhancing multi-lateral coordination, communication, and cooperation among the United States, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam to enhance response readiness to natural disasters in the Lower Mekong region.

2019 culminated over three years of cumulative and collaborative efforts of the United States and Malaysia co-chairing the most robust exercise of its kind ever to be executed. The exercise tested a real world scenario utilizing actual communications methods and coordination processes

with a crosscutting group of civil and military stakeholders across the 18 ADMM-Plus countries, the humanitarian community, and regional and international organizations. As a result, the USG demonstrated its commitment to the Indo Pacific region, and tangibly and practically advanced One ASEAN One Response, alliances and partnerships. The United States remains committed to developing ASEAN HA/DR capabilities and streamlining the ASEAN response mechanism. As part of the United States commitment to advancing civil - military coordination in ASEAN and throughout the Asia Pacific region, we recognize the need to further synchronize the defense efforts of the ADMM and ADMM-Plus with the civilian-led efforts in the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) and by the AHA Centre. We see this as a critical step toward realizing the vision of 'One ASEAN, One Response,' and we look forward to furthering these efforts in collaboration.

The Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel missions enhance regional disaster preparedness capabilities. Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel strengthen relationships between civilian and military specialists from countries in the region to cooperate on medical and engineering projects and practice disaster response procedures. The United States Navy and the United States Air Force respectively recognize the effectiveness of establishing relationships and building capacity to respond to a disaster through training and education before a disaster strikes. In 2018, the hospital ship USNS Mercy visited Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Vietnam as part of Pacific Partnership while USNS Fall River visited Yap, Palau, Malaysia, and Thailand. Pacific Angel engagements are planned for: Suai, Cova Lima Municipality, Southwest Timor-Leste; Tam Ky, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam; Luganville, Espiritu Santo Island and Tanna, Tanna Island, Vanuatu; and Anuradhapura (North Central Province), Puttalam (Northwest Province), Vavuniya, (Northern Province), Sri Lanka. Pacific Partnership and Pacific Angel missions improve the ability of providers and subject matter experts from the United States working side-by-side with counterparts from other countries to prepare for and better respond to disasters, such as pandemic illness, typhoons, earthquakes, and tsunamis. In 2018, Pacific Partnership supporting partners included more than 800 military and civilian personnel from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Peru, and Japan. Pacific Angel missions have in the past involved military personnel from New Zealand, Australia, France, the Philippines, Indonesia and Tonga. These two humanitarian missions underscore the United States' efforts in the Pacific region to provide assistance and enhance disaster relief capacity.

Lastly, the United States is the permanent Secretariat of the Pacific Area Senior Officer Logistics Seminar (PASOLS). PASOLS provides a congress for senior logisticians to exchange and discuss best practices and lessons learned, review regional issues and initiatives, and exchange information that strengthen cooperation throughout the region. The majority of ARF participants attend the annual PASOLS Seminar. Heads and representatives of military logistics organizations from 28 countries took part in the 2017 PASOLS conference, including Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the United States. PASOLS aims to promote open dialogue for military logistics chiefs in the Asia-Pacific region to further build Supply Chain networks and enhance cooperation towards a more consolidated response to common security challenges, particularly peacekeeping missions. PASOLS' regional presence and logistics focus is an ideal platform for ARF Participants to continue dialogue and strengthen regional cooperation and collaboration of disaster response efforts.

v. Maritime Security

The Indo-Pacific region and its maritime waterways are critical to United States security. Together with our interagency colleagues and regional allies and partners, the United States strives to ensure that the Indo-Pacific will remain open, free, and secure in the decades ahead. To protect free and open access, the United States focuses on three objectives: safeguarding the freedom of the seas, deterring conflict and coercion, and promoting adherence to international law and standards.

The United States has, throughout its history, advocated for the freedom of the seas and airspace. Freedom of the seas includes more than the mere freedom of commercial vessels to transit through international waterways. It also includes all of the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea and airspace for military ships and aircraft as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. The United States will continue to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows, as United States forces currently do all around the world.

For 70 years, United States military presence in the Indo-Pacific region has played a vital role in undergirding regional peace, stability, and security. We note several continuing trends, including rapid military modernization, growing resource demands, and territorial and maritime disputes, that have the potential to create instability. Many countries across the region are significantly enhancing their naval and maritime law enforcement (MLE) capabilities. Although most nations are using these capabilities in a responsible manner, ongoing provocative actions continue to heighten tensions in the region and raise concerns. Actions such as the use of MLE vessels to coerce rival claimants, and unsafe air and maritime behavior raise the risk of miscalculation or conflict. Maritime vessels are also increasingly being used to traffic terrorists and illicit materials. Increase screening measures and controls, such as those identified in UNSCR 2396 on foreign fighters, are needed to deter illicit and terrorist use of the maritime sector.

The tensions arising from maritime and territorial disputes in the Indo-Pacific are deeply concerning to the United States. The Indian Ocean, East China Sea, and South China Sea are all vital thoroughfares for global commerce and energy. Well over half the world's merchant tonnage flows through the South China Sea, and over 15 million barrels of oil per day transited the Strait of Malacca last year, with most of it continuing onward through the East China Sea to three of the world's largest economies – Japan, the Republic of Korea, and China.

With regard to the South China Sea, the United States has a vital national interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and other lawful uses of the sea, respect for international law, unimpeded lawful commerce, and peace and stability. The United States insists that such that disputes should be resolved peacefully, without the use of force or coercion, and in accordance with international law. To that end, we urge claimant countries to conform all of their maritime claims to international law as reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention.

China's efforts to assert its unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea threaten the regional rules-based order and undermine international law. China's provocative reclamation and militarization of

disputed outposts in the South China Sea, and its attempts to coerce and intimidate other nations undermine regional stability. The United States urges all claimants, including China, to manage and resolve disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. The United States encourages all parties to employ diplomatic and other peaceful avenues for resolving disagreements, including the use of third party dispute settlement, such as arbitration, negotiation, multilateral fora, or other peaceful international mechanisms. In this regard, the United States takes note of the importance of the July 12, 2016 arbitral tribunal ruling in the China-Philippines arbitration, and notes that it could serve as a useful basis for claimants to resolve their overlapping maritime claims.

On negotiations towards an ASEAN-China SCS Code of Conduct, we will continue to advocate for a meaningful Code of Conduct in the South China Sea that is fully in accordance with international law. Although not all ASEAN Member States are SCS claimants, we support ASEAN's ongoing efforts to negotiate a meaningful and effective Code of Conduct in the South China Sea that is fully in accordance with international law. We are concerned, however, at reports that China has been pressing ASEAN member states – behind closed doors – to accept limits on with whom states may conduct military exercises and offshore energy development. These proposals put at risk the autonomy of ASEAN states, and pose a direct challenge to the interests of the broader international community, including the United States. The United States urges all negotiating parties to ensure that rights and interests of third parties are respected and that any eventual Code be crafted in full accordance with international law.

In the East China Sea, we remain concerned about the provocative behavior by the PRC. We support calls for diplomacy and crisis management procedures in order to avoid a miscalculation or a dangerous incident.

We further believe the ARF can help put in-place supportive diplomatic structures that lower tensions and help claimant States manage these disputes peacefully. This forum needs to play an increasingly important role in reinforcing international law and practice and in building practical cooperation among member states.

The United States is not standing still in light of the challenges we face in the maritime domain. There should be no doubt that the United States will employ whole of government resources that includes maintaining military presence and capabilities to protect our interests and those of our allies and partners against potential threats in the maritime domain.

The United States Navy is pursuing a comprehensive strategy focused on four lines of effort:

i. Strengthen United States Naval capacity to ensure the United States can successfully deter conflict and coercion and respond decisively when needed.

- The United States Navy is investing in new cutting-edge capabilities, deploying our finest maritime capabilities forward, and distributing these capabilities more widely across the region.
- The United States Navy will increase the size of the United States Pacific Fleet's overseas

assigned forces by approximately 30 percent over the next five years to maintain a higher tempo of routine and persistent maritime presence activities across the Pacific region.

ii. Work together with our allies and partners from Northeast Asia to the Indian Ocean to build their maritime capacity.

- The United States Navy and Coast Guard are building greater interoperability and developing more integrated operations, actions, and activities with our regional allies and partners.
- The United States Pacific Fleet is increasing the size, frequency, and sophistication of their regional exercise program, with a particular focus on increasing the operational exercise complexity with Southeast Asian partners and expanding the multilateral exercise program.
- The United States Navy has also implemented a Southeast Asia Maritime Security Initiative that enable training and exercises, personnel support, and national level subject matter experts on maritime domain awareness to enhance capabilities for our partners in Southeast Asia.

iii. Leverage defense diplomacy to build greater transparency, reduce the risk of miscalculation or conflict, and promote shared maritime rules of the road.

- The United States Navy is actively seeking to mitigate risks in the Indo-Pacific region, both through bilateral efforts with China, as well as region-wide risk reduction measures.
- Recently, the United States Navy and China's Ministry of National Defense concluded an historic Memorandum of Understanding on Rules of Behavior for Safety of Air and Maritime Encounters. This MOU currently includes annexes on ship-to-ship and air-to-air encounters.
- United States Navy and People's Liberation Army-Navy (PLA-N) vessels have also successfully employed the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES) during recent interactions, which reduce risk in the region and demonstrate cooperativeness on the seas.

iv. Strengthen regional security institutions and encourage the development of an open and effective regional security architecture.

- The United States is enhancing its engagement in ASEAN-based institutions such as the ARF, ADMM-Plus, Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) and the EAS. The United States promotes candid conversations about ongoing challenges in the maritime domain, and encourages greater information sharing and cooperative solutions.

In addition to United States Navy and Coast Guard lines of efforts on the seas, the United States regularly conducts maritime exercises with regional partners to build confidence and to enhance regional maritime readiness. Cooperative activities such as the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) and the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise foster bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region. In February 2017, the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) participated in the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) with the United States Coast Guard's 14th District in the western Pacific Ocean. OMSI is a joint maritime security operation designed to enhance maritime domain awareness, increase law enforcement presence, and expand at-sea law enforcement capabilities throughout Oceania. During the exercise, sailors had the privilege of working side by side with an elite Coast Guard Law Enforcement team. The team provided invaluable training to Murphy's Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) team

to include tactical team movements, tactical combat casualty care, and safe boarding techniques. These are just a few of several engagements aimed to develop cooperation, promote common seafaring practices, and enhance mutual trust.

Additionally, the United States participated in its fourth Governors' Council meeting with the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) since becoming the organization's 20th contracting party (member) in 2014. The United States has been proactive in assisting the development of a ten-year strategy plan for the future of ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) to become a Centre of Excellence by 2020. The United States is also working with regional partners to improve the safety and well-being of mariners through the Expanded ASEAN Seafarers Training on Counter-Piracy (EAST-CP) program. The United States is enhancing the capacity of the coast guards, navies, and law enforcement and judicial sectors of partner nations to address not only piracy, but also the broad scope of illicit maritime activity ranging from illegal fishing to the trafficking of arms, narcotics, and people. Training and technical expertise are delivered through a variety of cooperative training programs supported by the United States Departments of Defense, Justice, and State, NOAA, the United States Coast Guard, and USAID. The workshops incorporate the knowledge of technical experts in the maritime transport sector and regional survivors of piracy to address issues ranging from preparedness and survival, ransom negotiations, to post trauma care upon returning home.

vi. Information and Communications Technologies

The speed and efficiency of information and communication technologies (ICTs) are of great benefit to commerce and development. At the same time, ICTs introduce vulnerabilities that countries must proactively address, as the risks can impact national and regional security and economic prosperity – especially in Asia, where e-commerce is a significant and increasing portion of many developing countries' economic growth. In a cyber-incident of national significance, the unique nature of the ICTs, including the lack of external observables of ICTs and the difficulty in determining the nation or entity responsible, may lead states to act precipitously, with significant consequences for strategic ICT stability and international security. To reduce the risk of conflict stemming from ICT incidents, practical confidence building measures (CBMs) are needed to enhance the predictability of state activities and reduce national security risks. This can be achieved by fostering transparency, increasing cybersecurity cooperation, and developing incident response capacity within and among states. These practical measures in the form of CBMs can help reduce the risk of conflict.

In the interest of increasing ARF's budding Preventive Diplomacy role and promoting regional cyber stability, the United States welcomes the establishment of the ISM on ICTs Security and supports continued ARF dialogue on enhancing international ICT stability via the 2015 ARF Work Plan on Security of and in the Use of ICTs. We support further institutionalization of cyber work within the ARF, the development and implementation of cyber CBMs in the ARF and continued ARF discussion on preventive diplomacy's role in cyberspace. The United States will cooperate with other ARF Participants on the development of relevant cyber workshops and projects in 2018 to support the ARF Work Plan.

4. Role of the ARF

a) National Contributions to Enhancing the ARF and Regional Security

The United States remains committed to building institutional capacity in the ARF and strengthening its role in the ASEAN-centered regional security architecture. The United States remains committed to the full and complete implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action 2020-2025 and will work diligently with ARF participants to fulfill the ARF's mandate to advance from confidence-building measures, to preventive diplomacy, to effective conflict resolution.

The United States will also continue to work with ASEAN to strengthen and build capacity in the ARF Unit – a critical element of process sustainment and administrative protocol. A reinforced ARF Unit will benefit ASEAN members and all ARF dialogue partners as the engine of a credible and results-oriented organization.

b) Future of the ARF

The ARF serves as an important venue for senior-level security policy dialogue and working-level technical cooperation on regional security issues. The ARF's inclusiveness, maturing commitments, and growing experience position it to achieve success on a targeted agenda that addresses common issues of interest for all ARF participants. However, its participants should take deliberate steps toward shaping the ARF into an institution that faces important security challenges candidly and head-on, with the capability to conduct effective Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, and inclusive of women, youth, and civil society. Furthermore, the continued provocation and militarization within the region highlight the urgent need for the ARF to go beyond just providing confidence-building measures. In this regard, the United States supports efforts to develop the ARF's Preventive Diplomacy capability together with the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR).

It is important to highlight the context of the ARF as one element of a broader regional security architecture that includes the EAS, ADMM-Plus, and the EAMF. The United States is committed to continuing its engagement to help shape a robust and coherent architecture in the Indo-Pacific region – including a key role for the ARF in promoting stability and prosperity – through a transparent and inclusive process. Developing rules-based frameworks for dialogue and cooperation will help maintain stability and economic growth while resolving disputes through diplomacy are especially important in a region facing territorial and maritime disputes, political transformation, political and civil unrest, and pandemic disease response and recovery, and natural disasters. The United States is committed to building on its active and enduring presence in the Indo-Pacific region and working with its partners to support the ARF as an effective mechanism for confronting transnational and emerging security issues troubling the region today.

VIET NAM

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

In 2019 and the early half of 2020, the world and the region have witnessed complicated and unexpected developments. In particular, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe and unprecedented socio-economic and geo-strategic impact at both the global and regional levels.

Amid this ongoing crisis, countries have been stepping up international cooperation, policy coordination, medical support, and experience sharing in responding to this pandemic. Working towards becoming a cohesive and responsive Community, ASEAN has played a proactive and active role in promoting cooperation and linkages among member states and external partners in pandemic response and mitigation of its impact on the regional security and prosperity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the global supply chain, while exacerbating and further complicating frictions among major powers. While having made efforts to promote cooperation in addressing common challenges, these countries have intensified their strategic competition, thus bringing about negative multi-faceted impacts worldwide, including on international institutions.

Against such a backdrop, more complicated developments have been witnessed in regional flashpoints, especially those in East Asia. In the South China Sea, there remain complex developments, including militarisation, serious incidents and activities that have violated the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of coastal states and run counter to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). These developments have eroded mutual trust and confidence, increased tension and undermined peace, stability, maritime security and safety as well as freedom of navigation and overflight in the region. These have also failed to create a conducive environment for the negotiation of a substantive and effective COC.

In this regard, it is imperative for all countries to firmly uphold the 1982 UNCLOS as the basis for determining maritime entitlements, sovereignty, sovereign rights, jurisdiction and legitimate interests over maritime zones. It should also be reaffirmed that the 1982 UNCLOS sets out the comprehensive legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out. All the parties should continue to commit to the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, especially the 1982 UNCLOS, without the threat or use of force, exercise of self-restraint and refrain from actions that would complicate the situation. ASEAN and China should further intensify efforts to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) in its entirety, and to achieve the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) that is effective, substantive and consistent with international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS.

Non-traditional security challenges such as cyber-security, disasters, climate change, human security, maritime security, violent extremism and terrorism have continued to adversely impact regional stability and prosperity. In particular, the issue of water security in the Mekong River has caused widespread concern as the sub-region has been experiencing one of the worst droughts in history. This is seriously threatening food security and regional stability, therefore underlines the need to promote cooperation for sustainable development.

2. National Security and Defence Policy

a. Overview of National Defence Policy

Viet Nam released the 2019 National Defence White Paper. The information provided in the Paper reaffirms the advocacy of the Communist Party and the State of Viet Nam for transparency of the country's national defence policy, which is peaceful and self-defensive in nature. Viet Nam resolutely and consistently settles all disputes and divergences through peaceful means on the basis of international law, actively and proactively prevents and rejects the risks of wars, realises the motto of defending the Homeland from afar while being prepared to fight against wars of aggression.

Viet Nam does not advocate joining any military alliances, siding with one country against another, giving any countries the permission to set up military bases or use its territory to carry out military activities against other countries as well as using force or threatening to use force in international relations. Viet Nam promotes defence cooperation with countries to improve its capabilities to protect the country and address common security challenges. Depending on circumstances and specific conditions, Viet Nam will consider developing necessary, appropriate defence and military relations with other countries on the basis of respecting each other's independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity as well as fundamental principles of international law, cooperation for mutual benefits and common interests of the region and the international community.

It is Viet Nam's consistent policy to oppose all arms races. As a responsible member of the international community, Viet Nam is keen on fulfilling its duties while actively cooperating with other nations to address emerging security issues, thus contributing to the protection of peace and stability in the region and the world.

b. Data contribution to ARF Arms Register

Viet Nam builds its military potential based on a unified strategy as required by the tasks of national defence and construction. The combat competency and readiness of the armed forces are reflected in their organisation, structure, weaponry, logistical and technical support, military art, and science and technology, which are usually maintained, improved, and developed to meet the requirements of the people's war for safeguarding the Homeland.

On the basis of its socio-economic growth rate, Viet Nam determines its national defence budget in order to meet the demands of strengthening national defence potential for safeguarding the Homeland while ensuring neither falling into any arms race nor making the defence budget an economic burden¹.

3. National Contribution to Regional Security

i. Counterterrorism

In the course of implementing our commitments to counter terrorist threats, Viet Nam has enhanced cooperation with other states and partners, both bilaterally and multilaterally. Internally, the Government of Viet Nam has implemented various measures to enhance the institutional capacity, including through strengthening the legal framework and establishing a National Steering Committee.

At the regional level, as a party to the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism, Viet Nam has proactively and responsibly worked with other countries through ASEAN-led mechanisms, including the ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting (ADMM) and ASEAN Defense Ministers Plus (ADMM+) to prevent terrorist activities through information sharing and capacity-building. In particular, Viet Nam will continue to work closely with ASEAN Member States in the implementation of the ASEAN Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (2018-2025).

Bilaterally, Viet Nam has signed with various countries cooperation agreements on the issues of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, extradition and combating transnational crimes. Hotlines have been established between Viet Nam and several partners for exchange of information and intelligence, including those related to terrorist suspects and organisations, and coordination of joint activities. Being a member of the Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering, Viet Nam is committed to contributing to the common efforts of the international community on the prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing.

At the global level, Viet Nam has been parties to various UN instruments related to countering terrorism. Viet Nam stands ready to work with members of the United Nations to implement the Security Council Resolution 2396 (2017) on the strengthening of measures to counter threats posed by returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) and Resolution 2496 (2019) on preventing and combating the financing of terrorists.

In 2019, Viet Nam continued to promote anti-terrorism cooperation with ASEAN and its partners by hosting 39th ASEANAPOL Conference; participating in discussions on terrorism within the

¹ Viet Nam's GDP for defence budget in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 was 2.23, 2.82, 2.88, 2.69, 2.72, 2.64, 2.51 and 2.36 per cent respectively

framework of the ASEANAPOL Conference, the 13th AMMTC+3 (Bangkok), the 18th Conference on Terrorism Prevention and Control (Sochi), the APG's 2nd 'No Money for Terror' Ministerial Conference (Melbourne), the joint Belarus-UN International High-level Conference on Counter-Terrorism and the Use of New and Emerging Technologies, the UNSC open debate on the relations between terrorism and organised crimes; and enhancing cooperation with partners, including the United States and Russia.

Viet Nam attaches great importance to enhancing cooperation among law enforcement agencies, including in the areas of preventing and countering terrorist financing and terrorist use of the internet as well as border management. Cooperation within bilateral and multilateral frameworks should be further encouraged, including the regular convening of regional and international fora to share information and expertise and conduct joint training and exercise.

ii. Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

Viet Nam remains committed to the policy of non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. Guided by the policy of proactively supporting and contributing to the common efforts of the international community for peace, security, and disarmament, Viet Nam stands ready to fulfil its membership obligations of international conventions, agreements, and protocols on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), and other international conventions on disarmament. Viet Nam is actively considering and making necessary preparations for further participation in international conventions and treaties on national defence and security. Viet Nam welcomes initiatives to prevent the development, production, storage and use of WMD.

In 2019, the Prime Minister of Viet Nam issued Decision No. 104/QĐ-TTg dated January 22, 2019, approving the National Action Plan for Prevention, Detection and Preparation of Responding to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risks and Incidents in the period of 2019 – 2025. The Government of Viet Nam also issued Decree No. 81/2019/ND-CP dated 11 November 2019 on Preventing and Countering Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Those documents are the legal basis for taking actions at the national and local levels in the efforts against the proliferation of WMD, funding for proliferation and other illegal acts on WMD.

At the regional level, Viet Nam supports regional efforts in strengthening cooperation to respond to Chemical, Radiological and Nuclear Challenges (CBRN), including Singapore's initiative as the 2018 ASEAN Chair in establishing a network of CBRN experts in ASEAN. Viet Nam also sent delegations to attend relevant international conferences and workshops, including the ASEAN Armies CBRN Subject Matter Expert Exchange and the 14th International CBRN Commandants and Commanders Conference in Singapore in July 2019. At the international level, Viet Nam is party to various international agreements in the field of non-proliferation, counter-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and

the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Viet Nam has submitted three national reports on the implementation.

As the Chair of ASEAN 2020 and a non-Permanent Member of the UNSC 2020 - 2021, Viet Nam reaffirms its strong support for the implementation of the NPT on all three pillars, namely, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament and the use of nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes. Viet Nam also calls upon the Nuclear Weapon States to sign the Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone Treaty.

iii. Transnational Crime

Viet Nam reaffirms its commitment to cooperate with other countries and international organisations in fighting transnational crimes, including through engaging in many related international cooperation activities with positive results recorded.

Regarding illicit drugs, Viet Nam has been strengthening prevention and suppression responses to counter drug trafficking activities. Drug law enforcement agencies have implemented strict measures to detect, investigate and prosecute syndicates who illegally traffic drugs on land, sea and air routes. The Vietnamese Government have signed bilateral drug control cooperation agreements with various countries, including Cambodia, China, Hungary, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Russia, Thailand and the United States. Within the frameworks of multilateral and bilateral cooperation, Viet Nam has also set up a network of liaison offices in the border areas with Cambodia, China and Lao PDR. Viet Nam has been actively engaging in regional mechanism in combating illicit drugs such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Drug Matters (ASOD) and ASEAN Chiefs of Police Conference (ASEANAPOL) as well as other ASEAN-led mechanisms. Viet Nam also hosted a series of activities with its ASEAN partners, including the 39th ASEANAPOL, the Ministerial Meeting on Enhancing the Cooperation Effectiveness in Combating Transnational Drug Crime, the 18th Tripartite Ministerial Meeting between Viet Nam, Lao PDR and Cambodia on the prevention and combat against drugs, the Viet Nam-Cambodia Ministerial Meeting on the review of cooperation efforts against drugs between the two countries. Since the beginning of 2020, Viet Nam has successfully hosted the 10th ASEANAPOL Training Cooperation Meeting and the 4th ASEANAPOL Forensic Science Network Meeting. Through this, Viet Nam has reaffirmed its strong political commitment and role in the fight against drug crimes in the region and the world.

With regard to human trafficking, Viet Nam is committed to cooperating with other countries in preventing and addressing this issue. At home, it is running awareness campaigns in communities vulnerable to trafficking and government-facilitated trainings for consular officers, police and other relevant agencies in combating trafficking and ensuring support to the victims of trafficking. Notably, the Vietnamese Prime Minister issued Decision No. 2546/QĐ-TTg, approving the Program on Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking for the period of 2016-2020, with the overall goal of reducing human trafficking risk and crime, and effectively receiving, protecting and providing aid to

victims of human trafficking. Moreover, Viet Nam has continued to implement the third phase of the 2016-2020 National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan (NAP). In 2019, Viet Nam also hosted the 14th AHG SOM of the Bali Process on the prevention and combat against human trafficking (Da Nang) and the Conference on the establishment of focal points for the implementation of the ASEAN Convention against the trafficking of Persons (Ha Noi). Viet Nam also participated in the 12th ASEAN-China Prosecutors General Conference themed “the Role of Prosecutors in Regionally Combating Human Trafficking” (Cambodia). At the same time, Viet Nam has continued to enhance cooperation with its neighboring countries, including Lao PDR, the Philippines and China on the prevention of human trafficking.

Viet Nam places great importance on and is committed to enhancing ASEAN cooperation in preventing and combating transnational crime. In 2020, Viet Nam encourages law enforcement agencies to continue to maintain and strengthen cooperation, exchanging information and sharing expertise, including in the fight against illicit drug trafficking. Viet Nam deems it important for ASEAN to continue to strengthen cooperation in investigation and capacity building, as well as in the area of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters. In particular, priority should be given to the negotiation and early conclusion of the agreements on extradition, mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

iv. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Viet Nam has actively participated in HADR cooperation activities through multilateral cooperation mechanisms, including the ARF, ADMM-Plus Experts’ Working Group on HADR, ASEAN Militaries Ready Group on HADR (AMRG on HADR) including the HADR communications and staffing exercise (in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, July 29 – August 2, 2019) which was sponsored by the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting–Plus (ADMM+) and the rescue competition International Rescue Extrication Challenge (MIREC) (Malaysia, July 18-19, 2019). Viet Nam also plans to participate in the ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise 2021 (ARDEX-21) under the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER).

Viet Nam has continued to stay active in cooperation with regional countries to conduct and participate in disaster management training courses to improve management, coordination and response capabilities; working towards achieving common consensus within the ARF; establishing mechanisms for coordinating and exchanging natural disaster warning and forecasting information, as well as supporting disaster response among ARF Participants; strengthening the support and transfer of search and rescue facilities and equipment among ARF Participants; participating in HADR exercises as an observer as well as training courses and other activities on disaster management and HADR.

With regard to bilateral cooperation, Viet Nam has maintained its cooperation with countries in the region through training activities such as the rescue drill by Viet Nam People’s Army and the Royal Cambodia Army (December 18, 2019). The drill aimed to implement the protocol on search and

rescue cooperation in mainland border area signed between the two defence ministries on July 20, 2017. It was also a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activity within the framework of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM).

In addition, Viet Nam also received the maritime search and rescue support vessel of the Russian Navy Igor Belousov (December 02-09, 2019). The visit was part of a series of activities in the Viet Nam - Russia defence cooperation plan in 2019. During the visit, the Russian vessel took part in a joint search and rescue exercise for submarines in distress, with the participation of the Viet Nam People's Navy and the Russian Navy. These cooperative activities have contributed to the improvement of the relevant countries' humanitarian support and disaster relief capacity.

v. Maritime Security

Viet Nam has made consistent efforts in contributing to maintaining and promoting peace, stability and security in the South China Sea, which is in the common interests of all countries. Viet Nam supports efforts to strengthen a rules-based maritime order in the region. Viet Nam has been working closely with all countries to promote mutual trust and confidence as well as the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS. Together with other ASEAN Member States, Viet Nam has actively contributed to ensuring the full and effective implementation of the DOC, while making substantial contributions to the COC negotiations towards the early conclusion of a COC that is effective, substantive and consistent with international law, particularly the 1982 UNCLOS.

Viet Nam continues to attach great importance to regional cooperation in ensuring maritime security and safety, including through various ASEAN-led frameworks such as the EAS, ARF, ADMM, ADMM-Plus, AMF and EAMF. Last December, Viet Nam hosted the 9th ASEAN Maritime Forum and 7th Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum, which discussed, among others, measures to enhance coordination and synergy among maritime-related activities in the region. Viet Nam also participated in a number of events, including the 13th ASEAN Navy Chiefs' Meeting (ANCM-13), etc. to support sustainable regional maritime security. Viet Nam has also dispatched its naval ships and personnel to join the ADMM-Plus Maritime Security Field Training Exercise and ASEAN - US Maritime Exercise (AUMX) with a view to sharing awareness and interoperability in the maritime domain.

Within the ARF framework, Viet Nam has co-hosted a number of activities on maritime security. Along with Australia and the EU, Viet Nam is the co-chair of the Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (2017-2020). In 2019 and early 2020, Viet Nam successfully co-hosted the 2nd ARF Workshop on Enhancing Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation, the 2nd ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to Address Emerging Maritime Issues and the 2nd ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness. In the Inter-Sessional Year 2020-2021, Viet Nam will expectedly co-host the 3rd Workshop on Enhancing Regional Maritime Law Enforcement Cooperation and the 3rd ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments.

Viet Nam has also continued to engage with other regional and multilateral forums, such as the Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meetings, the Global Coast Guard Summit (Working Level Meetings), the Southeast Asia Maritime Law Enforcement Initiative Commanders' Forum (formerly known as the Gulf of Thailand Initiative (GoTI) on Maritime Law Enforcement Commanders' Forum), the Regional Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) as well as the Global Maritime Crime Program (GMCP) of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for capacity building and experience sharing activities among Maritime Law Enforcement Agencies, etc.

At the bilateral level, Viet Nam has closely coordinated with maritime law enforcement forces, especially coast guards, of regional countries to share best practices and conduct other practical cooperation activities such as exchange of visits, joint patrols, information sharing and joint training courses for capacity building.

vi. ICTs Security

Being fully aware of the increasing importance of cyber security, Viet Nam has developed and implemented various policies and measures to ensure cyber security, as well as promote cooperation with external partners in this priority area. In 2018, Viet Nam passed the Law on Cybersecurity to protect national security and ensure public safety and order on the Internet. On the international sphere, through joining common efforts, Viet Nam aims to, among others, enhance coordination and mutual assistance, including in investigation; to proactively contribute to the joint campaign launched by the INTERPOL and other UN bodies; to establish modalities and arrangements for cooperation among line agencies; and to promote the sharing of information, intelligence and expertise, as well as training and technology transfer among countries.

At the regional level, Viet Nam has actively participated in various cybersecurity-related activities under ASEAN-led mechanisms. Within the ARF, in the Inter-Sessional Year 2020-2021, Viet Nam is expected to co-host with Russia and China the Workshop on Countering the Use of ICTs for Criminal Purposes.

4. Role of the ARF

As the ARF Chair in 2020, Viet Nam is committed to strengthening further the ARF so that the Forum can maintain its relevance while being responsive to emerging challenges. In the face of serious disruptions to ARF activities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Viet Nam has worked closely with other ARF Participants to implement necessary provisional measures to sustain the ARF process and operation, which has resulted in positive outcomes. Also as initiated by Viet Nam, ASEAN has finalised the Guide to ARF Processes, Procedures, Practice and Protocol, which aims to ensure that all ARF activities shall be conducted in a consistent and standardised manner, while the role of ASEAN as the primary driving force is further reinforced. Building on the past achievements,

the ARF Ha Noi Plan of Action II (2020-2025), which will be adopted at the 27th ARF, will provide guidance for the Forum to develop and implement concrete and practical actions on the identified priority areas.

Defence dialogue and cooperation have been an integral part of the ARF process. Over the past years, the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue (ARF DOD) has been a valuable channel for interaction, providing useful supports as well as strengthening confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy among the military officials. The ARF Security Policy Conference (ASPC) has served as an effective platform for participants to present and exchange views on regional security issues, to clarify their defence policies and to share experiences in dealing with regional security threats.

In 2020, Viet Nam has proposed measures to revitalise the ASPC and strengthen the defence cooperation within the ARF. They include: (i) assigning ARF DOD to assist and prepare the agenda of the ASPC; (ii) the APSC Chair to attend and brief the ARF Ministerial Meeting on the progress of defence cooperation within the ARF; and (iii) exploring the possibility of enhancing complementarity between the work of the ARF and that of other ASEAN-led mechanisms, especially the ADMM+, to avoid duplication of work. As agreed by the ARF SOM on 21 July 2020, the ASPC Chair would attend and brief the 27th ARF Ministerial Meeting on the progress in defence dialogue and cooperation within the ARF for the first time.

As the regional security architecture is evolving and the complexities of security challenges continue to grow, it is imperative for all ARF Participants to continue to make joint efforts in strengthening and revitalising the ARF so that the Forum would remain relevant and responsive to challenges. In order to achieve this, it is also important for the ARF to synergise its work with other ASEAN-led mechanisms for greater concerted efforts and coherence, thus jointly contributing to regional peace, stability and security.



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