

Concept Paper ASEAN Regional Forum

Aviation Security and Information Sharing

Executive Summary

This paper outlines a proposal by the United States for an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop Series to begin in 2017/2018 that formalizes and operationalizes aviation security cooperation among heads of specialized law enforcement, border security, and intelligence agencies from ARF nations, especially ASEAN members. This workshop series will directly support the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism signed in 2007 and the ARF Work Plan for Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime 2015-2017.

Background

Aviation security is an essential component of comprehensive counterterrorism measures. Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) traveling to and from Syria and Iraq not only use civil aviation as a means of transportation but also pose a direct threat to the safety and security of civil aviation. Recent attacks in airports in Brussels and Istanbul underscore how terrorist groups continue to view civil aviation as an attractive target, with the aim of causing substantial loss of life, economic damage, and travel disruptions. The risk of terrorist attacks against civil aviation affects many countries, including ARF Member States.

A safe and secure global aviation system is vital to economic development and prosperity, and secure air services enhance transportation, trade, connectivity, and political and cultural linkages among communities. The global nature of aviation means that states are dependent on the effectiveness of each other's aviation security systems for the protection of their citizens and their national security. A secure aviation security environment therefore requires the participation and support of all states.

Given the threat of FTF travel, it has become increasingly important to: 1) identify vulnerabilities in civil aviation and mechanisms that prevent travel by FTFs; 2) enhance states' access to relevant databases and increase screening and information-sharing measures related to the movement of potential FTFs; and 3) continuously assess and update aviation security measures to address emerging threats, in cooperation with ICAO and other international bodies.

Workshop Proposal

The ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism calls upon parties to take steps to prevent terrorist acts, including by "the provision of early warning to the other Parties through the exchange of information" and "effective border control and controls on issuance of identity papers and travel documents." In support of implementing the ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism, **Country X**, **Country Y**, and the United States propose creating a workshop series within the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to emphasize the importance of aviation security as part of comprehensive counterterrorism measures; share good practices and strengthen mechanisms for cooperation and information sharing among ARF Member States related to the movement of potential FTFs; and enhance Member States' access to and utilization of relevant databases and screening measures.

The goals of this workshop series are to strengthen aviation border control measures that counter terrorist threats, especially the threat of FTF travel, and to assist in developing the necessary capacity and capabilities to effectively provide a secure civil aviation environment. The workshop series will incorporate lessons learned from the APEC Counterterrorism Working Group Secure Travel Workshops on Countering Foreign Terrorism Fighter Travel and from the UN Center for Counter Terrorism (UNCCT)'s Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF).

Workshop Format

The Governments of **Country X**, **Country Y**, and the United States propose to organize and conduct a series of three workshops with border security officials, law enforcement personnel, and policy practitioners. All ARF member countries will be invited to send representatives from relevant agencies to attend the workshops.

The workshop series will consist of (1) a seminar for senior officials in law enforcement, border security and other relevant agencies to identify and prioritize terrorism-related vulnerabilities in civil aviation, with a focus on information and data sharing to prevent FTF travel; (2) a technical workshop for mid-level officers and subject matter experts focused on the implementation and utilization of specific screening and information sharing mechanisms, including identifying opportunities for assistance in capacity development, training, and other necessary resources to implement those mechanisms; and (3) a final seminar for senior officials to identify best practices for ICAO assessments or national self-risk assessments, or audit processes to ensure security measures keep pace with emerging terrorism threats.

The first workshop could potentially feature expert speakers, participant dialogue, and breakout sessions focused on the following themes:

- Opportunities and mechanisms for sharing concrete, timely and actionable information on known or suspected FTFs, whether through formal criminal information exchanges, established channels for general sharing of intelligence and other sensitive information, or through tips and notices on individuals of concern;
- Legislative and administrative requirements related to aviation security and information sharing, including mandates for airlines to provide governments with advance passenger information and/or passenger name record (API/PNR) data; potential legal conflicts or gaps between countries of departure and arrival related to data transmission; and administrative gaps among law enforcement and border security agencies to enable the timely use of data
- Technical requirements to access and effectively utilize existing information sharing systems, such as INTERPOL's I/24-7 secure global police communications system, as well as exchanging API/PNR data in sufficient time for other transit and destination states to take action against suspected FTF travelers.
- Procedures and screening measures necessary to disrupt FTF travel, including analysis of passenger data, interview protocols, and screening/inspection of luggage and cargo. Evaluate specialized tools such as behavioral analysis and travel-pattern analysis to identify FTF travelers and their likely routes both out-bound and returning

ARF partners will contribute to the workshop by sharing their experiences and expertise related to the workshop topics. Invited expert speakers will provide educational presentations, case studies, and briefings on aviation security operations.

The second and third seminar in the workshop series will be developed based on the findings and recommendations provided by ARF Member States in the first seminar.

Participation

Delegations to the workshop series will include senior officials (first and third workshop) and mid-level officials (second workshop) representing aviation security and counterterrorism law enforcement bodies and mechanisms. It will also include policy experts, practitioners, and private industry engaged in civil aviation security.

Output

The first seminar will produce prioritized recommendations for improving information and data sharing to prevent travel by FTFs to, from and between ARF Member States. Vulnerabilities identified in the first seminar will inform the second seminar on technical assistance.

The second seminar will improve the technical expertise of mid-level officers on implementing and utilizing aviation security information and data sharing mechanisms. If possible, the seminar will identify opportunities for Member States and international organizations to provide additional targeted technical assistance to partner nations.

The third seminar will assess progress in aviation security standards as a result of the workshop series and identify best practices for regional or national assessments and audits to facilitate the long-term sustainability of aviation security measures.

Location and Dates

It is proposed that the first workshop be two days in duration and held sometime in the ARF intersessional year 2017/2018. The second and third workshops in the series will be held within eighteen months from the date of the first workshop. The workshops will be conducted in English. The location is to be determined.

Administrative Arrangements

International travel, accommodations, and other related costs necessary for participation will be borne by **Country X**, **Country Y**, and the United States.

Please direct comments or questions on this proposal to:

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