



CONCEPT PAPER
on
Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Mitigation

1. Background

As defined in the 2002 Paper on Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy, Preventive Diplomacy is defined as consensual diplomatic and political action taken by sovereign states with the consent of all directly involved parties: to help prevent disputes and conflicts from arising between States that could potentially pose a threat to regional peace and stability; to help prevent such disputes and conflicts from escalating into armed confrontation; and to help minimize the impact of such disputes and conflicts on the region.

Over the past five years, the ARF member-states have focused on developing a knowledge base of concepts and skills towards achieving preventive diplomacy to reduce the prevalence of conflict and to promote peaceful and inclusive processes throughout the region. In fact, since the “Concept Paper on Moving towards Preventive Diplomacy” was adopted at the 20th ARF Ministerial meeting in Brunei Darussalam, eleven engagements have taken place towards this goal. Most recently, the governments of Timor-Leste, Indonesia, the United States of America, and New Zealand, hosted a workshop on “Early Warning, Early Response, and the Role of Preventive Diplomacy,” in Dili, on April 24-26, 2019. A full list of events is included in Annex 1 to this concept paper.

2. Context

The Global Peace Index recorded that in 2017 the level of peace worldwide deteriorated by 0.27 per cent in the previous year, thus marking the fourth successive year of deteriorations (Global Peace Index 2018). This trend gives rise to the reality that the simmering tensions and conflicts and outright crises at play in the world today exist as extensions of unresolved conflicts and has pointed to challenges confronting governance institutions. Building on the ARF’s commitment to peace, prosperity, and regional security, and in response to the rise of threats to peace in the world today, the ARF has a unique opportunity to set an example on a global scale that models cooperative and peaceful processes through good governance institutions and in support of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 – to promote peace, justice, and strong institutions.

3. Proposal

The United States proposes a three-part integrated preventive diplomacy series, that will enable participants of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to enhance their understanding of and capacity to employ preventive diplomacy methods to prevent and mitigate ongoing and potential conflict to ensure a peaceful region. This effort will comprise the following integrated components:

- 1) A seminar reviewing the foundational principles of the ARF Hanoi Plan of Action and the essential skills of preventive diplomacy to include stakeholder engagement, early warning and response and dispute resolution mechanisms;
- 2) A table-top exercise that allows for the operational application of these key principles in the context of a case relevant for the region;
- 3) A study tour that will allow participants to engage directly on-the-ground with the key stakeholders and institutions responsible and/or involved in mitigating conflict at the government and non-governments levels.

4. Program Objectives

- 1). Review and Understand the different preventive diplomacy methods available to prevent and mitigate conflict;
- 2). Understand the application of conflict-analysis skills, methodologies, and coordination frameworks towards peaceful processes;
- 3). Discuss various models for the role of government officials, local and regional non-government in preventive diplomacy processes; including the role of women and youth;
- 4). Establish an informal network among ARF members to coordinate technical assistance needs and coordination in relation to the pursuit of conflict prevention and mitigation objectives.

5. ARF Linkages

This proposal directly supports the following ARF Hanoi Plan of Action Objectives:

- 1.3. Compile best practices on confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution for further development by ARF.
- 1.4. Improve the collection, dissemination, and exchange of information and analyses of regional security concerns.

6. Co-Chairs

The United States and New Zealand are actively seeking an ASEAN co-sponsor for this series.

7. Participants

ARF delegates with responsibility for coordination and monitoring at the national and local level on the issues concerning the political and security community and socio-cultural community departments are encouraged to participate. Regional stakeholders and international organizations and related experts are encouraged to attend and share their experiences.

8. Date and Venue

The timeframe and venue will be determined at a later date.

9. Administrative Arrangements

International travel, accommodations, and other related costs necessary for participation and event proceedings will be borne by the co-chairs.

10. Points of Contact

Ms. Calvina Coleman
Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State
colemanca@state.gov

Mr. Thomas Appleton
Asia Regional Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Thomas.Appleton@mfat.govt.nz

Ms. Debra Liang-Fenton
U.S. Institute of Peace
dfenton@usip.org

DRAFT

Annex 1: Past ARF Preventive Diplomacy Engagements

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>March 2014, Wellington, New Zealand</u> Roundtable discussion co-chaired by New Zealand, China, the United States and Brunei Darussalam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>November 2015, Yogyakarta, Indonesia</u> Training on preventive diplomacy and mediation co-chaired by Indonesia and the EU
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>October 2014, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei</u> Training on preventive diplomacy and mediation co-chaired by Brunei Darussalam and the European Union (EU) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>March 2016, Hanoi, Vietnam</u> Workshop on mediation and negotiation skills co-chaired by Vietnam and the US
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>November 2014, Beijing, China</u> Seminar co-sponsored by China and the United States 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>April 2017, Dili, Timor-Leste</u> Workshop on preventive diplomacy in post-conflict environments, co-chaired by Timor-Leste, Singapore and New Zealand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>July 2015, Bangkok, Thailand</u> Training on preventive diplomacy and mediation co-chaired by Thailand and the United States (US) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>June 2017, Yangon, Myanmar</u> Workshop on preventive diplomacy and early warning co-chaired by Myanmar, the EU and the US
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>November 2018, Nanjing, China</u> Seminar hosted by China 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>September 2018, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar</u> Workshop on mediation skills building co-chaired by Myanmar, the US and New Zealand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>April 2019, Dili, Timor-Leste</u> Workshop on early warning-early response systems and the role of preventive diplomacy co-chaired by Timor-Leste, Indonesia, the US and New Zealand 	