

*A Concept Paper on
Enhancing Ties between Track I and Track II in the ARF, and between the ARF and
Other Regional and International Security Organizations*

Background

1. At the 12th ARF on 29 July 2005 in Vientiane, the Ministers emphasized the need to continue strengthening ties with other regional and international security organizations as well as linkages between Track I and Track II.
2. In accordance with the discussion at the ARF ISG Meeting in Honolulu on 17-19 October 2005, this paper attempts to provide some further guidelines and procedures to give expression to the Ministers' decision, building upon recommendations from previous ARF meetings and related papers, which include, *inter alia*, "Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair: Shared Perspectives among ARF Members," Brunei Darussalam's "Stocktaking of the ARF Process and Recommendations," Canada's "Discussion Paper on Strengthening Linkages Between Track I and Track II in the ARF Context," and Russia's "Draft Concept Paper on ARF-SCO."

Strengthening Linkages between Track I and Track II

3. Since the 1995 ARF Concept Paper decided to move the ARF process along two tracks, there have been many Track II activities.¹ The results of some have been reported to the ARF and some inputs have also been incorporated by Track I. An example is Singapore's "Concept Paper on Preventive Diplomacy" adopted at the 8th ARF, which refers to CSCAP's proposal on the definition of Preventive Diplomacy (PD).
4. It is understood that all decisions with regard to enhancing linkages between Track I and Track II would be undertaken by consensus in accordance with the principle of respect to ARF participants' sovereignty and non-interference in their internal affairs and take into account the comfort level of all ARF participants. As such, contacts with Track II would not prejudge ARF participants' policies towards such organizations. Further modalities of linkages between the ARF and various Track II organizations may differ, without one case necessarily setting a precedent for another.

Formats and Procedures

5. With respect to strengthening linkages between Track I and Track II, priority should at this stage be given to CSCAP and ASEAN-ISIS in the following manners:
 - Inviting chairs of CSCAP and ASEAN-ISIS to the ISG on CBMs and PD meeting to give a presentation of written report(s) on their work, which reflect

¹ Track II activities have been compiled by the ARF Unit and the list appears on the ARF Net (www.aseanregionalforum.org).

the consensus of their respective members and with prior consultation and consent of ARF participants. The ISG co-chairs would make every effort to ensure that Track II invitees do not raise sensitive issues;

- Reporting Track II activities that are sponsored by ARF participants to the ARF Chair;
- Circulating to ARF participants a compilation of CSCAP and ASEAN-ISIS recommendations made by consensus of their respective members;
- Including Track II experts, when judged appropriate by individual ARF participants, on the participant's national delegations to ARF CBMs, with the understanding that these individuals agree in advance to respect the non-public character of the discussions and that participants include only individuals from their own country(s). The co-chairs of CBMs would make every effort to ensure that such experts do not raise sensitive issues.

6. As the Guidelines for the Operation of the ARF EEPs has been adopted by the 11th ARF, the ARF will consider the EEPs as its major Track II resources for studying possible links/overlaps between Track II recommendations and those of Track I activities and pursuing deeper discussions on a particular issue (s), including on Preventive Diplomacy.

Strengthening Ties between the ARF and other Regional and International Security Organizations

7. Since the 6th ARF endorsed the recommendations on the "enhanced role of the ARF Chairman" in liaising with external parties, including other regional organizations, the ARF Chair has initiated informal contact with other organizations such as United Nations, the OAS (Organization of American States), the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and the NAM (Non-Aligned Movement).

8. Other organizations are doing likewise. In line with its Tashkent initiative to gradually establish a partnership network of multilateral associations active in the Asia Pacific region, the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) has expressed interest in establishing links with the ARF. The OSCE and the CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Activities in Asia) are exploring the modalities for conducting a seminar jointly.

Format and Procedures

9. Based on the agreement that contacts between the ARF and external parties should be carried out for the sharing of information and experiences with prior consultation with all ARF members and their consent, ARF may, at the initial stage, wish to develop contacts with the UN, SCO, CICA, NAM, OAS and OSCE on issues relevant to its work. For the UN, such bodies as UN Office for Drugs and Crime and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate may be given special consideration in view of the significance given by ARF to the related issues.

10. In view of the differing characteristics of various regional and international security organizations, ARF may have to consider the issue of enhancing linkages with specific organizations on a case-by-case basis and in an incremental manner. Modalities of linkages between the ARF and various organizations may differ, without one case necessarily setting a precedent for another. In principle, the external parties with which the ARF may wish to engage should be significant organizations or processes that are deemed of immediate relevance to the ARF and its particular CBM-PD activities.

11. Subject to the above guidelines, preliminary suggestions for ARF contact with such regional and international security organizations include:

- a. Promoting contacts between the ARF Unit and the Secretariats, or between the ARF Chair and the Chairs of other organizations;
- b. Inviting experts from other organizations to provide briefings to ARF ISG, ISM, or CBM activities on specific issues of interest to the ARF, on a case-by-case basis;²
- c. Conducting joint discussions on an informal and voluntary basis;³
- d. Encouraging ARF participants that are also members of other organizations to disseminate information on activities and outcomes of the ARF in those organizations and vice versa.

Review

12. The above Format and Procedures for enhancing ties between Track I and Track II in the ARF, and between the ARF and other regional and international security organizations shall be subject to review whenever the need arises.

² This was the case with the presence of a representative from the OSCE Action Against Terrorism Unit to the ISG in Berlin/Potsdam in 2005 and a representative of SCO to the 4th ISM on CT/TC in 2006.

³ An example of this was when OSCE and ARF participants met informally at the sideline of the ARF Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy in Tokyo in 2004. Thailand, as host, invited ARF participants to attend the OSCE Thailand Conference, on 25-26 April 2006, Bangkok.

