



## **“ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations”**

**44<sup>th</sup> AMM/PMC/18<sup>th</sup> ARF**

**INDONESIA 2011**

**Chair’s Statement**

**18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum**

**23 July 2011**

**Bali, Indonesia**

1. The Eighteenth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2011 in Bali, Indonesia, was chaired by His Excellency Dr. R. M. Marty M. Natalegawa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.
2. The Meeting was attended by the Foreign Ministers and Representatives of all ARF Participants. The Secretary-General of ASEAN was also in attendance. The List of Delegates appears as **ANNEX 1**.
3. The Ministers reiterated the importance of the ARF as a primary forum to discuss political and security issues in the region. They underlined the role of ASEAN as the main driving force within the ARF to uphold its significant role in the evolving regional architecture. The Meeting also underscored the need to pursue actively the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement 2020 in a consistent and

comprehensive manner. To bring the discussion within the ARF framework from the phase of confidence building measures to preventive diplomacy, the Meeting adopted the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan which appears as **ANNEX 2**.

### **Highlights of Discussion on Regional and International Issues**

4. The Ministers expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the people and Government of Norway for the loss of lives and damage caused by the ruthless shooting and bombing in Oslo, Norway, on Friday, 22 July 2011. The Ministers also conveyed their heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the people and Government of India for the loss of lives and damage caused by the string of bombings in Mumbai, India, on Wednesday, 13 July 2011. The Ministers condemn these heinous acts of terrorism and stand ready to support Norway and India in their efforts to recover from these devastating tragedies.

5. The Ministers noted with appreciation the outcomes of the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, which was held in Jakarta on 7-8 May 2011. At the 18<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Leaders issued 3 (three) Leaders' Joint Statements namely: the Joint Statement on the ASEAN Community in the Global Community of Nations, the Joint Statement on the Establishment of an ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation, and the Joint Statement on Enhancing Cooperation against Trafficking in Persons in Southeast Asia. In this context, the Ministers also noted that at the Summit, the Leaders addressed priorities such as ASEAN Connectivity, food and energy security, conflict resolution and management, regional architecture, a people-oriented and people-centered ASEAN, disaster management, the East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Community in a global community of nations.

6. In the discussion on regional security architecture, the Ministers welcomed the progress of the ARF in achieving and entering the phase of preventive diplomacy while continuing to strengthen confidence-building measures process. The Ministers reaffirmed that the ARF should serve as a platform for countries in the region to deal with challenges in the security environment while continuing to uphold the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Ministers noted that multilateralism has flourished in East Asia and Asia-Pacific in recent years. In this context, the Ministers welcomed the establishment of the ADMM-Plus, the inaugural meeting of which was convened in Ha Noi on 12 October 2010, and the expansion of the East Asia Summit to include the Russian Federation and the United States of America. In this regard, the Ministers encouraged the ARF to pursue an ideal synergy with the other ASEAN-led mechanisms, through coordination as well as constructive engagement and communication.

7. The Ministers welcomed the meeting between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea's Heads of Delegation to the Six Party Talks in Bali, Indonesia, and expressed the hope that the inter-Korean Dialogue should be sustained in the future. They emphasized that the inter-Korean Dialogue is a positive step in the efforts to creating an environment conducive toward the resumption of the Six Party Talks. To this end, the Ministers noted that the ARF, where all six members to the Six Party Talks are also participants, could also contribute in forging such conducive atmosphere for the resumption of the Six Party Talks.

8. The Ministers reaffirmed that the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is essential not only for the enduring peace and stability in the region but also the integrity of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. In this context, they expressed concern

about the DPRK's uranium enrichment activities and called on the DPRK to comply fully with its international obligations and commitments, by abandoning all existing nuclear programs. Furthermore, they underlined the importance of addressing humanitarian concerns of the international community, such as the issues of abduction and family reunion.

9. The DPRK responded that their uranium enrichment activities are an exercise of its legitimate right of a sovereign state for peaceful purposes. On the abduction issue, the DPRK responded further that the matter has already been settled.

10. While Japan stated the issue remains unresolved.

11. The Ministers welcomed the recent finalization and adoption of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) at the recent ASEAN PMC+1 with China. The Ministers further reaffirmed the importance and continued relevance of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) of 2002, as a milestone document between ASEAN Member States and China, embodying their collective commitment to promoting peace, stability and mutual trust and to ensuring the peaceful resolution of disputes in the area, in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They looked forward to the full and effective implementation, in letter and spirit, of the DOC to promote conducive conditions with a view to building confidence and strengthening peace in the South China Sea through, among others, cooperative activities and projects.

12. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of maritime security and safety in the South China Sea. They stressed the importance of promoting a peaceful,

friendly and harmonious environment in the South China Sea for maintaining and enhancing peace, stability, economic growth and prosperity in the region. The Ministers called on all parties concerned to demonstrate friendly and cooperative undertakings by continuing to exercise self-restraint, as well as promote confidence-building measures in the South China Sea. They also encouraged the need to move towards the eventual establishment of a regional code of conduct (COC) in the South China Sea as provided in the DOC.

13. The Ministers were briefed by the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar on the progress and the political development made in the country and its enhanced relations with other countries following the General Election in 2010 and the formation of the new government on 30 March 2011. The Ministers took note of the recent developments in Myanmar and encouraged Myanmar to fulfill its own commitment in achieving the Seven Step Roadmap to Democracy. The Ministers continue to render their support to Myanmar on its reform efforts, including in pursuing economic reforms, genuine national reconciliation, unity and reconsolidation, the release of all political prisoners as well as the transition to democracy in the country that will contribute to sound progress. In this regard, they emphasized the need for Myanmar to continue to work closely with ASEAN and the United Nations.

14. The Ministers recalled the importance of the International Court of Justice's order of 18 July 2011 on the request for the indication of provisional measures on the Thailand and Cambodia border issue, which include, inter alia, that both Parties shall continue the cooperation which they have entered into within ASEAN and, in particular, allow the observers appointed by that organization to have access to the provisional demilitarized zone. The Ministers further welcomed the continuing commitment expressed by both Cambodia and Thailand to resolve their differences by peaceful means, with

the appropriate engagement of Indonesia, as current Chair of ASEAN. In this regard, the Ministers expressed their support to Indonesia, Chair of ASEAN, to continue to undertake consultations with Cambodia and Thailand on the above matter, including on the early assignment of the Indonesian Observer Team (IOT).

15. The Ministers discussed recent developments in Afghanistan. They expressed support for reconstruction efforts and peaceful transition to democratic governance in Afghanistan. The Ministers also highlighted the need to advance economic development in Afghanistan, particularly within the framework of capacity building, such as occupation training programs and other technical assistance in order to improve the welfare of local communities and develop Afghanistan's human resources.

16. The Ministers supported the international efforts in non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy. They stressed the importance of moving toward the universalization of the Additional Protocol. In working toward the goal of a nuclear weapons-free world, Ministers underscored the importance of implementing the consensus outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and expressed their support for the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit to be held in the Republic of Korea. Ministers also called on all ARF Participants to start immediately the Conference on Disarmament, within the agreed context of the comprehensive and balanced programme of work negotiations on a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). They encouraged those ARF participants that have not done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Ministers called on Iran to take steps to resolve international concerns about its nuclear program and abide by UN Security Council Resolutions 1737, 1747, 1803 and

1929. Ministers supported increased efforts on international nuclear safety, including through the work of the IAEA. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the Biological Weapons Convention and called on States Parties to work constructively towards strengthening the regime at the seventh Review Conference to be held in Geneva in December.

17. The Ministers re-emphasized the importance of preserving the region of Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the SEANWFZ Treaty. The Ministers noted their support for ongoing efforts designed to secure the signing of the SEANWFZ Protocol by the Nuclear Weapon States, which would strengthen the Treaty's contribution to regional and international stability and security.

18. The Ministers reiterated their calls for a peaceful solution in managing conflicts in the Middle East. Regarding the recent developments in Northern Africa, the Ministers stressed the need for all parties concerned to work towards a peaceful solution and the respect for popular aspiration for peace and justice. Furthermore, they welcomed the growing political will to pursue good governance as the foundation for a sustainable environment of stability and perpetual peace in many countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa.

19. The Ministers followed with continued concern developments in Fiji, including especially the human rights situation. They reiterated their expectation of the return to democratic life in Fiji. The Ministers expressed readiness to support such an outcome. The Meeting urged continued engagement between Fiji and the Pacific Islands Forum's Ministerial Contact Group (MCG) and the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG).

20. The Ministers expressed condolences to ARF participants affected by the spate of disasters over the past year. On the issue of disaster management, the Ministers recognized the importance to develop a 'Whole of Government' approach to ensure the coordination between civilian and military officials dealing with disaster relief operations. Ministers acknowledged the substantive and practical contributions made by the ARF to regional disaster management and response efforts, including through this year's ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx 2011) co-sponsored by Indonesia and Japan in Manado, Indonesia, and encouraged the ARF to sustain these efforts.

21. The Ministers agreed that the ARF should take account of the disaster management and response agendas evolving in other key regional institutions. In this context, they encouraged the ARF to make efforts in pursuing synergy and coordination with other existing regional mechanisms on disaster management, including, inter alia, the ADMM Plus, EAS, and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre), in terms of policy and guidance on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, and to promote networking of centres and facilities with humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) capabilities in the region, including the WFP Humanitarian Response Depot in Subang, Malaysia, and the Utapao airport facilities in Thailand. They also encouraged enhanced cooperation in the area of capacity-building which would be facilitated through a regional stocktake of capabilities that could be undertaken by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) and other centers in the region.

22. The Ministers took note of the discussion on the non-traditional security threats in the region. They acknowledged that these threats continue to



cause major concerns and pose serious challenges to peace and stability in the region. On the issue of counter-terrorism and transnational crimes, the Ministers encouraged the ARF to further enhance the coordination among its participants to tackle these transnational threats.

23. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to combat people smuggling and trafficking in persons. In line with the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement in Enhancing Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons in South East Asia, they stressed the importance of continued bilateral and regional cooperation, including through the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, to address the impact of these and other transnational crimes. In this regard, Ministers welcomed the initiation of the Regional Cooperation Framework, endorsed by Bali Process Ministers on 30 March 2011, as an important step towards building a sustainable regional response to irregular migration.

24. The Ministers took note of Timor-Leste's intention to officially become a full member of ASEAN. In this regard, ASEAN is considering Timor-Leste's intention.

### **Review of Activities of the Current Inter-Sessional Year (August 2010 – July 2011)**

25. The Ministers noted the active role by the ARF in ensuring and maintaining peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region through the convening of ARF activities during the inter-sessional year 2010/2011. They commended the work of the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) in Surabaya on 10 June 2011 and ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs & PD), co-

chaired by Indonesia and Australia, which was held in Bali, on 1-2 December 2010, and in Sydney, Australia, on 7-8 April 2011. The Ministers noted the Reports and endorsed the recommendations contained therein. The Report of the ARF SOM is at **ANNEX 3** and the Co-Chairs' Summary Reports of the ISG on CBMs & PD appear as **ANNEX 4**.

26. The Ministers appreciated the contribution of the defence officials and highlighted the important role of the defence track in the ARF process. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the high-level interaction among the ARF defence officials in identifying and reviewing the ARF position and delineation with other regional mechanism such as the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the ADMM-Plus. In relation to this, the Ministers noted the Reports of the Defense Officials' Dialogue and the Report of the Eighth ASEAN Regional Forum Security Policy Conference (ASPC) hosted by Indonesia. These Reports are in **ANNEX 5**.

27. The Ministers welcomed the results of the 10<sup>th</sup> ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) co-chaired by the Thailand and the United States, held on 2-3 September 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 6**.

28. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) co-chaired by Japan, Indonesia and New Zealand, held on 14-15 February, 2011 in Tokyo, Japan. This Meeting finalized the draft of the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 7**.

29. The Ministers were informed about the convening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) co-

chaired by the United States, Singapore and China held on 23-25 February 2011 in Las Vegas, the United States. This Meeting has prepared the draft ARF Work Plan on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (NPD) to be further submitted for finalization at the ARF SOM. They welcomed the results of the Meeting as reflected in the Co-Chairs' Summary Report which appears as **ANNEX 8**.

30. The Ministers welcomed the results of the 9<sup>th</sup> Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC) co-chaired by Malaysia and Japan, on 29-31 May, 2011 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This Meeting noted the inclusion of new priority areas as well as the expansion of an existing priority area in the new ARF Work Plan on CTTC. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 9**.

31. The Ministers noted other ARF activities which were completed in the inter-sessional year 2010-2011:

- a. ARF Meeting on the Development of Table Top Exercise (TTEEx) for the ARF DiREx 2011, Bandung, Indonesia, 5-7 August 2010;
- b. ARF DiREx 2011 Initial Planning Conference and Site Survey (IPC/SS), Manado, Indonesia, 23-27 August 2010;
- c. 2<sup>nd</sup> ARF Seminar on Laws and Regulations on Disaster Relief Cooperation, Beijing, China, 29-31 August 2010;
- d. ARF Workshop on Biorisk Management, Manila, the Philippines, 28-30 September 2010;
- e. 14<sup>th</sup> ARF Heads of Defense/Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting (HDUCIM), Washington D.C., the United States, 6-10 November 2010;

- f. ARF Seminar on International Security Implications of Climate Change, Brussels, Belgium, 19-20 November 2010;
- g. ARF Training on Developing a Common Framework for Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, Recovery and Reconstruction in Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, 25-26 November 2010;
- h. ARF DiREx 2011 Final Planning Conference and Site Survey (FPC/SS), Manado, Indonesia, 13-17 December 2010;
- i. 5th ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) Meeting Dili, Timor Leste, 27-28 January 2011;
- j. ARF Seminar on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Manila, the Philippines, 8-9 March 2011; and
- k. ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx) 2011, Manado, Indonesia, 15-19 March 2011;

32. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the convening of the ARF DiREx 2011 in Manado, Indonesia, on 15-19 March 2011, which was co-hosted by Indonesia and Japan. They highlighted the results of the Exercise in enhancing coordination in the field of disaster relief based on the principle of “civilian-led, military supported.” They welcomed the recommendations of the Exercise to conduct joint field exercises on a regular basis, every two years, while convening table-top exercises in between. In this regard, the Ministers were encouraged by the indication made by the Republic of Korea to host the next ARF DiREx. The Ministers also noted the importance of future exercises being coordinated with activities in the East Asia Summit and the ADMM-plus.

33. The Ministers noted the draft Concept Paper prepared by the United States regarding the establishment of the ARF Transnational Threat Information-sharing Centre (ATTIC). The Ministers considered that the draft

Concept Paper still needed to be further examined and tasked the next Meeting of the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD to deliberate on this proposal. The Ministers approved plans to hold a series of concept development workshops in order to address ARF Participants' concerns and questions.

34. The Ministers took note of the Russian Federation's draft Statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the ARF Participating States on Cooperation in Ensuring International Information Security. They were also of the view that the draft would need further consideration by ARF Participants and therefore they requested the next Meeting of the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD to review the draft.

35. The Ministers approved the Concept Paper on Best Practices for Implementation of a Biorisk Management System.

### **Programme of Work for the Next Inter-sessional Year**

36. The Ministers agreed that the ARF should continue to promote confidence building measures while building its preventive diplomacy agenda. They welcomed the offer by Cambodia and New Zealand to co-chair the ISG on CBMs & PD in the next inter-sessional year. The Ministers noted that the first meeting of the ISG on CBMs and PD for the inter-sessional year 2011-2012 will be held in the second half of 2011 and the second meeting will be held in the first half of 2012.

37. The Ministers agreed that the ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings on Disaster Relief, on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crimes, on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and on Maritime Security should continue their work as the priority areas of cooperation within the ARF framework. In this regard,

the Ministers welcomed the offer from Indonesia and Australia to co-chair the 11<sup>th</sup> ISM on DR in 2012, from Viet Nam and Canada to co-chair the ISM on CTTC in the next inter-sessional year, from the Philippines, Japan and Australia to co-chair the ISM on NPD in 2012, and from Indonesia, ROK and the United States to co-chair the 4<sup>th</sup> ISM on MS for the next inter-sessional year that will be held in the first-quarter of 2012.

38. The Ministers reaffirmed the process whereby all proposed ARF activities should first be discussed at the ISG/ISM level and agreed to by the ARF SOM. In this regard, the Ministers approved the List of ARF Track I Activities for the next inter-sessional year (August 2011 - July 2012) which appears as **ANNEX 10**.

### **Future Direction of ARF**

39. The Ministers welcomed Cambodia as the next Chair and Brunei Darussalam as the next Vice-Chair of the 19<sup>th</sup> ARF, whose terms begin on 1 January 2012.

40. The Ministers supported the idea of streamlining the established practices of the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD and the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue (DOD). In this context, the Ministers recommended this be further discussed in the next inter-sessional year.

41. The Ministers agreed to adopt the ARF Work Plan on Maritime Security (MS), which they are confident will contribute to promoting awareness and concrete cooperation on maritime security related issues in the region. The Ministers tasked the ARF Senior Officials to work out the details of the Work Plan, including specific projects and list of Lead Countries or Co-Sponsors

that ARF Participants may wish to submit to the Work Plan. The Work Plan appears as **ANNEX 11**.

42. The Ministers appreciated the efforts to update the ARF Work Plan on CTTC. This updated Work Plan should reflect the proposed new priority areas, as well as the expansion of the scope of bioterrorism to include chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear (CBRN) aspects. The Work Plan appears as **ANNEX 13**.

43. The Ministers reaffirmed that the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement shall move the ARF process forward at a pace comfortable to all Participants. They underscored the need for the ARF to become a more “action-oriented” forum, with deeper engagement in preserving peace and stability in the region. The Ministers stressed the importance for the POA’s implementation to be reviewed and evaluated annually by the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD and the ARF SOM. The Ministers noted with appreciation the Matrix of the Status of Implementation of the ARF Hanoi Plan of Action (**Annex 14**) prepared by the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat. This Matrix will serve as a tool to monitor the progress of the implementation of the POA.

44. The Ministers commended the ARF Unit for its excellent efforts in assisting the ARF Chair during this inter-sessional year, including through regularly updating the Matrix of ARF Decisions and Their Status (**Annex 15**) as well as making available ARF documents on the ARF Net. Taking into account the increased volume of the ARF activities and future work of the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action, the Ministers reiterated their support for strengthening the capacity and resources of the ARF Unit. In this

regard, the Ministers hoped to see further strengthening of the ARF Unit as part of the ongoing comprehensive review and strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat.

45. The Ministers underlined the relevance of the ARF as the central pillar in the evolving regional architecture, in particular within the framework of political and security cooperation. The Ministers noted the establishment of the ADMM-Plus and the expansion of the East Asia Summit (EAS) which would contribute constructively to the evolving regional architecture. In this regard, they underscored the need for these mechanisms to synergize and complement each other's work and develop closer linkages as well as to avoid any duplication between the said mechanisms. Furthermore, they emphasised the importance of the ARF achieving ideal synergy with the ADMM-Plus.

46. The Ministers underlined the need to further utilize the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) Meeting and welcomed the offer from Thailand and the United States of America to host the 6<sup>th</sup> ARF EEPs Meeting in 2012. The Ministers agreed to task the ARF EEPs to conduct a study on the elaboration of the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan's implementation, including on the suggestion to expand the role of the ARF EEPs. Ministers further agreed that the next meeting of the EEPs would provide an ideal opportunity for the ARF to prepare a voluntary observer team, comprising ARF officials and representatives of the EEPs, for Timor-Leste's elections in 2012 in response to the invitation from the Government of Timor-Leste.

47. In adopting the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan, the Ministers commended Singapore, Indonesia and Australia for the preparation of the Work Plan. The Ministers noted that the Work Plan marked a significant



juncture in the evolution of the ARF from the promotion of confidence building measures to the second stage of developing preventive diplomacy mechanisms, as envisioned by the founders of the ARF in 1994. They expressed high hopes that this Work Plan would pave the way for the ARF to reach a higher level of cooperation as well as to become a more “action-oriented” Forum, beneficial to its Participants. Ministers encouraged ARF Participants to actively contribute to the work plan and review its implementation as appropriate to ensure it continued to meet the needs and priorities of the ARF.

48. The Ministers welcomed the 2011 ARF Annual Security Outlook, presented by Indonesia, which has applied the Simplified Standardized Format. They expressed appreciation for the contributions to the 12<sup>th</sup> ARF ASO. The Ministers stressed the need to further promote transparency among ARF Participants through the publication of the ARF ASO. The Ministers expressed confidence that the standardized ARF ASO would become an essential instrument for the promotion of confidence building measures and mutual understanding through greater transparency between ARF Participants. Noting the adoption of the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan, the Ministers encouraged the ARF to consider how the ASO might be used to identify possible preventive diplomacy activities. The Ministers further noted that the ASEAN Security Outlook, due to be published for the first time in 2012, shall also be an integral part of the ARF ASO publication.

49. The Ministers reiterated the importance of enhancing linkages between Track I and Track II, and between the ARF and other regional and international organizations/fora, such as the ASEAN ISIS and CSCAP. The Ministers stressed the need to involve Track II in every ISM and ISG meetings, and this involvement shall be carried out as appropriate.

50. The Ministers noted that disaster management and response is an issue of common concern to all regional organizations and in this regard welcomed the efforts to further strengthen synergy and collaboration in disaster management between the ARF, EAS and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). The Ministers were encouraged by the participation of the APEC Emergency Preparedness Working Group (EPWG) as an observer at the ARF DiREx 2011, which has served as an initial stage of cooperation between the two fora. The Ministers expressed their support for strengthened cooperation between the ARF ISM on DR and the APEC EPWG. The Ministers also stressed the importance of links to and cooperation with disaster management and response activities in the East Asia Summit.

51. The Ministers noted that proper information on ARF activities should be further disseminated with a view to enhancing public awareness on the ARF.

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