



**ASEAN:** *One Community, One Destiny.*

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## **Chairman's Statement of the 19<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Regional Forum**

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 12 July 2012**

1. The Nineteenth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 12 July 2012, was chaired by His Excellency HOR Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia.
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 the main forum to promote peace, security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region through open and frank discussions on political and security issues and action-oriented cooperation. They underlined the role of ASEAN to continue to serve as the primary driving force within the ARF as well as the crucial contribution of the ARF to the evolving regional security architecture. The Meeting also underscored the need to pursue the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement 2020 and all other current work plans in a consistent and comprehensive manner in order to support the development of the ARF from the phase of confidence building to preventive diplomacy.

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

4. The Ministers noted the outcomes of the 20<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, which was held in Phnom Penh, on 3-4 April 2012, during which the ASEAN Leaders adopted four documents, namely: the ASEAN Leaders' Declaration on Drug-Free ASEAN, the Phnom Penh Agenda on ASEAN Community Building, the Phnom Penh Declaration on ASEAN: One Community, One Destiny, and the Concept Paper on Global Movement of Moderates. The Ministers noted that at the Summit, the Leaders addressed priorities

such as realising ASEAN integration through implementation of the IAI Work Plan II, advancing the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, realising the ASEAN single market, addressing regional and international peace and security issues such as the South China Sea and the Korean Peninsula, food and energy security, conflict resolution and management, a people-oriented and people-centred ASEAN, disaster management, advancing ASEAN centrality in regional architecture, ARF and ADMM-Plus, ASEAN and external relations, ASEAN Community building and the plan to celebrate the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ASEAN.

5. In the discussion on regional security architecture, the Ministers commended the progress of the ARF in entering the phase of preventive diplomacy while continuing to undertake confidence-building measures. The Ministers reaffirmed that the ARF should continue to serve as a platform for countries in the region to deal with challenges in the security environment while continuing to uphold the principles of peaceful settlement of disputes in the Asia-Pacific based on the principles of international law and use of multilateral mechanisms in finding common solutions to problems. The Ministers noted that regional security remains a key area for dialogue and cooperation. In this context, the Ministers noted the role of the ADMM-Plus which will convene their 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting in Brunei Darussalam, in 2013.

6. The Ministers acknowledged the importance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) as a code of conduct for growing inter-state relations. In this regard, they welcomed the entry into force of the Third Protocol Amending the TAC and the subsequent accession to the TAC by the European Union. The Ministers also noted the accession to the TAC by the United Kingdom.

7. The Ministers underlined the importance of peace, security and stability on the Korean Peninsula and urged concerned parties not to take any further provocation actions and to comply with their respective obligations under the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and their commitment under the 2005 Six-Party Talks Joint Statement. The Ministers further reiterated the call for all parties concerned to explore all possibilities to engage in peaceful dialogue which would lead to the creation of an atmosphere of trust and confidence among the concerned parties. The Ministers noted the successful visit of H.E. HOR Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia to Pyongyang, Democratic Republic of Korea on 3-4 June 2012, in his capacity as both the ASEAN Chair and the ARF Chair. The visit has highlighted the enhancing role of the ARF Chair.

8. The Ministers emphasized the importance and continued relevance of the DOC of 2002, as a milestone document signed 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, and the adoption of the Guidelines for the implementation of the DOC in July 2011. They noted that this year is the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the DOC. They looked forward to the full and effective implementation of the DOC to promote conducive conditions with a view to building confidence and strengthening peace in the South China Sea through, among others, joint cooperative activities and projects.

9. The Ministers stressed the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the South China Sea, the continued exercise of self-restraint and the non-use of force by all parties concerned, respect for the universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS, and the promotion of confidence-building in this area. They called upon all parties to undertake peaceful resolution of the disputes in the area in accordance with the recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.

10. The Ministers thanked Timor-Leste for the invitation to the ARF participants to send observers to its parliamentary elections on 7 July 2012 and noted that some ARF participants had participated as voluntary election observers on a bilateral basis.

11. The Ministers discussed and expressed deep concern over the situation in Syria which continues to have a severe effect on human lives, peace and stability, and economic development in the country. The Ministers, therefore, called on all parties concerned in Syria for immediate cessation of violence in all its forms through urgent peaceful negotiations with participation of all parties taking into account the legitimate aspiration of all Syrians, and to respect international norms and principles in order to create an environment of peace, security and stability in that country. To this end, the Ministers fully supported the six point plan of the Joint Special Envoy of the UN and the League of Arab States, Mr. Kofi Annan and welcomed the decisions taken by the Action Group for Syria in Geneva on 30 June 2012 and called upon all international and Syrian parties to fully comply with those decisions and to implement them in their entirety.

12. The Ministers exchanged views on recent developments in Afghanistan, emphasizing the need to make concerted efforts to counter the threats of terrorism and illicit drug production and trafficking. They expressed support for reconstruction efforts and peaceful transition to democratic governance in Afghanistan, including its path to self-reliance following the transition to Afghan-led security in 2014. The Ministers highlighted the need to advance economic development in Afghanistan, particularly within the framework of capacity building, such as training programmes and other technical assistance, in order to improve the welfare of local communities and develop human resources.

13. The Ministers welcomed the recent steps taken by Fiji towards holding elections in 2014 and urged continued engagement between Fiji and the Pacific Island Forum, the Commonwealth and the UN.

14. The Ministers supported the international cooperative efforts in non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Ministers also supported the global efforts and initiatives on the non-proliferation and disarmament under current existing international treaties and conventions. In this regard, they agreed to adopt the ARF Work Plan on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (**ANNEX 2**) which provides a set of measures to promote the three central pillars of the global non-proliferation regime: preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), advancing global disarmament efforts, and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. They reaffirmed the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in enhancing coordination and cooperation in the region with regard to the issue of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. They encouraged relevant countries to promote greater cooperation with the IAEA including the adoption of the Additional Protocol and to fully comply with its obligations. The Ministers re-emphasised the importance of preserving the Southeast Asia region 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.

15. The Ministers reiterated their calls for a peaceful solution to managing conflicts in the Middle East. The Ministers expressed support for the on-going processes of political transition in parts of the Middle East and North Africa, and welcomed the efforts and the political will to pursue good governance and democracy as the foundation for stability and peace within the region.

16. The Ministers discussed ways and means of how ARF participants can better address natural disaster issues. The Ministers reiterated the importance to develop a 'whole of government' approach to ensure coordination between civilian and military parties dealing with disaster relief operations. In this connection, the Ministers adopted the new ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief including its Implementation Annex, which appears as **ANNEX 3**. The Ministers encouraged all ARF participants to volunteer to lead the implementation of each priority area of the Work Plan. They encouraged the ARF to make efforts in pursuing synergy and coordination with other existing regional mechanisms on disaster management, including 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. The Ministers were encouraged by the assistance and contribution made by some ARF participants to advance the operationalisation of the AHA Centre and called for further contributions. The Ministers also welcomed the outcomes of the ARF Disaster Relief Exercise (DiREx) 2011 and reiterated their support for the recommendations of the ARF DiREx to

conduct joint field exercises on a regular basis, every two years, while convening table-top exercises in between. In this regard, the Ministers encouraged ASEAN Member States and non-ASEAN ARF participants to volunteer to co-chair the exercises in the inter-sessional years to come. They welcomed Thailand and the Republic of Korea as co-hosts of the ARF DiREx in the inter-sessional year 2012-2013. The Ministers further recognised the practical value of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between ARF participants to strengthen humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capabilities.

17. The Ministers discussed the non-traditional security threats in the region. They acknowledged that these threats are still major challenges to peace and stability in the region. On counter-terrorism and combating transnational crimes, the Ministers encouraged the ARF to further enhance the coordination and cooperation among the ARF participants to overcome these threats. The Ministers welcomed the entry into force of the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism (ACCT) in 2011 and expressed their support to the implementation of the ACCT. The Ministers also underlined the need to foster coordination among ARF participants to ensure security for the use of information and communication technologies and to strengthen detection and surveillance of infectious diseases to ensure early warning for the effective control of outbreaks, whether natural, accidental or intentional in origin. To this end, the Ministers adopted the ARF Statement on Cooperation in Ensuring Cyber Security, which appears as **ANNEX 4**, and the Best Practices for Implementation of a Disease Surveillance System, which appears as **ANNEX 5**. The Ministers agreed to task their relevant Senior Officials to develop an ARF work plan related to cyber security.

#### **Review of Activities of the Current Inter-Sessional Year (July 2011 – July 2012)**

18. The Ministers noted the active role by the ARF in ensuring and maintaining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region through the implementation of ARF activities during the inter-sessional year 2011-2012. They commended the work of the ARF Senior Officials' Meeting (ARF SOM) in Phnom Penh, on 26 May 2012 and the ARF Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy (ISG on CBMs & PD), co-chaired by Cambodia and New Zealand, which was held in Phnom Penh, on 8-9 December 2011, and in Wellington, on 8-9 May 2012. The Ministers noted the Reports and endorsed their recommendations contained therein. The Report of the ARF SOM is in **ANNEX 6** and the Co-Chairs' Summary Reports of the ISG on CBMs & PD are in **ANNEX 7**.

19. The Ministers welcomed the contribution by the defence officials and highlighted the important role of defence in the ARF process. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the high-level interaction among the ARF defence officials in identifying and reviewing the ARF position and delineation with other regional mechanisms such as the ASEAN

Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the ADMM Plus. The Ministers also noted the discussion of the ARF Defence Officials' Dialogue (DOD) on the streamlining of the ARF DODs in one inter-sessional year and supported its recommendation to discontinue the ARF DOD which is held back-to-back with the ARF Ministerial Meeting.

20. The Ministers welcomed the results of the 11<sup>th</sup> ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM on DR) co-chaired by Indonesia and Australia, held in Brisbane, on 16-17 April 2012. The Ministers noted that the ARF ISM on DR had reviewed the implementation of the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief and welcomed the participation of the ACDM Chair to the ARF ISM on DR for the first time. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 8**.

21. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (ISM on MS) co-chaired by Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and the United States, held in San Francisco, on 14-15 June 2012. The Ministers noted the discussion at the ARF ISM on MS on how best the ARF participants can enhance cooperation in civil maritime law enforcement and welcomed for the first time the participation of regional civil maritime agencies in order to build stronger ties and greater mutual understanding among the region's civil maritime professionals. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 9**.

22. The Ministers welcomed the convening of the 4<sup>th</sup> Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) co-chaired by the Philippines, Australia and Japan, held in Sydney, on 8-9 March 2012 which finalised the ARF Work Plan on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (NPD). The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 10**.

23. The Ministers welcomed the results of the 10<sup>th</sup> Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CTTC) co-chaired by Viet Nam and Canada, held in Quang Nam, on 16-17 March 2012. The Co-Chairs' Summary Report appears as **ANNEX 11**.

24. The Ministers also noted other ARF activities which were successfully implemented in the inter-sessional year 2011-2012, as follows:

- a. ARF Workshop on Disease Detection and Surveillance, Manila, the Philippines, 13-15 September 2011;
- b. ARF High-Level Workshop on Confidence-Building Measures and Preventive Diplomacy in Asia and Europe, Berlin, Germany, 27-29 November 2011;
- c. 15<sup>th</sup> ARF Heads of Defence Universities/Colleges/Institutions Meeting, (HDUCIM), Bali, Indonesia, 29 November – 2 December 2011;
- d. ARF Workshop on Non-Proliferation Nuclear Forensics, Bangkok, Thailand, 7-9 December 2011;

- e. 6<sup>th</sup> ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 1-3 February 2012;
- f. ARF Workshop on Proxy Actors in Cyber Space, Quang Nam, Viet Nam, 14-15 March 2012;
- g. 3<sup>rd</sup> ARF Seminar on Laws and Regulations on the Participation in International Disaster Relief by Armed Forces, Beijing, China, 11-12 June 2012;
- h. ARF Election Observation Mission to the Timor-Leste Parliamentary Election, Dili, Timor-Leste, 7 July 2012.

### **Programme of Work for the Inter-Sessional Year (2012- 2013)**

25. The Ministers reiterated the importance of continuing to promote confidence building measures while progressing in implementing preventive diplomacy. The Ministers therefore welcomed the offer by Brunei Darussalam and China to co-chair the ISG on CBMs and PD and ARF DOD in the inter-sessional year 2012-2013. The Ministers noted that the first meeting of the ISG on CBMs and PD for the inter-sessional year 2012-2013 will be held in the second half of 2012 and the second meeting will be held in the first half of 2013.

26. The Ministers agreed to continue the ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings (ISM) in the four priority areas: Disaster Relief, Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and Maritime Security. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed Indonesia and Australia to continue to co-chair the 12<sup>th</sup> ISM on DR in Indonesia in the first quarter of 2013; the Philippines, Australia and Japan to co-chair the 5<sup>th</sup> ISM on NPD in the Philippines in 2013; Indonesia, the Republic of Korea and the United States to co-chair the 5<sup>th</sup> ISM on MS in the Republic of Korea, in April 2013; and **(ASEAN Member State)** and Australia to co-chair the 11<sup>th</sup> ISM on CTTC in the next inter-sessional year.

27. In view of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ARF in 2013, the Ministers welcomed the project of the Commemorative Publication for the 20<sup>th</sup> ARF, proposed by Brunei Darussalam and China. The Concept Paper of the project appears as **ANNEX 12**.

28. The Ministers reaffirmed the procedure that all proposed ARF activities should first be discussed at the ARF ISG/ISM level and agreed to by the ARF SOM. The List of ARF Track I Activities for the next inter-sessional year (July 2012 - July 2013) that has been approved by the Ministers appears as **ANNEX 13**.

### **Future Direction of ARF**

29. The Ministers reiterated the importance of continuing to promote confidence building measures while progress is made in implementing preventive diplomacy. The Meeting welcomed the adoption of the ARF Work Plan on Preventive Diplomacy at the 18<sup>th</sup> ARF in Bali, on 23 July 2011. The Ministers encouraged the ARF participants to take the lead in the implementation of the Work Plan.

30. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed ISG co-chairs' proposal on preventive diplomacy training which would provide a good basis for taking forward the ARF Preventive Diplomacy Work Plan that was agreed in 2011. The Ministers tasked the ARF SOM and the ARF ISG to deliberate further on the proposal, with a view to finalising it on time for the next ARF Ministerial Meeting. The Discussion Paper appears as **ANNEX 14**.

31. The Ministers welcomed Brunei Darussalam as the next Chair and Myanmar as the next Vice-Chair of the 20<sup>th</sup> ARF, beginning on 1 January 2013.

32. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the Hanoi Plan of Action to Implement the ARF Vision Statement to guide the ARF process forward at a pace comfortable to all participants. They reiterated the importance of the ARF to move in a more "action oriented" manner, constructively engaging deeper in preserving peace and stability in the region. The Ministers also emphasised the importance of the annual review of the implementation of the Plan of Action by the ARF ISG on CBMs and PD and the ARF SOM. They noted with appreciation the Matrix on the Status of Implementation of the ARF Hanoi Plan of Action (**ANNEX 15**) prepared by the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat which identified the ARF's progress in implementing the Hanoi Plan of Action. They also tasked the ARF Unit to continue updating the Matrix for consideration of the ARF Ministerial Meeting.

33. The Ministers commended the ARF Unit of the ASEAN Secretariat 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 16**) 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 ARF Unit with necessary resources and manpower, as part of the ongoing strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat itself.

34. The Ministers exchanged views on how best to improve synergies between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus and acknowledged the central role that ASEAN can play in helping to facilitate this process. They agreed that practical steps can be taken to ensure greater coordination between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus, including enhancing



cross-participation and attendance between ARF and ADMM-Plus activities and meetings to promote information sharing between these fora. To this end, the Ministers noted the Discussion Paper on Improving Synergies between the ARF and ADMM-Plus (**ANNEX 17**) which encourages cross-reporting between the ARF and the ADMM-Plus. The Ministers decided that the ADMM-Plus Chair shall be invited to brief the relevant meetings and activities of the ARF from inter-sessional year 2012-2013 onward.

35. The Ministers underlined the need to further utilize the ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs) Meeting as Track 1.5 to assist in advancing the ARF process through providing visionary recommendations. The Ministers took note of the recommendations presented by the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ARF EEPs which was held in Bangkok, on 1-3 February 2012. They also looked forward to the convening of the 7<sup>th</sup> ARF EEPs Meeting and encouraged ARF participants to volunteer convening the meeting in 2013. To further support the ARF EEPs, the Ministers agreed to explore the possibility for the ARF EEP representatives to attend relevant meetings of the ARF ISM and ISG as appropriate.

36. The Ministers welcomed the 2012 ARF Annual Security Outlook (ARF ASO), presented by Cambodia, which has applied the Simplified Standardized Format of the 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 standardised ARF ASO would become an essential instrument for the promotion of confidence building and mutual understanding through greater transparency among ARF participants. The Ministers further noted that the ASEAN Security Outlook is due to be published for the first time in 2012.

37. The Ministers reiterated the importance of continuing to enhance linkages between Track I and Track II, and between the ARF and other regional and international organisations/fora, such as the ASEAN ISIS and CSCAP. The Ministers stressed the need to involve Track II in relevant ISM and ISG meetings, and such involvement shall be carried out as appropriate.

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