

*ARF ASEAN-CTTC-21-22 March 2016*

Co-Chair,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As SOMTC Chair, I am pleased to elaborate some actual activities of the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC). The annual ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and related Meetings are usually to be convened in the month of June in one of the 10 ASEAN Member States with the participation of Senior Officials in charge of transnational crimes; and the Related Meetings are for the Dialogue Partner Countries for their Consultations on transnational crimes such as terrorism, trafficking in persons, drug trafficking, money laundering, arms smuggling, economic crimes, sea piracy, and cybercrime.

Representatives from international organizations such as the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the INTERPOL were also welcomed in attendance at the SOMTC.

The SOMTC focused on three main agenda namely, deliberation and implementation of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint, discussion on the ASEAN post- Agenda and enhancing coordination with other sectoral bodies under all ASEAN pillars in order to promote the way forward for ASEAN to maintain peace and stability in the region.

In total 29 activities covering almost all eight areas of transnational crime have been carried out which demonstrated the success of the implementation of the SOMTC Work Programme 2013-2015.

The year 2016 marks the end of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) Blueprint and the beginning of the ASEAN Political-Security Community 2025.

Subsequently the key deliverables during the inter-sessional year namely, the finalisation of the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) and the ASEAN Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (APA) which were adopted by the ASEAN Leaders on 21 November 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The ASEAN's Leaders inspiration is to establish one vision, one identity, one community. They highlighted that transnational crime has no boundaries and it is increasingly becoming a menace to the society. As such, to effectively protect the ASEAN people, they urged for the enactment of legal instruments to cover all eight areas of transnational crime under the purview of SOMTC.

The annual country reports of the ASEAN Member States indicated enhanced national and regional responses to the areas of transnational crime under the purview of the SOMTC, through development of national legislation; implementation of capacity building initiatives; adherence to regional and international legal documents; as well as strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation among ASEAN Member States and with Dialogue Partners.

The ASEAN Secretariat has the responsibility to brief the Meeting on the recent developments and key decisions made in relevant ASEAN Meetings and mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and others.

The ASEAN Secretariat also would brief the Meeting on the recommendations of the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and Reviewing the ASEAN

Organs, especially on action lines that are relevant to SOMTC. The Meeting was requested to provide their recommendations to the matrix circulated by the ASEAN Secretariat. The Meeting would note that inputs from all ASEAN Sectoral Bodies would be included in the report of the Secretary-General of ASEAN to the ASEAN Summits.

There are SOMTC Working Groups for each lead shepherd country. They annually reported their activities to the SOMTC.

The SOMTC Leaders' Retreat has provided the opportunity for multiple exchanges of views on various issues. The 2015 SOMTC Leaders' Retreat of the 15<sup>th</sup> SOMTC in Siem Reap, Cambodia was resulted the decision of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) just to name a few resultants as followed:

- a. Due to the evolving nature of and increasing threats posed by transnational crime in the region, the AMMTC is to be convened annually;
- b. On Emergency AMMTC: when the need arises, any ASEAN Member State can propose to the AMMTC Chair to call for an Emergency Meeting;
- c. The annual convening of the AMMTC is to begin from 2016; and
- d. The time period of convening SOMTC and AMMTC should be pre-determined to ensure there is sufficient time for preparation between the two Meetings.

To Review of the SOMTC Work Programme, the progress report would then be circulated to SOMTC Focal Points for further inputs with a subsequent deadline for *ad referendum* adoption; **and for Way Forward for SOMTC Work Programme**, the Meeting agreed that all Voluntary Lead Shepherds would submit their respective draft components of the SOMTC Work Programme by 15 July 2015, after which the drafts would

be circulated to SOMTC Focal Points for further inputs. The Work Programme should be adopted on an *ad referendum* basis and submit it to the AMMTC for endorsement.

## **SOMTC PROJECT MATTERS**

### **Updates on the Revised ASEAN Project Appraisal and Approval Process**

The ASEAN Secretariat would inform the Meeting of the revised Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the ASEAN Project Appraisal and Approval Process. The Information Note would be circulated to all SOMTC Focal Points.

### **Status of Pending and On-Going Projects**

All Project Proponents should report the pending and on-going projects to the Meeting for SOMTC information.

### **Overview of Dialogue Partners' Cooperation with ASEAN on Matters Relevant to SOMTC**

The ASEAN Secretariat briefed the Meeting on the status of Dialogue Partners' engagement with ASEAN on matters relevant to SOMTC.

For bilateral consultations such as:

**13<sup>th</sup> SOMTC + China Consultation will be chaired by Thailand;**

**11<sup>th</sup> SOMTC + Japan Consultation (Cambodia)**

**9th SOMTC + Republic of Korea Consultation (Indonesia)**

**13th SOMTC + 3 Consultation (Cambodia)**

**10th SOMTC + Australia Consultation (Philippines)**

**4th SOMTC + Canada Consultation (Singapore)**

**4th SOMTC + the European Union Consultation (Viet Nam)**

**4th SOMTC + India Consultation (Brunei Darussalam)**

**4th SOMTC + New Zealand Consultation (Lao PDR)**

**10th SOMTC + Russia Consultation (Malaysia)**

**6th SOMTC + U.S. Consultation (Myanmar)**

Activities by other Sectoral Bodies involvements are as followed:

- ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) proposes to convene its first Annual Consultation on Human Right-based Approach in the implementation of ACTIP and APA. This First Annual Consultation will be hosted by AICHR Indonesia. One of its objectives of the Consultation is to collate best practices on how human rights-based approach has been implemented on the prevention, protection and assistance program to victims of trafficking in some ASEAN Member States from the perspective of the ACTIP.
- The Meeting on the Draft Work Plan for ACTIP Future Direction was hosted by the Philippines, the voluntary lead shepherd of TIP, on 20-22 January 2016 in Manila. The Draft Work Plan includes four main components, namely:
  1. Work toward the early ratification of ACTIP;
  2. Enhance cross-sectoral cooperation with ASEAN Sectoral-Bodies towards the effective implementation of ACTIP and APA;
  3. Enhance partnership with Dialogue Partners and external partners/entities towards the fight against trafficking in persons; and

#### 4. Work towards the effective implementation of the APA.

- The ASEAN Secretariat introduced a matrix to monitor the implementation of the ASEAN Political Security community (APSC) Blueprint 2025 at the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASCCO) held in the Secretariat premises on 28 January 2016.

The upcoming SOMTC Chair, Indonesia, requested to save the date for 16<sup>th</sup> SOMTC and its Related Meeting, 22 to 27 May 2016 at Borobudur Hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia.