

ARF SOM, 24 May 2013, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei

Agenda 6.1: Outcome of the ARF Disaster Relief Exercise, 7-11 May 2013

Thailand's presentation

- At the outset, Thailand would like to thank the ROK for excellent cooperation leading to the successful conclusion of the ARF DiREx 2013.
- The co-chairs would like to thank participants of the ARF DiREx 2013 for their active contribution toward a successful conclusion of the Exercise. ARF DiREx 2013 was attended by over 1,600 participants from 24 countries and the European Union (represented by Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the UK), as well as those from 8 international organizations.
- Building on the previous exercises in 2009 and 2011, the ARF DiREx 2013 resulted in a strengthening of relationships, partnerships, and networks that would advance ARF participants' ability to rapidly provide coordinated and effective civilian-military disaster reliefs. The ARF DiREx 2013 also acted as a platform for exchange of best practices and identification of areas for improvements for future exercises and actual natural disasters.
- The three main components of the ARF DiREx 2013 included the table top exercise (TTX), field training exercise (FTX), and After Action Review (AAR). The TTX addressed important issues to improve national mechanisms and structures for disaster relief including civil-military cooperation, communication and coordination mechanisms, and public information. It also identified problems and challenges in real situations such as the need for clear procedures, coordination between national, regional and international mechanisms, and communication and information accuracy.
- The FTX was organized in five main scenarios: building collapse, rock slide, chemical leakage, maritime search and rescue, and air operation. Exercises in disaster management and medical response were also held in tandem with the scenarios. FTX participants were able to apply life-saving methodology in terms of search and rescue (SAR) through efficient and effective civilian-military collaboration, as well as gain mutual understanding on multinational disaster response operations at the regional level.

- Both the TTX and the FTX benefited from the presence of a member of the AAR team, who carried out evaluations of each exercise. The recommendations of the AAR report will be presented by my colleague from the Republic of Korea.
- The Co-Chairs' Summary Report of the ARF DiREx, along with the After Action Review Report, will be circulated *ad referendum* prior to the ARF Ministerial Meeting.
- Before I end my presentation, I would like to emphasize that as we move forward in disaster management cooperation we should also bear in the mind the challenge of competing initiatives on disaster management in various regional frameworks. On the one hand, it is a plus for there to be so much interest and activities on disaster management in frameworks such as ASEAN, ARF, EAS, ADMM Plus, amongst others. At the same time, in view of limited resources, we need to start developing better synergies between the various initiatives in the region. We need to encourage better sharing of information and results across frameworks, perhaps starting with a comprehensive unified program of disaster management activities across the region.
- Thank you for your attention. I now turn the floor to the co-host of the ARF DiREx 2013, the Republic of Korea.
