

ARF Annual Security Outlook 2019

B. Contributions by Member Countries

1. Overview of the Regional Security Environment

1. Thailand's ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Chairmanship comes at a time of rapidly evolving geo-strategic dynamics and multi-faceted transboundary challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. There is increased competition amongst the major powers. Transboundary challenges, in particular, transnational crime, terrorism, cybersecurity, maritime security, natural disasters, and pandemics have grown, both in terms of intensity and sophistication. The onset of the Fourth Industrial Revolution has brought forth both disruptive technologies and technological solutions. These developments have brought about immense challenges to regional efforts to promote sustainable peace, security and prosperity, while maintaining ASEAN's centrality and strategic value added.

2. Despite these challenges, the regional security situation remains relatively stable and peaceful. There have been positive developments on key regional issues as a result of multilateralism, regionalism and diplomatic initiatives. These include the efforts to reinforce economic growth in the Asia-Pacific region, the strong momentum of regional integration, the commitment to promote cooperation and partnership between ASEAN and external partners and the promotion of sustainable security through the deepening of strategic trust which will contribute to maintaining the Asia-Pacific region as an area of peace, security and prosperity.

ASEAN Centrality in the Evolving Regional Architecture

3. The strengthening of the ASEAN-centred regional architecture is supported by shared norms and principles of international law, as embodied in key instruments such as the ASEAN Charter, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), and the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), among others. With wider recognition of its governing principles in inter-state relations in response to security challenges in the fast-changing geo-political environment, the TAC has become ever more valid and relevant. Reinforcing the TAC and its principles which will strengthen regional norms and their application to the wider region beyond Southeast Asia, should thus be a priority for ASEAN and its partners, especially the High Contracting Parties to the TAC.

4. The long-term goal is to realise a Strategic New Equilibrium that will be conducive to peace, security and prosperity for all in the Asia-Pacific region, and from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. The 34th ASEAN Summit on 23 June 2019 in Bangkok adopted the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific which is "ASEAN's Vista" on the evolving regional geo-strategic landscape anchored on existing norms and principles including those enshrined under the TAC, and on engagement with partners, not a response to other initiatives existing in the region. It thus aims to promote win-win cooperation in areas that are constructive and mutually beneficial, namely, connectivity, sustainable development, maritime cooperation and economic cooperation. It is based on the principle of inclusiveness and the 3Ms: Mutual Trust, Mutual Respect, and Mutual Benefit.

5. The ASEAN-centered regional architecture comprising the East Asia Summit (EAS) at its apex, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) and the ASEAN Plus One, has provided ASEAN with a strong convening power and a platform to establish rules and norms for a regional order. These fora have provided venues for key players to engage in dialogue for the enhancement of strategic trust, the strengthening of confidence-building measures and the promotion of preventive diplomacy, focusing on win-win cooperation and concrete deliverables. They will ultimately contribute to attaining **"sustainable security"** within the ASEAN region and beyond.

Regional Security Environment

6. There have been some recent positive developments regarding the situation on the Korean Peninsula, with some prospects for continued peaceful dialogue amongst parties concerned. This includes the Meeting between President Putin of Russia and Chairman Kim of the DPRK in April 2019, the Meeting between President Xi of China and Chairman Kim in June 2019, the Summit between U.S. President Trump and Chairman Kim in February and their meeting at the Demilitarised Zone in the Korean Peninsula in June 2019. We hope that all parties concerned will continue peaceful dialogue and work towards establishing lasting peace and stability in a denuclearised Korean Peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration and the Joint Statement by the U.S. and DPRK Leaders. Meanwhile, implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions remains an obligation of the international community. In this connection, the ARF, as an ASEAN-led platform, has a role to play in helping create a conducive environment for peaceful dialogue.

7. The Asia-Pacific region is home to vast maritime areas and important trade and transportation routes. Promoting maritime cooperation, security, safety and connectivity, is therefore one of the region's priorities. Safe and secure Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) are important to enhancing maritime connectivity in the region as well as driving maritime commerce. There have been continuous efforts to address transnational crime at sea, including piracy, armed robbery, trafficking of illicit drugs and goods. Other increasingly important maritime issues, such as marine resources management, including combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Fishing) have fostered cooperation to jointly address the issue. Moreover, to complement these efforts, practical cooperation, maritime domain awareness (MDA), information-sharing and intelligence exchange must also be enhanced.

8. Regarding the South China Sea, there have been positive developments. ASEAN and China continue negotiations on and look forward to an early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct (COC). The completion of the first reading of the Single Draft COC Negotiating Text COC is a welcomed development. ASEAN and China as well as the international community attach importance to ensuring freedom of navigation in and overflight of the South China Sea. In the meantime, all parties concerned should continue to work together to enhance trust and confidence, and exercise self-restraint in order to maintain the positive momentum in relations and create an environment conducive to the peaceful resolution of disputes on the basis of international law, including UNCLOS 1982.

9. Full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) is also important and is being pursued. Win-win functional maritime cooperation in areas of mutual interest, such as marine environmental protection, including addressing the shared challenges of plastic and marine debris, has helped enhance trust and confidence as well as promote the implementation of the Declaration for a Decade of Coastal

and Marine Environmental Protection in the South China Sea. The long-term goal is to ultimately transform the South China Sea into a Sea of Peace, Stability and Sustainable Development, through cooperative actions that are anchored on the ideas of prevention, protection and partnership.

10. The continuation and acceleration of the ASEAN Community integration process has led to enhanced connectivity amongst countries in Southeast Asia and the wider region. While this is positive, it can potentially render the region more vulnerable to the threats of transnational organised crimes, including trafficking in persons and people smuggling, irregular migration and illicit drug trafficking. This landscape requires ASEAN to enhance its border management cooperation through enhanced coordination in all aspects, including information sharing and intelligence exchange, implementing appropriate measures to ensure safety and security from land, air and sea border challenges, and catalysing joint action to help address multifaceted dimensions of transnational crime. There is thus a need to ensure a balanced approach between safety and security on the one hand, and cross-border trade facilitation and the seamless movement of goods and people on the other.

11. Priority should continue to be given to combatting trafficking in persons, people smuggling, and irregular migration. These closely linked concerns are caused by transnational organised crime elements that increase the vulnerability of victims. The critical challenges required the full implementation of the Bohol Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Work Plan 2017-2020.

12. The persistent challenge of drug trafficking, in terms of volume and types, has prompted ASEAN to take further action to address illicit drug activities. These include proactive cooperation through the ASEAN Narcotics Cooperation Center (ASEAN-NARCO) based in Bangkok, the implementation of the ASEAN Work Plan on Securing Communities Against Illicit Drugs (2016-2025) and the ASEAN Cooperation Plan to Tackle Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle (2017-2019), under the framework of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Drug Matters (AMMD). Such cooperation provides a comprehensive strategy to tackle drug-related activities, including investigation and arrest of major drug producers or traffickers, promotion of health and area development, and cooperation with external parties. ASEAN reaffirms the resolute stand against legalization of illicit drugs for non-medical and non-scientific use, in line with the Statement delivered by ASEAN at the 5th Intersessional United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) Meeting of the 61st Commission on Narcotic Drugs on 7-9 November 2018.

13. Over the past several years, cybersecurity has been increasingly in the spotlight. The focus on cybersecurity has reflected the growing regional and international attention to the issue, with regard to a continued attempt to balance the opportunities afforded by the digital economy with the challenges due to the increased sophistication of cyber threats. The landscape requires enhanced cooperation at regional and international levels to ensure a safe, secure and resilient cyberspace, and sufficient capabilities to combat cybercrime. Although several cyber management attempts are in place, more actions remain to be done, including adoption of a risk-centric, layered-defence approach to cyber threats. This involves promoting sufficient and well qualified security professionals in the field of innovative technology. Moreover, achieving greater prosperity in the digital economy prompts ASEAN to ensure safety and security for both the business sector and the public. The main tasks for ASEAN include the identification of a coordinating mechanism between ASEAN and ASEAN-led frameworks related to cybersecurity and development of a list of voluntary, practical norms of state behaviour in cyberspace, to ensure that such challenges areas are addressed in a comprehensive and

coordinated manner. Equally important is training and capacity-building, and this is where the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre plays an important catalytic role in the region.

14. The threat of terrorism and violent extremism is likely to persist in 2019. ASEAN needs to address the significant security risks posed by returning combatants of nationals to the region from other regions affected by terrorism and violent extremism. ASEAN's agenda on counter terrorism and violent extremism is guided by the 2007 ASEAN Convention on Counter Terrorism (ACCT), which aims to deepen cooperation between law enforcement and intelligence agencies to counter, prevent, and suppress terrorism. Collective efforts involving ASEAN and ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC), the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC), the East Asia Summit, and the ARF, need to be further strengthened to undertake a comprehensive and coordinated action in countering terrorism and radicalisation. Combatting terrorism requires a sustainable approach in addressing the root causes and the conditions conducive to the spread of radicalised ideologies. This would include poverty eradication, encouraging tolerance and utilising the moderation agenda, and promoting inter-faith and intra-faith dialogues in the region, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

2. National Security and Defence Policy

Overview of National Security and Defence Policy

15. In relation to Thailand's national security and defense policy, the Ministry of Defense has published its policy statement in an effort to promote transparency, and to enhance trust and confidence between Thailand and ASEAN Member States (AMS), as well as with other partners within and beyond the Asia-Pacific region. According to the policy statement, the missions of the Ministry of Defense are outlined as follows:

a. To safeguard and uphold the institution of the Monarchy with His Majesty the King as the Head of State and the Highest Commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, so that the Institution of the Monarchy remains as the center that harmonises hearts and souls of the Thai people, and as the most important institution of the nation, and to accomplish this through making every effort in cooperation with other government agencies.

b. To enhance defense cooperation with neighbouring nations, ASEAN Member States, friendly nations, and international organisations, both at bilateral and multilateral levels, in order to support the arrangement of the security environment, the collective building of confidence, peace and stability, with focus on the prevention and reduction of conflict with neighbouring countries. Moreover, the Ministry of Defense aims to maintain a positive image of the nation within the international arena and seeks to strengthen defense cooperation with the international community through support for peace and humanitarian missions under the UN umbrella. Furthermore, the Ministry of Defense will initiate and develop a wider scope of military cooperation, and maintain the balance of relationships between nations in the region, and will seek to expedite the process of activities under cooperation frameworks between Thailand and neighbouring countries for the survey and demarcation of boundaries, as well as support the integration of the ASEAN Community, especially the ASEAN-Political Security Community.

c. To enhance the integration of strengths and capabilities with every sector by incorporating every aspect of national powers to support national defense. During peace time, the Ministry of Defense will utilize all resources for the benefit of the country, through a comprehensive approach in enhancing every aspect of national powers to support all operative missions for the security of the nation. This can be achieved by prioritising support towards the urgent policies of the Government, especially on national reformation, the arrangement of social discipline, the restriction of illegal activities and the reconciliation of the people in the nation. Moreover, emphasis will also be given to accelerating the restoration of peace and safety for the lives of the people in the southernmost provinces, and for the security of their assets. Furthermore, the Ministry of Defense will utilise all resources to support the safeguarding of national interests, the national development for security purposes, and the provision of assistance to the people, especially on problems arising from disasters, epidemic and communicable diseases. Also, focus will be given to solve problems relating to natural resources and environment, water resource management, illegal immigration and other transnational crimes including arms, drugs and human trafficking, piracy, computer crimes and international terrorism.

d. To enhance the capability of the armed forces and the national defense system to ensure readiness for safeguarding the independence, sovereignty, security and national interests through both the preparation of force, and the use of force, by adhering to the principle of the maintenance of forces for self-defense purposes. Priorities will be given to the deployment of forces for joint operations, and the development of personnel for combat readiness. Moreover, efforts will be made towards improving proactive intelligence gathering to ensure timely strategic warnings and the provision of information for decision making. Furthermore, in enhancing the capabilities, emphasis will be given to improving joint logistics by utilizing the standard platform of military equipment, as well as other equipment with potential for effective utilization by each service, and also by strengthening cooperation with the people to ensure that military missions are supportively carried out during peace time. In addition, the Ministry of Defense will seek to develop the reserve systems in accordance with military necessities, those of which include development of reserve forces for mobilisation, military equipment and energy to ensure preparedness in responding to the nation's security needs.

e. To strengthen the defense industry through the integration of capabilities from both public and private sectors, and to capitalise on the cooperation between AMS and work towards becoming self-reliant with regards to the production of the necessary military equipment. Moreover, the Ministry of Defense seeks to strengthen the scientific and technological aspects of its defense industry in order to achieve equal standards with those of other nations in the region, and to work with all sectors at both the domestic and international levels. Furthermore, the Ministry of Defense aims to enhance the standard and the secureness of its information technology and communication systems, and to improve its ability to respond to the threat of cyber warfare.

f. To give priority to the provision of assistance to war veterans and their families to enable them to live in society with honour and dignity, and to enhance the morale of all personnel who had served to defend the nation. Also, efforts will be given to the enhancement of the capabilities of war veterans so that they can contribute further towards national security.

g. To establish the appropriate structure for the Armed Forces and work towards the enhancement of the quality of personnel within the Ministry of Defense, through increasing their knowledge, skills, sets of morals and ethics, and to ensure that all personnel are equipped with physical and mental preparedness in carrying out their duties. Also, appropriate work will

be given towards the improvement of the benefits of its personnel to give a morale boost for their work. In addition, the Ministry of Defense will ensure professionalism from its personnel, and support further integration with the population in all aspects in order to maintain national security.

h. To enhance armed forces capability in order to counter the non-traditional threats, the Ministry of Defence focuses on administration reform before commencing to the restructuring of the armed forces. For the first phase of the reform, priority will be given to the preparation of personnel, equipment, education, defence industry research and development for self-reliance, improvements to the national defence capabilities, joint operations with allied armed forces.

i. Promotion of confidence in the capabilities of the armed forces is an important means to support regional efforts in addressing security-related challenges. In this connection, Thailand's defence budget for fiscal year 2018 amounted to 111,962 million baht (approximately 3,394 billion US dollars). This is equivalent to 1.44 percent of Thailand's national Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

16. In an effort to promote military cooperation and mutual trust and confidence, the Ministry of Defense has set out its immediate policies to use all existing security mechanisms at all levels to contribute towards regional security. With regard to its Immediate Policies for the 2018 Fiscal Year (1 October 2017 – 30 September 2018), the Ministry of Defense has set out to ensure regional peace, stability and security through implementation of the following policies:

a. To restructure and better the composition and deployment of troops along the borders in order to support the launch of the ASEAN Community and the establishment of the Special Economic Development Zones. Here, emphasis will be given towards the collective readjustments of troop deployments, enhancement of the command and control systems, and the strengthening of the legal system by all authorities concerned.

b. To maintain and strengthen military cooperation with neighboring countries, ally nations and major powers, and to reinforce the strong ties with international organizations in order to address international threats through collective efforts. Amongst others, this includes ensuring preparedness for participation in peacekeeping operations under the UN framework.

c. To support the Government's undertakings to realise the priorities set out in the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, with particular focus on the political-security pillar of the ASEAN Community. The Ministry of Defense will aim to support the Government by placing importance on the strengthening of military cooperation with AMS and other partners within and beyond the region. Moreover, the Ministry of Defense seeks to maintain a leading role in developing relations within the security cooperation frameworks, and in particular, in the ADMM, the ADMM-Plus, and the ARF for peace, stability and security.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Defense will give importance to participation in cooperation frameworks which will provide opportunities for the armed forces of the region to engage in practical cooperation to promote mutual interests of participating countries and enhance capacities for the future, such as the activities of the ADMM's initiatives and the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups, which includes the expansion of cooperation with other civilian agencies and international organisations to confront non-traditional challenges in the region. At the 34th ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Leaders approved the inclusion of the ASEAN Center of Military Medicine (ACMM) as a subsidiary body under the ADMM in Annex 1 of the ASEAN Charter. The Center will add value to the overall humanitarian

assistance and disaster relief framework of the region, as well as complement the work of the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) in improving the region's response and coordination mechanisms.

d. Thailand reiterated its commitments to addressing the issues related to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU Fishing), issues concerned with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Irregular Migration in the Indian Ocean, forest encroachment and preservation measures, problems of community waste, spread of drought and addressing problems from haze caused by forest fires.

National Contributions to Regional Security

Joint Exercise

17. Cobra Gold is one of the largest multinational exercises in the Asia Pacific region which has been held annually in Thailand since 1982. It is known to be one of the largest theater security cooperation exercises in the Indo-Pacific, with aims to strengthen military ties, and improve capabilities and interoperability of participating countries, through planning and conducting combined and joint operations over a range of both civic and military activities, including enhancing maritime security, preventing and mitigating emerging disease threats, and responding to large-scale disasters.

18. The 38th iteration of the Cobra Gold theater exercises took place during 12-23 February 2019 at various locations throughout Thailand. This year's exercises focused on 'light training', featuring three main activities: (1) STAFF Exercise (STAFFEX), (2) Field Training Exercise (FTX), and (3) Humanitarian Civic Assistance (HCA). There were an estimated 8,784 military officers from 29 countries in attendance, seven of which (Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the United States) were full participants. The Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) drill had participants from ten countries (Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Fiji). Seven countries (Thailand, the U.S., Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, and Malaysia) participated in the main training, while two others (China and India) took part in an additional assistance program drill. Furthermore, 11 countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Viet Nam, Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Israel, Germany, Sweden, and Switzerland) attended other exercises as observer countries ("COLT"). Cobra Gold contributes to building trust and confidence as well as practical cooperation through joint training and exchange of valuable experiences.

Peacekeeping

19. Thailand has always been committed to the cause of United Nations peacekeeping and has been a troop-contributing country since 1958. As of 2019, Thailand contributes an engineering contingent of 273 personnel to UNMISS in South Sudan, as well as military and police officers to three UN peacekeeping missions, namely UNAMID in Darfur, UNMOGIP in India and Pakistan, and UNMISS in South Sudan. The deployment of a Horizontal Military Engineering Company (HMEC) to join the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is in pursuit to fulfill the pledge at the Leaders' Meeting on Peacekeeping 2015, attended by the Thai Prime Minister, on 28 September 2015. The troop arrived in Juba and commenced its operation since 23 December 2018. The Thai HMEC's main responsibilities include road construction and infrastructure building in the United Nations military camp. The contingent also endeavour to promote development initiatives and the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) bestowed by

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great to assist in achieving a sustained peace which complements Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

20. Furthermore, Thailand supports the work of the High-Level Panel established by the UN Secretary-General and chaired by H.E. Mr. Jose Ramos-Horta to conduct a comprehensive review of UN peace operations and its report submitted to the UN Secretary-General. In addition, Thailand also supports the UN Secretary-General's initiative on Action for Peacekeeping by endorsing the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN peacekeeping Operations to reaffirm the commitment to strengthen United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.

21. Primarily, Thailand puts the protection of women and children, as well as elimination of sexual exploitation and abuse, high on agenda. Thus, Thailand supports the initiative of the UN Secretary-General by signing the Compact between the UN Secretary-General and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand: Commitment to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse in 2018. The document reaffirms the commitment of the Royal Thai Government and the United Nations to prevent, support and comprehensively assist victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel and non-United Nations personnel deployed under a Security Council mandate.

22. In addition to the standard training requirements, Thailand and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict organized training on child protection to the HMEC for troops deployed to the UNMISS on 4-6 June 2018 so as to ensure enhanced safety of children in conflict situations.

23. Given that the Communique of the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial Meeting in November 2017 recognized the existence of barriers to the development and deployment of qualified women peacekeepers, Thailand therefore has called on the United Nations to review rules and regulations that may hinder the roles and ratio of female officers joining peacekeeping operations on the ground.

24. The Thai military has also been active in promoting enhanced cooperation within ASEAN and with partner countries on peacekeeping training. In this regard, Thailand has initiated and continues to support the ASEAN network of peacekeeping centres and an Expert Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations to promote training and capacity-building of peacekeeping personnel.

Counter-terrorism

25. The region has witnessed continuing terrorist attacks. Terrorism remains one of the major threats to the Asia-Pacific region. Thailand reaffirms its commitment to combat terrorism and violent extremism. In recent years, fighting against terrorism has shifted its focus to the terrorist diaspora, those who have returned home or are dispatched to the next potential spot. Moreover, activities in the cyber domain and the use of ICTs and the internet for terrorist purposes and disseminating extremist propaganda, need to be closely monitored and addressed. Active regional and international cooperation to address the threat of terrorism and violent extremism is thus essential.

26. Thailand places emphasis on a comprehensive and sustainable response to terrorism which includes addressing root causes through soft and hard approaches in a balanced and holistic manner, encouraging international cooperation, and promoting interfaith dialogues and values of moderation and peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies. To this end, Thailand has

implemented the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2017-2021) focusing on prevention, response and rehabilitation, to counter terrorism and its cooperation at regional and international levels. Thailand has supported effective implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and has currently ratified 10 out of 19 UN conventions and protocols on counter-terrorism. Furthermore, the Anti-Money Laundering Office of Thailand (AMLO), in partnership with Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (AUSTRAC) and the Indonesian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre (INTRAC), hosted the 4th Regional Counter-Terrorism Financing (CTF) Summit on 6-8 November 2018, in Bangkok. At the Summit, the Bangkok Communique was adopted aimed to pilot a secure online regional information sharing platform to disrupt transnational crimes in 2019.

27. At the regional level, Thailand looks forward to working closely with AMS to implement the ASEAN Plan of Action to Prevent and Counter the Rise of Radicalization and Violent Extremism (2018-2025), and to promote strategic information exchange on terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism.

Non-proliferation, Counter-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

28. Thailand continues the policy not to develop, acquire or proliferate any kind of all types of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery, as well as fully observes commitments and obligations on non-proliferation of WMD. Therefore, Thailand has earmarked a budget for non-proliferation efforts and peaceful use of nuclear technology, including through development of research and laboratory facilities, building up human resources, and strengthening legal framework.

29. With the Nuclear Energy for Peace Act enacted in February 2017, Thailand is pursuing ratification and accession to all relevant nuclear non-proliferation treaties and conventions. As a result of said Act, to date, Thailand has ratified or acceded to the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Its 2005 Amendment, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Most recently, Thailand also ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in September 2018, and currently pursuing the ratification of the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT).

30. As one of the first three countries to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 20 September 2017, Thailand looks forward to its entry into force.

In this connection, Thailand, in collaboration with New Zealand, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), hosted the “Regional Workshop on Why We Need the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” on 31 August 2018, at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok. The Workshop aimed to promote further awareness of the TPNW in order to facilitate the signing and/or ratification process of the Treaty.

31. At the same time, Thailand reaffirms the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone for nuclear non-proliferation and recognises the complementarity between the TPNW and the NPT, as both share the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In this connection, as a State Party to the NPT, Thailand has been an active player in advancing nuclear disarmament as required under the Article 6 of the NPT, as well as promoting nuclear security through international fora, such as the Nuclear Security

Summits (NSS), the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), and Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT).

32. The draft Act on Trade Control of Weapons of Mass Destruction Related Items (TCWMD Act) was endorsed by the Cabinet in 2016. It has passed the third reading of the National Legislative Assembly (NLA), and is expected to come into force on 1 January 2020. The draft Act covers control on the export and re-export of goods, as well as the transit, transshipment and transfer of technology. Currently, the Department of Foreign Trade (DFT) is drafting subordinate regulations under the TCWMD, which will cover relevant issues such as the conditions, procedures, and criteria for the issue of licenses of dual-use items and self-certification, as procedures for obtaining a bulk license.

33. At the regional level, Thailand has been actively contributing to the enhancement of capability of AMS in nuclear security, safety and safeguard within the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM). Thailand supports the formalization of relations between ASEAN and the IAEA, which will enhance cooperation between the two entities on nuclear-related matters. Thailand looks forward to the signing of the the ASEAN-IAEA Practical Arrangements (PA) by the ASEAN Secretary-General on behalf of ASEAN, and the IAEA Director-General. As ASEANTOM Chair, Thailand hosted the 6th Annual Meeting of the ASEANTOM on 2-3 July 2019, in Krabi. The Meeting discussed several ongoing regional technical cooperation projects, including emergency preparedness and responses (EP&R) project and regional early warning radiation monitoring network in ASEAN. The Meeting also adopted the ASEANTOM Work Plan 2019-2023 as a framework for ensuring peaceful uses of nuclear energy in compliance with the IAEA standards.

34. As State Party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction or Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Thailand adheres to transparent and accountable management of biological agents and toxins, whereby there is need for increased coordination and sharing of experiences and good practices. In this connection, Thailand and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) co-hosted the “South-East Asian Workshop on Global Challenges to Successful Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540(2004), and Regional Efforts to Address Them” in September 2017 in Bangkok. The workshop noted a fruitful exchange of good practices on the implementation of Resolution 1540 (2004), and on advancements in biotechnology, biosafety and biosecurity, and intangible technology transfer (ITT).

35. Furthermore, Thailand attaches high importance to fulfill its obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention), particularly on completing mine clearance in remaining contaminated area of 2,557 square kilometers. In this connection, Thailand submitted in August 2017 the revised Second Article 5 Extension Request, setting out a two-phrase program for completing mine clearance, which Thailand is proceeding with its second phrase spanning from 1 November 2018 to 31 October 2023. Thailand fully supports the work of an ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre. We will continue to work with AMS and regional and international partners to exchange good practices on addressing the effects of anti-personnel mines, mine risk education and victim assistance, in line with our commitment under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Transnational Crime

36. Transnational crimes continue to pose major challenges affecting the Asia-Pacific region. Greater interconnectedness, technological advancement, economic linkages, and free flow of movement of peoples have been exploited by transnational criminal groups worldwide. In recognition of ASEAN's vulnerability to these threats due in large part to its higher degree of integration, Thailand has implemented the Strategy to Prevent and Combat Transnational Organised Crimes (2015-2021) in efforts to combat transnational crime in five identified priority areas, namely terrorism, illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber, infringement of intellectual property rights, trafficking in persons, and drug trafficking. To this end, Thailand believes that developing a more coordinated ASEAN-wide border management cooperation arrangement will be key to protecting the region from transnational crimes.

37. Thailand continues to implement the Border Management Plan on Security Issues B.E. 2559-2564 (2016-2021) focusing on setting system and related mechanisms for border areas protection, as well as improving intelligence exchange. Furthermore, in recognition of the significance of pushing forward the ASEAN-wide border management cooperation arrangement idea. Thailand in collaboration with the UNODC hosted the "High-Level Regional Conference: Synchronising Trade and Security Plans in Support of ASEAN 2025", on 3-4 April 2019 at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok. The Conference was presided over by H.E. General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, and aimed to enhance cooperation among AMS to strike a balance between regional security, stability and safety on the one hand, and facilitation of cross-border trade and movement of people on the other. Thailand believes this would enable ASEAN to mitigate the possible negative impact of enhanced physical connectivity and deepening economic integration especially with the full implementation of the ASEAN Single Window in 2019.

38. Thailand continues to commit to a "zero tolerance" policy against human trafficking, which measures driven by the 5Ps-approach (policy and legal framework, prosecution, protection, prevention, and partnership) are implemented. This led to Thailand's ratifying the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) on 24 July 2016. Thailand also welcomes the Bohol TIP Work Plan 2017-2020, endorsed on 13 November 2017 and envisioned to drive the work of the ASEAN on trafficking in persons from 2017-2020 consistent with the ASEAN Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (APA). In this connection, Thailand in collaboration with AMS and ASEAN Partners, through ASEAN-led mechanisms, such as the SOMTC, AMMTC and the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crimes (ARF ISM on CTTC) will continue to support the implementation of harmonized regional activities to combat TIP in four thematic areas of the APA including (1) prevention of TIP, (2) protection of victims, (3) law enforcement and prosecution of crimes of TIP, and (4) regional and international cooperation and coordination.

39. With attempts to translate the APA into practice, the ACWC Regional Guidelines and Procedures to Address the Needs of Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children was endorsed in March 2018 with the aim of providing AMS common approach for practical implementation of the ACTIP. The Guidelines and Procedures were recently launched on 4 April 2019 in Bangkok. As a step forward, the Guidelines and Procedures will be further tailored as useful tools and capacity building for practitioners at the national level over the course of the coming years.

40. Furthermore, Thailand advocates Public-Private-Civil Society Partnership (PPCP), which raises awareness of the importance of addressing human trafficking, as well as collaborating to develop the quality of life, lower economic disparities, and eliminate injustice on a

humanitarian basis. More than fifty agencies to foster Public–Private–Civil Society Partnership are also committed to the Memorandum on Cooperation to Prevent, Suppress, and Anti – Trafficking in Persons.

41. Another phenomenon that has become a major concern in the region is irregular migration. Joint action and firm focus on tackling the root causes is necessary. Concrete measures are needed to develop quality of life and lower disparities, eliminate injustice and social inequalities, and promote human rights. Thailand has been closely collaborating with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Bali Process and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in addressing irregular migration, including in maritime areas.

42. Thailand also serves as a lead shepherd for illicit trafficking of wildlife and timber, thus combatting these challenges, which involves trade activity that generates an estimated revenue of 2.5 billion USD each year is another priority. On 21-22 March 2019, Thailand hosted the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Illegal Wildlife Trade, in Chiang Mai. Following successful discussion on several topics including global and regional wildlife trade policy, demand reduction, law enforcement and wildlife cybercrime, the Meeting issued the “Chiang Mai Statement of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for CITES and Wildlife Enforcement on Illegal Wildlife Trade”, reflecting commitment to combatting wildlife and timber trafficking by reducing demand for wildlife consumption, stressing the importance of law enforcement and fighting against wildlife cybercrime, as well as promoting international collaboration to address the issue in collective, holistic, and sustainable manners.

43. The drug situation in ASEAN remains alarming with the influx of methamphetamine tablets and crystalline methamphetamine from illicit drug production sites in the Golden Triangle. Five AMS, namely Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Thailand, together with China, face the direct impact of illicit drug trafficking. In this regard, the ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network, the ASEAN-NARCO Website and the ASEAN Airport Interdiction Task Force are important supportive tools in tackling the drug trafficking problem.

44. The Thai Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) hosted the 7th ASEAN Drug Monitoring Network (ADMN) Operational Workshop during 5-7 March 2019, in Bangkok. The workshop was attended by representatives from AMS, ASEAN Secretariat, Thailand Substance Abuse Academic Network, and ONCB staffs. Main objective of the workshop included sharing information on regional drug situation, conducting the 4th drug monitoring report of ASEAN region, and reviewing the ADM Report System Manual providing AMS with the same working standard.

45. Addressing illicit trafficking of precursor chemicals in the Golden Triangle is one other major priority. AMS has formulated the ASEAN Cooperation Plan in Tackling Illicit Drug Production and Trafficking in the Golden Triangle (2017-2019) to support the work of five AMS together with China, and the Safe Mekong Operation initiated in 2012. As the Operation will continue until 2022, AMS remains committed to patrolling the Mekong River and working together to tackle drug problems, with emphasis on exchanging information. In the same vein, the Safe Mekong Coordination Centre (SMCC), located in Chiang Mai Province, acts as the information center for combating drugs through coordination on river and land patrols, information sharing, identifying targets and raids, and blocking the flow of precursors used for drug production in the Mekong countries. Since its operations, hundreds of arrests along with drug-related cases have been reported, proving the operation to be efficient and productive.

46. Thailand places importance to alternative development and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs), considering them as central to the “people-centred” approach in addressing drug-related problems. As a result, community leaders of the selected twin villages and local officers from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Thailand were met to pursue common development goals as an alternative to solve drug problems. It is expected that this recent collaboration would reduce drug production and trafficking activities in the Golden Triangle, resulting in drug situation in the sub-region being under control within the next few years.

47. Rapid ICT technological advancement and ever-increasing digital connectivity have made cyber threats more diverse, complex and impactful. ASEAN therefore is constantly required to calibrate an appropriate balance between security and business facilitation as well as to promote regulatory alignment across borders. With this in mind, Thailand has been pursuing Thailand 4.0 policy to create an innovative economy that can reap the full benefits of digitization. Accordingly, Thailand passed the Cybersecurity Act, leading to the establishment of the National Cybersecurity Commission to be chaired by the Prime Minister. The main purpose of the Bill is to ensure necessary regulatory frameworks to prevent, respond and alleviate cyber threats, particularly against Critical Information Infrastructures (CIIs). Moreover, Thailand is also working on the draft Personal Information Protection Act, aimed to standardize mechanisms and supervise measures to protect personal information.

48. At the regional level, Thailand has proposed and supported the “Seamless and Digital ASEAN” agenda underpinned by a healthy cyber ecosystem including a secured ICT infrastructure and effective cybersecurity regulations. To this end, Thailand successfully hosted an ASEAN Digital Agility Leaders’ Meeting, focusing on five aspects, namely cybersecurity, smart city, connectivity and mobility, harmonisation and alignment, and manpower and society.

49. On 14 September 2018, Thailand inaugurated the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) in Bangkok to serve as a training centre for public authorities and information infrastructure companies in ASEAN to enhance regional cybersecurity capacity. The Centre organised the first Cyber SEA Game to raise awareness on the technical side of ASEAN Cybersecurity. The AJCCBC plans for a total of 9 training sessions during the course of 2018-2019 on three issues: Cyber Defence Exercise with Recurrence (CYDER), digital forensics and malware analysis. Thailand also hosted the International Conference on Cybersecurity: Implications on Peace and Security in the ASEAN Region, on 10-11 May 2019, in Bangkok. The Conference highlighted Thailand’s priority on strengthening cybersecurity underpinning the development of sustainable ASEAN Community in the age of digital disruption, as well as building resilience to growing cyber threats and cybercrime through the “whole of ASEAN” approach to realise a “Seamless and Digital ASEAN”.

50. Thailand attaches great importance to preparing against Communicable Diseases, Non Communicable Diseases, Emerging Infectious Disease, and Chemicals Diseases caused by occupations and environmental pollution as they are one of main threats to human security. Thailand has joined the regional and international communication in finding ways to prevent and tackle these problems by regularly and actively participating in related meetings and fora such as the Meeting of ASEAN Working Group of Health Cluster 1: Promoting Healthy Lifestyle on Health Priority 4: Occupational and Health Cluster 2: Responding to all hazards and emerging threats for the ASEAN Post 2015 Health Development Agenda, ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM), in which in 2016 the threat of Zika Virus in the region was addressed and the Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases (APSED), organized by the Western Pacific Regional Office and the South East Asia Regional Office of the World Health Organization.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

51. Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) is a critical and cross-sectoral coordination issue. Main challenges include promoting closer integration of efforts across ASEAN sectoral bodies, as well as between ASEAN and other regional frameworks such as the ARF, EAS, and ADMM-Plus. In this regard, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) and its Work Programme 2016-2020 remain the basis for cooperation among AMS to prepare and respond to disaster emergencies in concerted manner. This major challenge, however, has been completed to a certain degree by the signing of “The ASEAN Declaration on One ASEAN, one Response” in 2016. Furthermore, Thailand reaffirms our support to an active role of the AHA Centre, the ASEAN-Emergency Response and Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT), and other ASEAN tools to deal with HADR challenges.

52. In addition, Thailand, as a Party to the AADMER and a member of the Governing Board of the AHA Centre, continuously plays an active role in strengthening ASEAN’s efforts in the area of disaster management. In 2018, Thailand, as one of the lead countries in the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management Working Group on Prevention and Mitigation, hosted the Regional Conference on Risk Informed Development, the 2018 Southeast Asia Disaster Risk Governance Academic Seminar, and the meeting on the development of the Disaster Responsive Social Protection Guidelines. Thailand also participated in the ASEAN Regional Disaster Emergency Response Simulation Exercise 2018 (ARDEX-18).

53. Thailand supports regional efforts to enhancing capacity in disaster response and disaster management in line with the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration on Disaster Health Management, adopted at the 31st ASEAN Summit in Manila. Thailand officially launched an ASEAN Satellite Warehouse in Chai Nat Province during the 34th ASEAN Summit in June 2019. The warehouse will enhance the mobilisation and delivery of relief items rapidly to disaster-affected areas. We are also committed to strengthening regional collaboration on public health at the national and regional levels in line with the AADMER through the operationalisation of the ASEAN Leaders’ Declaration and the Phase 2 Plan of Action of the ASEAN Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (ADRFI), that would support the provision of disaster risk financing and insurance solutions in the region with a view to close ASEAN’s protection gap and reinforce disaster resilience.

Maritime Security and Cooperation

54. The Asia-Pacific region continues to face maritime challenges, including piracy, armed robbery against ships, as well as issues related to marine environmental protection including the Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Although the overall incidents in Asia have decreased in 2018, piracy and armed robbery against ships remain a prevailing security concern due to active criminal activities in several areas and vulnerability of important sea lines of communication, notably the Straits of Malacca which connect the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Given the complex and wide-ranging nature of maritime security issues, Thailand has finalized the Maritime Enforcement Administration Act, which will upgrade Thailand Maritime Enforcement Coordinating Center (THAI-MECC) into the Thailand Maritime Laws Enforcement Administrative Center (THAI-MLEAC). The Centre will serve as a national focal point on maritime matters with augmented role and greater authority in the management of maritime interests. At its core, the THAI-MLEAC would function as a *de facto* coast guard agency.

55. At the regional level, Thailand has participated in the Malacca Straits Coordinated Patrols since 2008, the air patrol “Eyes in the Sky” since 2009, as well as the secondment of rotating officers to the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC). Moreover, Thailand has actively taken part in regional fora that also deal with maritime security and cooperation such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Defence Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (EMF) and the Expanded AMF (EAMF) to contribute to the dialogue and discussions which would pave way for substantive cooperation, particularly in the areas of capacity building, maritime domain awareness and maritime connectivity.

56. On 8 January 2019, the European Union (EU) formally announced the lifting of a yellow card for Thailand in recognition of the substantive progress Thailand has made in tackling IUU fishing since 2015. These include legal reform, fishery management, fleet management, monitor, control and surveillance, traceability and law enforcement. Building on such success, Thailand will continue to promote cooperation towards sustainable fisheries, including the development of an ASEAN Network for Combatting IUU Fishing. This includes strengthening ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) and the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF). Several policy frameworks have been developed and implemented by the AMS, on a voluntary basis. These include the Regional Code of Conducts on Responsible Fisheries (RCCRF), the Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region (adopted in 2001), Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020 (adopted in 2011). The implementation of these policy frameworks has been supported by the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) located in Thailand under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) mechanism. Accordingly, several fisheries cooperative frameworks have been developed by SEAFDEC in collaboration with AMS to facilitate cooperation toward the integration of the ASEAN Community.

57. Moreover, ASEAN aims towards ensuring that fisheries sector in Southeast Asian Region is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. To obtain this goal, the ASEAN Meeting on Combatting IUU Fishing in Partnership with the EU was convened on 4-5 April 2019. During the Meeting, ASEAN agreed to explore the possibility of establishing an ASEAN Network for Combatting IUU Fishing, as well as implementing sustainable fisheries management.

58. On forced labour issues, Thailand has taken a significant step as part of efforts to addressing the problem by ratifying the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention No. 188, 2007 (C188) on 30 January 2019, making Thailand the first country in Asia to ratify the Convention. The move reflects Thailand’s strong political will to ensure that the working conditions in domestic fishing industry meet ILO standards. In this regard, the ILO will provide support and technical assistance for Thailand to implementing the Convention, which will come into force on 30 January 2020.

59. Thailand also attaches great importance to promoting marine environmental protection, in particular on marine debris issue. On 5 March 2019, Thailand hosted the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Marine Debris (SAMM-MD) in Bangkok, highlighting potential negative impacts of marine debris on marine biodiversity, health, society, and economy, and discussing best practices on combatting the issue. In this connection, the 34th ASEAN Summit adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Combatting Marine Debris in ASEAN Region, and

welcomed the ASEAN Framework of Action on Marine Debris. As part of continued efforts to sustain the momentum, Thailand in collaboration with Viet Nam and the United States co-hosted the “ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Workshop on Marine Debris Management for Sustainable Fisheries and Food Security in Southeast Asia” on 13-15 May 2019. The Workshop aims to discuss sources and challenges, as well as highlight best practices and opportunities for regional cooperation to preserve marine environment and ensure sustainable fisheries management and food security in the ASEAN region.

Role of the ARF

National contributions to enhancing the ARF and regional security

60. As one of the ASEAN-led platforms central to promoting ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture, the ARF remains a primary forum to foster constructive and meaningful dialogue and consultation on political and security issues of common interest and concern in the Asia-Pacific region. Progress in the implementation of the Hanoi Plan of Action to implement the ARF Vision Statement should be nurtured. In this respect, Thailand supports the comprehensive implementation of the Plan, as well as the ARF Work Plans under the respective priorities areas within the ARF process. Concrete steps include the conduct of training, workshops, and exercises in accordance with ARF’s purposes and principles.

Future of the ARF

61. Thailand remains convinced that a central function of the ARF involved the adoption and implementation of CBMs and stepping further to Preventive Diplomacy (PD) and conflict resolution. As the ARF’s scope of activities has expanded, the ARF has to explore synergies of activities and initiatives in order to ensure effectiveness and avoid duplication. To this end, the ARF may wish to focus on a specific theme to generate practical dialogue and discussion, such as the thematic issue of sustainable security, for 2019. It also needs to evolve into a process that could contribute to addressing and managing the important regional concerns in a more timely manner. In this connection, concerted effort to maintain momentum towards implementing PD is key to realising the ARF’s full potential. Therefore, there is a need to implement the PD agenda in line with universally recognised norms and principles of international law. Preventive Diplomacy has to be implemented in tandem with ongoing efforts on CBMs, to ensure that the ARF moves ahead in order to be more effective, yet at a pace comfortable to all.

62. With the diverse expertise of the Participants, the ARF can provide a platform for concrete cooperation to help address emerging security challenges including cybersecurity, maritime security, terrorism, transnational crime and natural disaster. Sharing of best practices and capacity-building activities should be encouraged to enable ARF Participants to respond to these challenges in a more timely and effective manner and help contribute to sustainable security in the Asia-Pacific region.

63. In addition, the ARF needs to develop greater synergies with other ASEAN-led platforms, including the ADMM-Plus and the EAS, as well as exchange best practices with other regional security organizations, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), among others. Furthermore, more interaction between Track 1.5 and 2 entities, including ARF Experts and Eminent Persons (EEPs), the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP), and the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) should be encouraged. This would allow ARF participants to mutually explore better way to enhance CBMs and PD in the region.

64. Looking to the future, the ARF needs to effectively manage its three core priorities of promoting CBMs and preventive diplomacy, nurturing a culture of cooperation on practical security issues, and encouraging closer civilian-military dialogue and cooperation, in a situation of growing resource constraints and proliferation of regional platforms dealing with security. In so doing, the ARF would be a new testament to ASEAN's vision and determination in contributing to regional peace and security through inculcating norms, facilitating the gradual alignment of security perspectives, forging trust and confidence, and ultimately making full use of preventive diplomacy to cope with the region's emerging security challenges. As such, the ARF should continue to be an important component of the ASEAN-centred regional architecture.
