

SEVENTH ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM MINISTERIAL MEETING
27 July 2000 Bangkok, Thailand

**CO-CHAIRMEN'S SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETINGS OF THE
ARF INTERSESSIONAL SUPPORT GROUP
ON CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES
HELD IN TOKYO, JAPAN, ON 13-14 NOVEMBER 1999
AND IN SINGAPORE, 5-6 APRIL 2000**

Introduction

Pursuant to the agreement reached at the 6th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Singapore, on July 26, 1999, the Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMS), co-chaired by Japan and the Republic of Singapore, held two inter-sessional meetings during the 1999/2000 inter-sessional year, the first in Tokyo on 13-14 November 1999, and the second in Singapore on 5-6 April 2000.

2. Representatives from all ARF members attended both meetings. Consistent with the goal of increasing defense participation in ARF inter-sessional meetings and activities, most of the delegations included defence officials. The annotated agendas of the Tokyo and Singapore ISG meetings are attached at Annexes A and B respectively, the programmes of activities at Annex C and D, and the lists of delegations at Annex E and F.

1st ISG Meeting 13-14 November 1999, Tokyo, Japan

Exchange of Views on Regional Political and Security Situation

3. The participants engaged in extensive general discussion on 'the development after the 6th Ministerial Meeting of the regional Political and security situation. The participants had frank, open and substantive discussions on the regional security environment and security-related developments that impact on the region as a whole, and on the regional and global non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament efforts as they related to these regional situations.

4. The participants generally agreed that so far the regional security situation remains stable although eventful, partly because co-operative 'arrangements had contained the effects of the economic and financial crisis. In light of the potential for

uncertainties arising out of the crisis, they also agreed that it was all the more necessary to strengthen the process of regional security dialogue and cooperation under the ARF, in accordance with generally accepted international norms and principles including the UN Charter. At the same time, the participants agreed that stable relations among the major powers in the region was essential for regional stability.

5. The participants welcomed the continuation of the engagement policy of the Republic of Korea and talks between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). They commented positively on J2c2n's decision to resume chartered flights to and from the DPRK in response to the announcement by the DPRK on September 24, 1999, that it would suspend missile launch while the talks with the United States are underway. Some participants expressed support for Dr. William J. Perry's "Comprehensive and Integrated Approach" towards the DPRK. The participants also reiterated support for the Four Party Talks and reaffirmed importance of maintaining the 1994 Agreed Framework and implementing the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) projects. At the same time, however, the participants noted that there still remain various concerns and uncertainties and emphasized that all the parties concerned should make further efforts for the improvement of the situation.

6. The participants noted the positive developments in the economic recovery of countries in Southeast Asia and the efforts to strengthen the process of ASEAN's integration, particularly the promotion of the development of the Mekong sub region, which would contribute to the peace and stability of Southeast Asia.

7. The participants noted that some members mentioned in their statements the latest developments in East Timor and welcomed the positive developments that have taken place.

8. The participants held the view that the situation in South China Sea is stable but some mentioned concerns over some recent developments. The participants welcomed the commitment of all the countries concerned to the peaceful settlement of disputes on the South China Sea in accordance with the recognized principles of international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the SEA (UNCLOS). They stressed the importance of freedom of navigation in this area. They welcomed the continued exercise of self-restraint⁴, by all sides and the positive contributions made by the bilateral consultations between the parties concerned. They welcomed the dialogue in the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations. In this connection, the participants believed the adoption of a regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea between ASEAN and China would contribute to regional peace and stability. They noted the continuing work of the Informal Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea. Some expressed that further efforts are necessary

9. The participants discussed the latest developments in South Asia. They agreed that the situation needs to be watched with careful attention.

10. The Participants reviewed the current situation of global and regional disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. They particularly emphasized the importance of further efforts taken by nuclear weapon states on nuclear disarmament. They noted that there were strong calls for all states to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as soon as possible. In this regard, they welcomed the remark by the U.S. that it would support the CTBT and continue efforts towards the ratification of the CTBT, despite the recent rejection of ratification of the CTBT by the U.S. Senate. They also supported other international efforts for disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means. They noted the progress made in the implementation of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the on-going consultations with the five Nuclear Weapon States on the possibility of their accession to the Protocol of the Treaty. Views were exchanged on Theater Missile Defense (TMD), particularly in relation to its implications to Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

Consideration of CBMs

11. Recalling that the 6th ARF Ministerial Meeting emphasized the importance of confidence building to the success of the ARF and encouraged the further development of CBMs, the participants reviewed progress in the implementation of agreed CBMs and considered two lists of new confidence-building measures for implementation in the near future (Basket 1) and over the medium term (Basket 2). The participants welcomed the report by Mongolia on the 3rd Meeting of Heads of Defense Universities, Colleges and Institutions" on September 22-24 and by China on "ARF Professional Program on China's Security Policy" on October 10-19, and the briefing by Australia on its ongoing preparation for the "Seminar on the Law of Armed Conflict" on December 13-16 and for the "Defense Language School Seminar," in March, 2000.

12. The participants noted China's proposal to move the following two CBMs from Basket 2 to Basket 1. On "Seminar on Defense Conversion," they agreed to move to Basket 1, and on "Regional Maritime Information Center," they requested China to provide more detailed information. They noted Brunei's proposal to host "ARF Professional Development Programme for Foreign Affairs and Defense Officials" with the U.S. They welcomed the EU's proposal for holding an ARF Seminar on "Approaches to Confidence Building" and requested more detailed information on it. At the same time, the participants noted the need to consolidate CBMs in the ARF process in view of limited resources of ARF members. In this regard, they welcomed the Co-Chairs' proposals to prepare a reference material to clarify the status of implemented CBMs by the time of the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore. The

participants noted China's proposal to host the "4th Meeting of Heads of Defense Universities, Colleges and Institutions."

Trans-national Crimes of Concern to the Region

13. As mandated by the 6th ARF SOM, the participants engaged in an extensive discussion on Trans-national Crime. Several views were expressed on the mandate, scope and modalities of the Experts Group Meeting on Trans-national Crime. It was decided that the Co Ch airs would continue to consult ARF members, with a view to holding an Experts Group Meeting before the next ISG meeting. The participants further decided that if no consensus on 'the scope and modalities could be reached, a meeting would be held back to back with the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore 'to further discuss the issue, including the scope and modalities.

Future Direction of the ARF

(i) Overlap between CBMs and Preventive Diplomacy

14. Consistent with the request of the 6th Ministerial Meeting that the ISG on CBMs should further explore the overlap between CBMs and Preventive Diplomacy (PD), the participants discussed enhanced roles for the ARF Chairman and the register of expert/eminant persons. The participants exchanged preliminary views on these subjects in preparation for the fuller discussion at the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore.

15. As a good example of an enhanced role for the ARF Chairman in liaising with external parties, the participants welcomed Thailand's report on the informal meetings Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan of Thailand, the current ARF Chairman, had with the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. They agreed that such a role for the ARF Chairman in liaising with external parties should be further encouraged as as it was carried out informally with prior consultation with all ARF members and their consent. At the same time, the participants noted that there where many complexities if the ARF is to reach consensus on principles and procedures for enhanced roles for the ARF Chairman in good offices and coordination in between ARF meetings and agreed to further discuss these issues at the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore.

16. The participants exchanged preliminary views based on Japan's paper on the development of an "ARF Register of Experts on Eminent Persons." They noted that there were many points to be considered concerning the modalities for

implementation of the ARF Register and welcomed Japan's proposal to prepare a paper showing possible options regarding these points based on ARF members opinions by the time of the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore. In this connection, they also welcomed the proposal by Canada and New Zealand to take an initiative in reviewing experiences of other "registers of experts/eminent persons" by the time of the 2nd ISG meeting.

17. The participants recalled the 6th ARF Ministerial Meeting welcomed the production of the Annual Security Outlook (ASO) by individual participants on a voluntary basis at the Track I level for compilation without any editing by the ARF Chairman. The participants noted Thailand's readiness to undertake the task of compiling the first ASO as the current ARF Chair and its request to submit individual ASOs to the ARF Chairman by March 31, 2000 on voluntary basis.

(ii) Preventive Diplomacy

18. Consistent with the request of the 6th ARF Ministerial Meeting that the ISG on CBMs should further explore the overlap between CBMs and PD, focusing, *inter alia*, on the development of the concept and principles of PD, the participants exchanged preliminary views on the "concept -and principles of Preventive diplomacy" in preparation for the fuller discussion at the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore. The participants welcomed the draft paper prepared by Singapore on behalf of ASEAN (at Annex G.) and, based on the paper, engaged in frank and substantive discussion. They agreed to submit their written comments to Singapore by February 1, 2000. They welcomed the reference materials prepared by Japan on the history of discussion on PD.

(iii) Other Issues

19. Pursuant to the agreement of the 6th ARF SOM that maritime co-operation be included in the agenda of future ISG on CBMS, the participants discussed this subject and agreed to hold a working lunch by maritime experts on the occasion of the 2nd ISG meeting in Singapore.

20. The participants noted Vietnam's suggestion of reviewing past experiences of application of PD.

21. The participants agreed that the interaction among the defense officials within ARF meetings was a useful confidence building measure in itself and should be encouraged. In this regard, the meeting noted that the informal lunch gathering among defense officials had promoted better understanding among the officials, and that defense officials would continue to exchange views on issues of common interest during future defense lunch gatherings.

Arrangements for the Second Meeting of the ISG on CBMs

22. The participants took note of Singapore's proposal that the 2nd ISG meeting for inter-sessional year 1999-2000 be held in Singapore on April 5-6, 2000. Tentatively, it will be preceded by a dinner on April 4, Tuesday, and followed by a visit to a defense facility on April 7, Friday. Should it be necessary to convene an Expert Group Meeting on Trans-national Crimes back-to-back with the 2nd ISG meeting, the Expert Group Meeting will be held on April 4, Tuesday. The participants agreed that all ARF ISG delegations would inform the Co-Chair by December 15, 1999, whether the above dates are acceptable. The participants all expressed their willingness to cooperate in the preparation for the 2nd [SG meeting, engage in substantive and active discussion at the meeting to further strengthen confidence building among ARF members and deepen the discussion so as to develop the ARF as a more relevant framework for political and security dialogue and cooperation in the Asia Pacific region.

2nd ISG Meeting, 5-6 April 2000, Singapore

Review of Outcome of 1st ISG meeting and interim activities

23. Japan, as Co-Chair of the 1st ISG meeting in Tokyo, reviewed the outcome of the 1st meeting and interim activities, and the meeting agreed with the review.

Exchange of Views on Regional Political and Situation

24. The meeting agreed that the situation in the region was relatively stable, but some challenges remained. The meeting noted that globalization could have implications for the region, and that this issue could be discussed by the ARF. The meeting also noted that there were positive developments in several areas.

25. The meeting welcomed positively the development of bilateral exchanges between the DPRK and several ARF members. The meeting noted that the ROK's engagement policy and other efforts by ARF members had helped to ease tensions in the Korean Peninsula, and welcomed the continued efforts to actively engage DPRK, including those on inter-Korean dialogue and normalization talks. Several participants called on DPRK to positively respond to these efforts.

26. The meeting reviewed developments in East Timor. It welcomed the positive developments that have taken place in East Timor. It noted that there was cause for continuing concern and recognized the importance of continued international efforts to help East Timor's reconstruction and to resolve the refugee problem.

27. The meeting noted that the situation in the South China Sea has been relatively peaceful and stable. The meeting welcomed the commitment of the countries directly concerned to the peaceful settlement of disputes on the South China Sea in accordance with the recognized principles of international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The ' meeting welcomed the progress made in consultations held in Hua Hin, Thailand on 15 March 2000 between ASEAN and China on the regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, and believed that its adoption would contribute to long term regional peace and stability. The question was raised whether more could be done.

28. Two delegations had an exchange of views on the situation in Myanmar.

29. The meeting recognized that the Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation, signed at the 3rd ASEAN Informal Summit in Manila last November, was a positive contribution to regional cooperation.

30. The meeting discussed developments in nonproliferation, and noted the importance of the NPT Review Conference from 24 April to 19 May 2000. The meeting also noted the efforts to achieve progress on the SEANWFZ Treaty and its Protocol.

Transnational Crimes of Concern to the Region

31. An Experts' Group Meeting on Transnational Crime (EGM), co-chaired by Singapore and Japan, was held back-to-back with the ISG meeting. The Singapore Co-Chair briefed the ISG meeting on the outcome and recommendations of the EGM, attached at **Annex H**. The meeting endorsed the recommendations, and agreed to refer the matter of additional transnational crime issues to the ARF SOM.

Consideration of CBMs

32. The meeting took note of the reports by Australia on the "Seminar on the Law of Armed Conflict" on December 1999 and for the "Defense Language School Seminar," in March 2000. The updated table of implemented CBMs is at **Annex I**.

33. As a follow-up to the 1st ISG, the meeting was informed of the following:

- China's proposal to host the "Seminar on Defense Conversion" in September-October 2000.

- China's proposal to host the 4th Meeting of Heads of Defense Universities, Colleges and Institutions" in September 2000.
- The EU's proposal to hold an ARF Seminar on "Approaches to Confidence Building" in the latter half of 2000.
- Brunei asked ARF members who had not done so to nominate officials to attend the "ARF Professional Development Programme" to be held in Brunei on 23-28 April 2000.

34. The meeting agreed to the following:

- China's proposal to move the CBM on "Regional Maritime Information Center" from basket two to basket one. It was agreed that contribution of data to the Center would start from the collection of marine weather information on a voluntary basis. As the Center's operations develop in this area, and ARF members develop familiarity with its method and utility, data collection can possibly be expanded to other areas.
- Singapore's proposal to co-host with the US, a course on "Combined Humanitarian Assistance Response Training" on 21-25 August 2000. This was put in basket one on an ad referendum basis pending confirmation from China.
- ROK's proposal to sponsor, with Canada, a "Joint ARF Seminar on Civil-Military Relations in Peace Support Operations" in the first half of 2001, would be put in basket two.
- ROK's proposal for a "Joint Workshop on Asia-Pacific Security in August 2002 would be put in basket two.
- India's proposal for a "Workshop on Anti-Piracy" in late October 2000 could be put in basket one, pending further information.
- Thailand's proposal to hold a follow-up session to the "Seminar on the Law of Armed Conflict" would be put in basket two, pending further information.
- Canada's proposal to co-host with Japan a seminar on "Conventional Weapons" would be put in basket two, pending further information.

35. The meeting also updated the list of CBMs in baskets one and two, and deleted the CBMs which have already been implemented or will not take place. The updated list is at **Annex J**.

36. The meeting emphasized the importance of giving advance notice to all other ARF participants of proposed CBM activities. The meeting also agreed on the need to coordinate the schedule of proposed seminars and other related CBM activities.

37. The meeting was informed of the US proposal to host a workshop for midlevel ARF civilian and defense officials on preventive diplomacy, and noted that the US had agreed to provide further information on it.

38. As a follow-up to the Bangkok ISG, Canada requested members to update the matrix on ARF members' positions on APLs at **Annex K** for completion by the ARF SOM in May 2000.

Preventive Diplomacy

39. The meeting had a substantive discussion based on the latest, draft paper on Concepts and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy (The PO paper is attached at **Annex L**. Written comments submitted on the draft PD paper that was circulated at the Tokyo ISG are at **Annex M**, while written comments on the latest draft PD paper are at **Annex N**). The meeting noted that this draft paper was work in progress that helped develop a greater understanding of varying concerns on the concept of PD. The meeting agreed to recommend to the ARF SOM that discussion on PD would continue in the next inter-sessional year and as a basis for further discussion, Singapore would revise the PD paper, taking into account the views expressed at this meeting and further written comments to be submitted to Singapore by 31 July 2000.

Future Direction-of the ARF

(i) Enhanced Role of the Chair

40. The meeting had a substantive exchange of views on the Enhanced Role of the Chair based on the Co-Chairs' paper (at **Annex O**). The discussion added clarity to the issue and helped members understand better the parameters of the ARF Chair's role. The meeting recognised that CBMs continued to be a key element in the ARF's priorities. The meeting agreed to Thailand's suggestion that the ARF Chair could serve as a useful conduit for information-sharing in between ARF meetings, and that members could utilize this on 2 voluntary basis. The meeting also -agreed to recommend to the ARF SOM that discussion on the enhanced role of the ARF Chair

continue, and that Japan would revise the paper, taking into account the views expressed at this meeting and further written comments to be submitted to Japan by 31 July 2000.

(ii) ARF Register of experts/ eminent persons

41. The meeting discussed the paper on the ARF Register of experts/ eminent persons (at **Annex P**). The meeting agreed that ARF members can only nominate their own nationals as experts/ eminent persons, that no country can veto the nominees of another ARF member, and that the Register would be available to ARF members to be used on a voluntary basis. On the basis of these agreements, the [SG agreed to recommend to the SOM that the ARF proceed to collate the Register on the understanding that further discussions and agreement on the terms of reference was needed.

Other Issues

(i) Defense Officials' lunch

42. Singapore, as co-chair of the Defense Officials' lunch with Japan, briefed the meeting on the discussions. The meeting agreed that the interaction among the defense officials within ARF meetings was a useful confidence building measure in itself and should be encouraged. In this regard, the meeting noted that the informal lunch gathering among defense officials had promoted better understanding among the officials, and that defense officials would continue to exchange views on issues of common interest during future defense lunch gatherings.

(ii) Maritime Specialist Officials' lunch (MSOL)

43. The US, as co-chair of the Maritime Specialist Officials' lunch with Thailand, briefed the meeting on the discussions. The MSOL Co-Chairmen's summary report is at **Annex Q**.

44. Vietnam briefed the meeting on the preparations for the 4th Inter-sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief to be held in Hanoi from 4-6 May 2000.

Co-Chairmanship of ISG on CBMs in the 2000/2001 inter-sessional year

45. The meeting agreed to the offer by Malaysia and ROK to co-chair the ISG on CBMs in the next inter-sessional year. ROK informed the meeting that the next ISG could tentatively be held in early November, and preceded by the EGM on Transnational Crime. Malaysia indicated that the 2 d ISG could be held in April 2001.

46. The meeting also noted that India and New Zealand had indicated their interest to be the non-ASEAN Co-Chair of the [SG on CBMs in the inter-sessional year 2001-2002.