

Co-Chairmen's Summary Report of the Meetings
Of the ARF Intersessional Support Group
On Confidence Building Measures
Held in Honolulu, USA, 4-6 November 1998,
And in Bangkok, Thailand, 3-5 March 1999

INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to the agreement reached at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Manila, Philippines, on 27 July 1998, the Intersessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs), co-chaired by Thailand and the United States, held two intersessional meetings during the 1998-1999 intersessional year, in Honolulu 4-6 November 1998 and in Bangkok 3-5 March 1999. Representatives from all twenty-two ARF participants attended one or both meetings. Consistent with the goal of increasing defense participation in ARF activities, most of the delegations at both meetings included defense officials.
2. The active participation of Mongolia at these meetings, the first since Mongolia's admission to the ARF, was warmly welcomed.
3. The Overview and Summary of Discussion from these meetings follow below. The list of Recommendations from the ISG to the Senior Officials and Ministers is found at the end of this report.
4. The agendas of the ISG meetings are attached at Annex A, the programs of activities at Annex B, and the lists of delegations at Annex C.
5. At the direction of the Ministers, the Intersessional Support Group considered where the ARF can add value to and supplement existing bilateral and multilateral maritime cooperation arrangements and instruments in the region, specifically in the areas of maritime safety, law and order at sea, and protection and preservation of the marine environment. Concurrent with the Honolulu ISG Meeting, a separate one-day Maritime Specialist Officials Meeting (MSOM) was held on 5 November 1998. The agenda of the MSOM is at Annex D, the list of delegations at Annex E, and the MSOM Co-Chairs' Report is at Annex F. The Bangkok ISG considered the proposals made by

the MSOM based on a matrix which included both recommendations from the MSOM and other ideas; the matrix is at Annex G. Those maritime CBMs recommended for consideration at the ARF Senior Officials Meeting are included in the list of Recommendations at the end of this report.

OVERVIEW OF THE 1998-1999 ISG ON CBMs MEETINGS

6. Pursuant to the instruction of the Ministers, the participants reviewed progress in the implementation of agreed confidence building measures 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 ISG welcomed the completion of work in progress of six Basket 1 CBMs, heard an interim report on the study group formed to examine ways to operationalize the proposed multilateral communications network ("ARFNET"), urged members to find ways to increase media support for the activities of the ARF, and welcomed the offers of Mongolia to hold the third meeting of Heads of Defense Colleges and Institution, the dates to be set after consultations, and of Australia to hold both a Workshop on the Law of Armed Conflict in December 1999 and a conference of defense language schools in Melbourne in March 2000. Several participants proposed new CBMs; a number of other new CBMs were added based on the recommendations of the MSOM. A revised List of Proposed CBMs is at Annex H.

7. The ISG had extensive discussion on the regional security situation, focusing in particular on the implications of the current financial and economic crisis for peace and stability of the region. The participants had frank, open and substantive discussions on the regional security environment and security-related internal and transborder developments that impact on the region as a whole, and on the contribution of certain regional and global non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament regimes to regional security. The delegations exchanged views and information on their respective defense policies, including defense conversion, and reviewed their political-military and defense dialogues, high-level defense contacts, joint training and personnel exchanges with fellow ARF participants.

8. Consistent with the Ministers' instruction that the ISG on CBMs continue its work in exploring matters of the overlap between confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy, the participants held a full discussion on the subject and on the four tabled proposals in the overlap area.

9. The ISG on CBMs acknowledged the work of both the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) and commended both Track II organizations for their contributions. The ISG encouraged both to continue their examination of issues of importance to the region.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FROM THE 1998-1999 ISG ON CBMs MEETINGS

Consideration of CBMs

10. The Co-Chairmen reviewed progress in implementing agreed CBMs and called on members to update their lists of ARF Points of Contact and their CBM Matrices. The delegation of the Republic of Korea reported on the outcome of the second ARF Meeting of Heads of Defense Colleges and Institutions (8-10 September 1998 in Seoul); Thailand and the EU reported on the Workshop on Approaches to Training for Peacekeeping (19-23 October 1998 in Dublin); and China reported on the Symposium on Tropical Hygiene and Prevention and Treatment of Tropical Infectious Diseases (25-27 November 1998 in Beijing). Japan called the attention of the participants to the Peacekeeping Seminar it will co-host with Canada and Malaysia in Tokyo in March 1999. Russia announced that its Conference Toward Comprehensive Security and Cooperation in Asia-Pacific will be held 25-28 April 1999 in Vladivostok.

CBMs List

11. As instructed by the Ministers, the participants considered two lists of proposed confidence-building measures for implementation in the near future (Basket 1) and over the medium term (Basket 2). The Co-Chairmen noted that several proposals in Basket 1 had already been, or were in the process of being implemented. The ISG, therefore, recommended that these could be

removed from the List: the Seminar on the Production of Defence Policy Documents (31 August - 3 September 1998 in Canberra), the Symposium on Tropical Hygiene and Prevention and Treatment of Tropical Infectious Diseases (TIDs) (25-27 November 1998 in Beijing), and the ARF Professional Development Program (to be co-hosted by the United States and Brunei 18-23 April 1999 in Washington, D.C.). With regard to three other CBMs, the ISG further recommended that:

--ARF members should be encouraged to exchange visits of their naval vessels as useful means of enhancing trust, transparency and confidence;

--ARF members should also be encouraged to exchange visits to military establishments, including as part of the program of meetings of the ISG on CBMs;

--ARF members compile and circulate to other ARF members national lists of publications/experts on confidence building measures.

The ISG recommended that the matrices be expanded to include information of ARF country implementation of these three CBMs.

12. China reported on the Symposium on Tropical Hygiene and Prevention and Treatment of Tropical Infectious Diseases (TIDs) hosted in Beijing 25-27 November 1998. The delegates from 19 ARF members concluded that the Symposium both raised the level of studies in military medicine and enhanced mutual trust and understanding-among ARF participants.

Delegates were to consult with their own governments about hosting a second such symposium in the future.

Basket 1 CBMs

13. With regard to the four remaining proposals in Basket 1, China noted that it had no specific proposals or elaborations on its proposal for multilateral exchanges and cooperation in military logistics and academic research in the field of military law. Singapore presented a paper with suggestions on how to materialize multilateral cooperation in military medicine within the ARF.

Upon ISG recommendation, a study group was formed to consider how an "ARFNET" system could be operationalized on an incremental basis. The United States presented an interim report on the ARFNET study group after two months of operation. The ISG recommended that the ARFNET be continued at the study group level until the Ministerial meeting in July 2000. The United States agreed to cover the costs of the study group through the

Ministerial meeting in July 1999, after which funding issues will have to be reexamined. The ISG also agreed that the final location(s) of the ARFNET would be decided later. Brunei elaborated on its proposal to encourage media coverage of ARF meetings and activities. Australia elaborated on its proposal to hold a defence language schools conference by offering to invite the executive staff of ARF defence language schools or representatives of ARF members interested in possibly setting up such an institution to a conference in Melbourne in March 2000.

Basket 2 CBMs

14. With regard to Basket 2, the five current proposals in this Basket will remain on the List in Basket 2 for further consideration in the medium term: ARF Liaison with Other Regional Fora, a second ARF SOM and a Counter-narcotics/Port Interdiction seminar (all proposed by the United States), preventing and combating illicit trafficking in conventional small arms (proposed by the EU) and a Shootfest among ARF riflemen (proposed by the Philippines).

Ongoing and New CBMs

15. Mongolia offered to host the Third Meeting of Heads of Defense Colleges and Institutions, during the next intersessional year, the dates to be set after consultations. Brunei presented a proposal for enhanced interaction between the ARF and Track II organizations. The issue was discussed further during the consideration of the overlap between CBMs and preventive diplomacy. Australia proposed hosting a seminar in early December 1999 on the Law of Armed Conflict for middle-to-senior-level military officers as well as defense and foreign affairs officials; the proposal was added to Basket 2, and Australia agreed to provide further details before the ARF SOM in May 1999, which would allow the proposal to be moved to Basket 1. China noted its intention to host a seminar for foreign affairs and defense officials parallel to that being co-hosted by the United States and Brunei; China undertook to provide more information before the ARF SOM in May 1999.

16. China presented five new CBM proposals. Consideration of the proposal regarding the use of force against civilian ships or fishermen was deferred, and China was requested to further elaborate and refine this

proposal. China's proposals regarding defense conversion, military environmental protection exchanges, mutual legal assistance coordination, and cooperation against international terrorism and crime were added to Basket 2. Upon finding a co-sponsor for the defense conversion proposal, this could be moved to Basket 1. The United States proposed to operationalize China's proposal for cooperation against international crime and terrorism by adding the topic of transnational crime to the workplan and agendas of the next intersessional year's ISG on CBMs and to convene, in conjunction with the second meeting of the 1999-2000 ISG on CBMs, a meeting of specialists to examine existing multilateral and bilateral arrangements and whether the ARF could add value to these arrangements. The ISG deferred a decision on this proposal. Canada presented a proposed matrix of activities relating to anti-personnel land mines and the Ottawa Convention. After discussion, the ISG accepted the matrix as an information paper separate from the ARF's Agreed CBM Matrices.

Maritime Cooperation

17. The ISG was briefed by the Co-Chairs of the Maritime Specialists Officials Meeting (MSOM), Rear Admiral Sutat Khayim, RTN of the Kingdom of Thailand; and Captain Mark E. Rosen, USN, of the United States of America, on the outcome of the meeting which was convened to consider and suggest ways and means for the ARF to add value to existing activities in the areas of maritime safety, law and order at sea, and protection and preservation of the marine environment.

18. A matrix of Proposed Maritime CBMs was prepared which included both recommendations of the MSOM as well as other ideas. The ISG recommended that seven of these be added to Basket 1; these include proposals for: Oil Spill Response (#4); Shipboard Generated Wastes Management (#5); Prevention of Illegal Fishing (#6); Bilateral Cooperation Matrices (#11); Ocean Policies Information Exchange (#12); Training on Law Enforcement (#17); and Marine Debris (#19). Four others were added to Basket 2, including proposals on: Links to Maritime Safety/Marine Environment Web Sites (#8); Marine Cooperation Information (#9); an UNCLOS Conference (#10); and a Regional Maritime Information Center (#15).

Maritime Information

19. The ISG recommended that the ARF should view itself as an umbrella forum, through which ARF countries can be kept informed of the many existing activities of various organizations and fora in these areas. ARF interest in and recognition of the work of these organizations and fora, such as the Asia-Pacific Maritime Safety Agencies Forum (and a myriad of others), provides impetus and consistency for their activities, and keeps ARF members informed. The ISG agreed that various domestic world wide web sites should be used to their best advantage, and that information should be posted and links developed among them to produce the maximum possible dissemination of information concerning maritime issues of concern to the ARF.

20. From the Maritime Matrix, the ISG recommended that the ARF specifically monitor three areas: the Tokyo MOU (#2), WPNS and RPC Anti-Piracy Efforts (#7); and Ratification of Various Maritime Conventions (#13). China proposed the creation of a Maritime Information and Data Center to be located within its National Marine Data and Information Service. The ISG added the proposal to Basket 2 and asked China to provide more information about the proposal.

Future MSOM Activities

21. The ISG on CBMs took note of the proposal for the MSOM to meet on a regular basis. However, some participants felt that this matter involved the question of mandate, and, therefore, should be referred to the ARF SOM. The ISG agreed that, while the ARF should focus on the agreed recommendations, it should also look at maritime cooperation in the CBM context. In this connection, the ISG recommended that maritime cooperation, especially in the CBM context, be included on future ISG agendas.

Exchange of Views on Regional Security Perceptions

Developments Within ASEAN

22. Vietnam briefed the ISG on the 6th ASEAN Summit held in Hanoi 15-16 December 1998 and ASEAN's meetings with China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. Among the important documents adopted or signed at the Summit were the Hanoi Declaration of 1998, the Hanoi Plan of Action, and the Statement on Bold Measures. The success of the Summit demonstrated ASEAN's determination to further consolidate its unity and strengthen its cooperation to achieve early economic recovery, sustainable and equitable development, and to enhance regional peace and security. The three dialogue partners reaffirmed their commitment to support ASEAN.

23. Thailand highlighted ASEAN's commitment to strengthening its engagement with those outside the region and the priority it attached to making ASEAN more "people-oriented." Thailand also noted the collective effort within ASEAN and on the bilateral level to enhance border cooperation, thus contributing to overall peace and security in the region.

Asian Financial Crisis

24. It was generally agreed that so far the regional security situation remains stable and that the economic and financial crisis has not yet produced any direct impact on the region's strategic environment, in part due to the improvements in the relations among the major powers. However, the delegates expressed concern that the continuing crisis could potentially have profound security implications including its social impact on the people, particularly the marginalized sector. Given the fact that economic growth has promoted peace and stability of the region and that the current crisis has spread to all emerging economies worldwide, it was necessary for the international community, particularly the major economies, to undertake a coordinated global response, in addition to the on-going efforts of the individual affected countries. It was also felt that given the potential for uncertainties arising out of the crisis and in keeping with the concept of comprehensive security, it was all the more necessary to strengthen the process of regional security dialogues and cooperation under the ARF, and the rôle of ARF participants in complementing the efforts of the financial

officials of the respective countries in addressing the current economic situations.

South Asia

25. In light of the grave concern expressed at the 5th ARF on 27 July 1998 in Manila over the nuclear tests in South Asia, the ISG discussed recent developments since the testing. Participants noted the complexities of the situation and some expressed their continuing concern. At the same time, they welcomed the positive developments in the relations between India and Pakistan since the tests, in particular the Lahore Declaration signed by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan on 21 February 1999, the three meetings between the two Prime Ministers in the last 10 months, and an MOU signed by the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries which pledged to develop CBMs in the nuclear and conventional fields and to abide by their moratorium on further testing. Participants expressed the hope that implementation of these agreements and the declaration by the parties to move towards signing the CTBT by the end of 1999 would contribute to the process of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Korean Peninsula

26. The ISG discussed the situation on the Korean Peninsula, and several participants expressed grave concerns over the August 1998 missile launch by North Korea. The ISG welcomed the efforts by South Korea to continue its policy of engagement with North Korea and its "Sunshine Policy," and welcomed the signs of positive developments in the relations between North and South Korea. These include progress at the ongoing Four-Party Talks in Geneva, the success of the Mt. Keumgang tourist project, the holding of General Officer-level Dialogue, and the governmental talks between the two sides in Beijing. The ISG stressed the necessity of continuing efforts to achieve progress within the Agreed Framework, especially KEDO, and through the process of the inter-Korean and Four-Party Talks. Given the importance of the Agreed Framework to regional peace and stability, several participants hoped that North Korea will clarify the nature of its suspect underground activity near Youngbyon.

South China Sea

27. The ISG welcomed the commitment of all the countries concerned to the peaceful settlement of the dispute on the South China Sea, in accordance with recognized principles of international law, including the UNCLOS. The ISG further noted the bilateral consultations between the countries concerned, the dialogue in the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations and in the ARF, as well as the continuing work of the Informal Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea. Some members of the ISG expressed strong concerns about certain recent developments. The ISG took note of different views expressed and expressed the hope that a meeting of experts on confidence building measures between China and the Philippines, and the ASEAN-China SOM will result in mutual understanding and constructive dialogue.

Transborder Challenges

28. Several participants noted that the financial/economic crisis would have potential global implications, and a global response is therefore needed. The ISG also noted that it is important that the financial crisis not divert attention from continuing transborder challenges. A climate of economic and social instability can, if not controlled, provide fertile ground for the flourishing of these types of challenges. Thailand reviewed bilateral and regional efforts to counter drug trafficking and illegal cross-border migration issues and noted it would host an International Symposium on Migration in Bangkok on 21-23 April 1999. The United States reviewed the negative impact of official corruption.

Cambodia

29. On Cambodia, the ISG welcomed the successful holding of the elections in July 1998 and the subsequent establishment of the new government. The ISG also took note of the decision taken at the 6th ASEAN Summit in Hanoi on 15 December 1998 to admit Cambodia as the 10th member of ASEAN and that a special admission ceremony be held in Hanoi at an appropriate time.

Exchange of Views on Defence Policies

30. The Australian delegation reported on the outcome and recommendations of the Seminar on Production of Defence Policy Documents co-chaired by Malaysia and Australia (Canberra, 31 August-4 September 1998). The seminar, one of a number of new confidence building measures recommended for implementation in the 1998-99 intersessional year, was attended by 40 delegates from 21 ARF countries. This presentation was followed by briefings by many ARF member countries on their respective defence policy statements and "White Papers." The frank and candid presentations were particularly useful in that some participants either updated previous submissions or provided a preview of policy statements to be released in the near future. The ISG welcomed the increasing quantity and frequency of briefings on this subject, noted the contribution of such briefings to confidence building and transparency, and urged the continuation of such briefings on a voluntary basis in future meetings of the ARF ISG on CBMs, as well as at the ARF SOM and the annual meeting of Ministers.

Defense Conversion

31. Some participants briefed the ISG on their defense conversion experiences. Defense conversion was encouraged because of its useful contributions to the local economy as well as in promoting disarmament and the development of dual-use technologies. Some participants encouraged the continued sharing of defense conversion experiences and information among ARF members at future ISG meetings as an important confidence building measure.

Global/Regional Non-Proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament

32. The Co-Chairmen reviewed participation by members in global nonproliferation, arms control and disarmament regimes, conventions, and treaties and encouraged members to accede to the NPT, CWC, BWC, CCW, and CTBT. It was acknowledged that adherence to these instruments contributed to regional peace and security. The ISG also recognized the important contributions made at the Asia Pacific Arms Control,

Nonproliferation and Disarmament Seminar co-sponsored by Thailand and the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in Bangkok 25-27 February 1999.

Conventional Arms Register

33. The ISG reaffirmed the value of the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms as an important transparency and confidence building measure, noted the very high level of ARF participation, and encouraged the continued practice of circulating annual submissions to each other.

Small Arms Trafficking

34. Several participants drew attention to the global threat posed by small arms proliferation and the illicit trafficking of these weapons, and urged member countries to adopt strict national controls on exports of these arms, seek agreement on the export of MANPADS, and adopt legislation to impose appropriate civil or criminal penalties for violations of UN embargoes. Countries were also encouraged to strengthen and harmonize multilateral controls, support the continuing work of the UN group of governmental experts, enhance international cooperation in law enforcement, and support negotiation of a global instrument on illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms by the year 2000. The EU briefed the ISG on its new Joint Action on small arms and light weapons, designed to end the destabilizing accumulation and spread of such arms, reduce the accumulation of these weapons, and help solve the problems caused by such accumulations.

UNGA Resolution on Mongolia

35. Mongolia informed the ISG about the United Nations General Assembly's adoption in December 1998 of a resolution on Mongolia's International Security and Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status. The ISG welcomed the information about this important resolution and would encourage the Senior Officials and Ministers to review Mongolia's request for ARF endorsement.

Anti-Personnel Landmines (APLs)

36. The ISG noted the signature by 133 states, including nearly half of ARF participants, of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines to Ban the Use, Stockpile, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and For Their Destruction. The Convention has now come into force. The ISG acknowledged the position of several ARF members that security considerations prevent them from signing the Ottawa Convention at this stage. The group also discussed a ban on export and transfer of APLs under the Conference on Disarmament and called on countries to ratify the Amended Mines Protocol to the CCW. Participants endorsed the need to continue to support efforts in demining, including training, and in the removal of unexploded ordinance as well as the rehabilitation of victims. Officials from Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) briefed the ISG on TMAC's organization and proposed plan of action to fulfill Thailand's obligation to the Ottawa Convention; the ISG welcomed TMAC's formation and anticipated future contribution to demining efforts.

Interaction Between Track I and Track II

37. The ISG reviewed the Guidelines for Regional Maritime Cooperation prepared by the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) and the Statement of Principles of Cooperation adopted by the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD). The ISG acknowledged the work of these Track II organizations and commended both CSCAP and NEACD for their contributions. The ISG encouraged both to continue their examination of issues of importance to the region.

Review of Track II Activities and Existing Agreements and Arrangements With Implications for the Development of CBMs/Preventive Diplomacy in the Region

38. Acknowledging the usefulness of Track II contributions to the ARF process, the ISG discussed ways of drawing upon these contributions to advance ARF consideration of the approaches towards the overlap between

CBMs and preventive diplomacy. Singapore presented an overview of the recommendations from the Conference on Preventive Diplomacy (9-11 September 1997) and the Seminar on the Future of the ARF (27-28 April 1998), both of which were held in Singapore. It was noted that certain of the recommendations have already provided useful inputs to facilitate the ARF's discussions on the overlap. Thailand briefed the ISG on the CSCAP Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy (28 February-2 March 1999) in Bangkok, which produced a broad definition and general principles of preventive diplomacy as well as suggested ways in which the ARF could promote preventive diplomacy in the region.

39. The ISG also exchanged views on existing CBMs/preventive diplomacy arrangements among various ARF members and took note of the presentations on the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the 1991 Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, and Exchange and Cooperation and the 1992 Joint Declaration on Denuclearization of the Korea Peninsula between North and South Korea, the 1994 Agreed Framework between the US and North Korea, the 1996 Agreement between the Government the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China, on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field Along the Line of Actual Control in the India - China Border Areas, the 1997 Aitutaki Declaration and the 1997 Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military on Regional Security Cooperation Forces in the Border Areas between China, Russia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

40. Participants agreed that there were important lessons to be drawn from the experiences cited. Certain of these arrangements have built on existing frameworks for cooperation or dialogue between the parties involved, and in addition to relying on mutual trust and confidence as the primary basis, the importance of reciprocity and a step-by-step approach should be considered. The fact that these arrangements should also be tailored towards meeting the prevailing specific conditions and situations was also noted. Participants took note that these arrangements demonstrated that confidence building and preventive diplomacy are complementary and can be implemented at the same time. It was recognized that multilateral and bilateral arrangements for confidence building/preventive diplomacy are mutually reinforcing and

should be equally promoted to eliminate sources of tension and promote security and stability of the region.

Overlap between CBMs and Preventive Diplomacy

41. Pursuant to the mandate given by the Ministers at the 5th ARF to the ISG on CBMs to continue its work in exploring matters in the overlap between CBMs and preventive diplomacy. The ISG participants had an extensive exchange of views on and consideration of the four tabled proposals, namely, an enhanced role for the ARF Chairman; particularly the idea of a good offices role; the development of a register of experts or Eminent Persons among ARF participants; Annual Security Outlook; and voluntary background briefing on regional security issues. In this regard, they agreed to recommend to the ARF SOM and Ministers as follows:

A) Enhanced Role for the ARF Chairman

i. Good offices role: There was general support among participants for the idea of the good offices role for the ARF Chairman, particularly in helping to promote trust and confidence among ARF participants. With a view to further consideration of this role, participants concurred that a set of principles, procedures and modalities be developed for the incremental implementation of the good offices role of the ARF Chairman. These could include the understanding that such a role would be given to the ARF Chairman on a case-by-case basis, when there is request, and based on a set of specific principles which include respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. It must also have consent of the parties concerned and be undertaken after prior consultations and mandate from the ARF. Some participants also underlined the importance of support mechanisms to assist the ARF Chairman in dispensing his tasks.

In this connection, the ISG agreed that the ISG on CBMs in the next intersessional year consider further the development of a set of principles and procedures for the good offices role of the ARF Chairman in conjunction with the development of the concept and principles for preventive diplomacy.

ii. **“Liaising” Role With External Parties:** The participants agreed to enhance the role of the ARF Chairman and the ARF SOM Chairman, as appropriate, in liaising with external parties, including other regional organizations. They further agreed that such a role would be conducted on an informal and case-by-case basis as well as in accordance with the mandate from prior consultations with all ARF participants. At this stage, the participants viewed that such a role would be limited to liaising for the purpose of exchanging information and sharing experiences, and not representing the ARF in any way in other fora.

iii. **Role in “Enhancing Interaction Between Track I and Track II”:** The participants shared the view that the ARF Chairman, at ministerial and senior officials’ level, could play a useful role in bringing recommendations from Track II fora into Track I and enabling the ARF to benefit from Track II contributions. In this regard, there was general support for case-by-case informal dialogue between the ARF Chairman and representatives of Track II fora. Such a dialogue would be based on prior consultations with ARF participants and would not constitute endorsement by the ARF of Track II works. Participants also noted the need for informality of such interaction with a view to ensuring that such link would not compromise the integrity and independence of Track II process.

In addition to having the ARF Chairman as the bridge between Track I and Track II, participants also agreed on the usefulness of greater consideration of the results of Track II activities and of voluntary participation by government officials of the ARF participating countries, in their personal capacity, in Track II activities.

iv. **“Coordinating” Role In Between ARF Meetings:** Participants noted that the ARF Chairman as well as ISG/ISM Co-Chairs had already been conducting coordination and consultations with other ARF participants regarding substance and arrangements for ARF meetings. They concurred that such a role could be further enhanced by giving the ARF Chairman such abilities as to call for special sessions and to issue Chairman’s Statements as situations warrant, and there was a broad agreement that this role be done on the basis of prior consultations with and consent of all participants. In this regard, the participants agreed to explore further the idea of enhancing the coordinating role of the ARF Chairman in conjunction with the development of the concept and principles for preventive diplomacy.

B) Development of a Register of Experts/Eminent Persons

The participants agreed in principle on the proposal to develop a register of experts/eminent persons to serve as a pool of resources in CBMs and preventive diplomacy whose services would be made available to ARF participants in providing non-binding professional advice and recommendations as well as to undertake in-depth studies. In addition, the ARF Chair at ministerial and SOM levels and ISG/ISM Co-Chairs, upon concurrence from all ARF participants, might also request the experts/eminent persons to serve as resource persons at their respective meetings. Furthermore, some participants felt that the experts/eminent persons could play a useful advisory role in developing preventive diplomacy, and that this should be explored further when the ARF agrees on the concept and principles of preventive diplomacy. However, it was noted that there were issues regarding modalities and financial implications which had to be addressed and, therefore, the ISG on CBMs in the next intersessional year should look into these issues with a view to implementing this proposal.

C) Annual Security Outlook (ASO)

Participants shared the view that an annual security outlook (ASO) would be a useful basis for discussions in the ARF SOM and ARF Ministerial Meetings. In this regard, during the discussions, there emerged three alternative options for implementation of this proposal, namely:

- i. Production of the ASO by individual participants on a voluntary basis at the Track I level for compilation without any editing by the ARF Chairman;
- ii. Production of the ASO by individual participants on a voluntary basis at the Track I level for compilation without any editing by the ARF Chairman who would undertake to produce an overview of regional security outlook based on individual contributions;
- iii. Continuation with the ASO by Track II institutions.

D) Voluntary Background Briefing on Regional Security Issues

There was a general agreement that background briefing on regional security issues had already been an on-going exercise among ARF participants. Participants agreed that ARF participants be encouraged to intensify this practice and to implement it on a voluntary basis, at appropriate occasions, both during ARF meetings and in between ARF meetings such as in respective capitals of the ARF participants. Views were also expressed that in making requests for voluntary background briefing, participants be mindful of the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and respect for sovereign decision.

42. The ISG endorsed Singapore's offer to produce and circulate, on behalf of the ASEAN member countries, a paper on the and concept and principles of preventive diplomacy for consideration by the ARF SOM in the year 2000. They also agreed that the Statement on Principles of Preventive Diplomacy produced by CSCAP would be useful basis for such a paper.

Future Activities of the ISG on CBMs

43. Participants agreed that the main focus of the work programme for the ISG on CBMs in the 1999-2000 intersessional year be the development of the concept and principles for preventive diplomacy. In conjunction with this, they further agreed that the next ISG continue to explore the principles and procedures for an enhanced role for the ARF Chairman in good offices and coordination in between ARF meetings, and consider the modalities for implementation of the register of experts/ eminent persons.

44. Participants welcomed the offer by Singapore and Japan to co-chair the ISG on CBMs in the next intersessional year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ISG decided to convey the following recommendations to the ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials Meeting (ARF SOM) to be held in Singapore on 20-22 May 1999 for the consideration of Ministers at 6th ARF.

1. Review of the Activities of the ISG on CBMs, including Implementation of Agreed CBMs

1.1 The ISG on CBMs continues to make important contributions to the building of confidence and trust in the region. Good progress has been made on implementing more agreed CBMs during this intersessional year; however, there remains considerable scope to further develop and deepen cooperation on confidence building measures among ARF members. In this context, the ISG on CBMs should continue its work for the foreseeable future. The mandate for the ISG on CBMs therefore should be extended for the next intersessional year. Considering the broad range of issues being discussed by the ISG on CBMs, the Ministers should encourage the Co-Chairs for the next intersessional year to continue the tradition begun by Japan and Indonesia of holding two meetings.

1.2 Pursuant to the request of Ministers at the 5th ARF to review implementation of agreed CBMs, the set of matrices and tables showing the degree of implementation, contained in Annex I, should be presented to the Ministers. These matrices and tables should continue to be updated on an annual basis and refined as necessary.

1.3 The list of ARF contact points, at Annex J, should be updated and distributed regularly.

1.4 The system of numbering, compiling, and distributing papers submitted to the ISG on CBMs should be continued.

2. Review of the Regional Security Environment and Exchange of Views on Security Perceptions

2.1 The exchange of views on the regional security environment continues to be a valuable and important confidence building measure and should continue in the ISG on CBMs, ARF SOM, and the ARF Ministerial Meetings.

3. Defense Participation in the ARF

3.1 Participation in Leaders Retreats at ARF SOMs should continue to include SOM Leader plus one in order to accommodate participation by defense officials. The participation by a second official and the composition of each delegation would remain at the discretion of the individual SOM Leaders.

4. Existing and New CBMs

4.1 The ISG on CBMs has expanded the existing two-part list of CBMs which are being considered for implementation in the near future (Basket 1) and over the medium term (Basket 2). The list is at Annex H.

4.2 The ISG on CBMs appreciated the work of the experts-level Maritime Specialist Officials Meeting (MSOM) held in conjunction with the Honolulu meeting of the ISG on CBMs. The MSOM produced a significant number of CBMs on the issues of maritime safety, law and order at sea, and protection and preservation of the marine environment. Regarding the proposal for the MSOM to meet on a regular basis, it was agreed that this matter involved the question of mandate, and, therefore, should be referred to the ARF SOM. The ISG also recommends that the ISG on CBMs look at maritime cooperation in the CBM context and that maritime cooperation be included on future ISG agendas.

4.3 The ISG on CBMs looks forward to the Peacekeeping Seminar which Japan, Canada, and Malaysia will co-host in Tokyo in March 1999; to the ARF Professional Development Program to be co-hosted by the United States and Brunei in Washington, D.C. 18-23 April 1999 and in Brunei during the next intersessional year, to the Conference Toward Comprehensive Security

and Cooperation in Asia-Pacific which Russia will host in Vladivostok 25-28 April 1999; and to the Defense Language Schools Conference which Australia will host in Melbourne in March 2000.

4.4 The ISG on CBMs welcomed proposals by Mongolia to host a third Meeting of Heads of National Defense Colleges and Institutions during the coming intersessional year, the date to be determined through consultations, and by Australia to host a Seminar on the Law of Armed Conflict in December 1999.

4.5 The ISG on CBMs appreciated the efforts of the United States in organizing a study group to consider how an "ARFNET" system could be operationalized on an incremental basis and recommends that the ARFNET be continued at the study group level until the Ministerial meeting in July 2000. The final location(s) of the ARFNET would be decided later. The United States agreed to cover the costs of the study group through the Ministerial meeting in July 1999, after which funding issues will have to be reexamined.

5. The CBMs/Preventive Diplomacy Overlap and the ARF

5.1 Enhanced Role for the ARF Chairman

The ARF Chairman should be given the roles in liaising with external parties and enhancing interaction between Track I and Track II, with a view to exchanging information and sharing experience, on an informal and case-by-case basis and with prior consultations with and consent of all ARF participants.

With regard to the good offices and coordinating roles between ARF meetings, including the abilities of the ARF Chairman to call for special sessions and issue Chairman's Statements as situations warrant in consultation with and with the consent of ARF participants, the ISG on CBMs in the 1999-2000 intersessional year should consider the development of a set of principles and procedures for these roles in conjunction with the development of concepts and principles for preventive diplomacy.

5.2 Development of a Register of Experts or Eminent Persons among ARF Participants

The ISG agreed in principle on the compilation of the register of experts/eminent persons to provide non-binding professional advice and recommendations as well as to undertake in-depth studies as to be decided by the ARF when needed. However, this proposal was subject to further development of modalities for implementation, which would be further considered by the ISG on CBMs in the next intersessional year.

5.3 Annual Security Outlook (ASO)

The ISG on CBMs discussed three alternative options for the Annual Security Outlook (ASO) and submitted them for consideration by the ARF SOM, namely:

- i. Production of the ASO by individual participants on a voluntary basis at the Track I level for compilation without any editing by the ARF Chairman;
- ii. Production of the ASO by individual participants on a voluntary basis at the Track I level for compilation without any editing by the ARF Chairman who would undertake to produce an overview of regional security outlook based on individual contributions;
- iii. Continuation of the ASO by Track II institutions.

5.4 Voluntary Background Briefing on Regional Security Issues

In order to augment existing practice among ARF participants in providing one another with briefings on issues affecting regional security, ARF participants should be encouraged to intensify this practice on a voluntary basis and at appropriate occasions, both during ARF meetings and in between ARF meetings, such as in respective capitals of the ARF participants.

5.5 The ISG endorsed Singapore's offer to produce and circulate, on behalf of the ASEAN member countries, a paper on the concept and principles of preventive diplomacy for consideration by the ARF SOM in the year 2000.

6. Exchange of Views on Defense Policies

6.1 In view of their contribution to increasing transparency and mutual understanding, the dialogue on defense policies, the submission annually to the ISG on CBMs of papers on defense policy statements and the publication of defense white papers or their equivalent on a voluntary basis should continue. Continued exchanges of views within the ISG on defense policies and programs will further contribute to increased transparency and mutual understanding.

7. Defense Conversion

7.1 ARF members should continue to share information and seek cooperation on defense conversion on a voluntary basis.

8. Arms Modernization in the Region

8.1 Noting the importance of transparency, thematic discussions of arms modernization within the ISG on CBMs should continue.

9. Arms Control and Nonproliferation

9.1 Attention was once again called to the ARF's earlier commitment to encouraging ARF countries to sign and ratify the global nonproliferation regimes, specifically the NPT, CWC, BWC, CCW, and CTBT. The urgent need to support efforts in demining, including training, in the removal of unexploded ordinance, and in the rehabilitation of victims was endorsed.

9.2 The ISG on CBMs welcomed the United Nations General Assembly's adoption in December 1998 of a resolution on Mongolia's International Security and Nuclear-Weapon-Free Status and encourages the Senior Officials and Ministers to review Mongolia's request for ARF endorsement of this important resolution.

10. United Nations Register on Conventional Arms

10.1 Taking note of the high level of ARF member participation in the UN Conventional Arms Register, those ARF countries not submitting annual reports are encouraged to do so. All ARF members are encouraged to circulate their submissions to the other ARF members. Aspects of the UN Conventional Arms Register should continue to be addressed in the ISG on CBMs.

11. Training on Regional Security

11.1 A regular integrated training program for foreign affairs and defense officials on regional security should remain a permanent CBM activity. The offer by the United States and Brunei to co-host Professional Development Programs in Washington, D.C. in April 1999 and in Brunei during the next intersessional year is welcomed as is the intention expressed by China to also host this type of program in the future. The offer by Japan, Canada, and Malaysia to hold a peacekeeping training seminar in Japan in March 1999 is also welcomed.

12. Future Work Plan for the ISG

12.1 In light of the on-going consideration of the overlap between CBMs and preventive diplomacy, it was agreed that the ISG should hold two meetings of the ISG on CBMs in the next intersessional year focusing, among others, on the development of concept and principles of preventive diplomacy.

13. Co-Chairmanship of the ISG on CBMs in the 1999-2000 intersessional year

13.1 The ISG agreed to the offer by Singapore and Japan to co-chair the ISG on CBMs in the next intersessional year.