

**CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE
ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM INTER-SESSIONAL SUPPORT GROUP
ON CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES**

BEIJING, CHINA

20-22 NOVEMBER 2003

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 10th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Cambodia on 18 June 2003, the Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs), co-chaired by the People's Republic of China and the Union of Myanmar, held the first meeting of the 2003/2004 inter-sessional year in Beijing from 20-22 November 2003.

2. Representatives from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, United States of America and Viet Nam attended the Meeting. Consistent with the ARF goal of increasing the participation of defence and military officials in all relevant meetings and activities, most delegations included defence officials. An ARF Defence Officials' Meeting was held on 19 November. The Agenda of the ISG meeting is attached at Annex A, the Programme of Activities at **Annex B** and the list of Participants at **Annex C**.

Exchange of Views on the Regional and International Situation

3. There was an extensive exchange of views among participants on the political and security developments in the region and beyond since the 10th ARF Ministerial Meeting. The discussion was held in an open and free-flowing manner and covered a wide range of issues which had an impact on the region as a whole.

4. The Meeting noted that the world and region had undergone profound changes. Participants were of the view that peace, cooperation and development were the main trend of the regional situation. They expressed their gratification that relations between countries, in particular the major powers in the region remained stable and cooperative, and that regional cooperation were enhanced under various frameworks such as ASEAN Plus Three (10+3), ASEAN Plus India Summit, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) and Boao Forum for Asia (BFA).

5. Participants welcomed the outcome of the 9th ASEAN Summit held in Bali, Indonesia on 5-6 October 2003. Support was expressed for the Bali Concord II as a solid platform to achieve an ASEAN Community and China and India's accession to the TAC, which would contribute further to long-term peace and stability in the region.

6. The nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula remained the most significant focus for participants. The Meeting emphasized the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. Recalling discussions of previous ARF meetings, participants called for a nuclear-weapon-free peninsula and supported the efforts to address all the concerns of the parties. They agreed that the nuclear issue should be resolved peacefully through dialogue and

welcomed the progress made for an early convening of the second round of the Six-Party Talks. Participants commended the Chinese Government for its efforts in this direction. Participants welcomed the efforts to continue inter-Korea dialogue. They also expressed their hope for DPRK to resume participating in the ARF activities.

7. The Meeting emphasized that terrorism remained a serious threat in the region, and noted that progress had been made in regional efforts against terrorism since the 10th ARF Ministerial Meeting. Participants deplored the terrorist bombing attacks in Istanbul, Bali, Jakarta and Riyadh, and emphasized the need to further strengthen regional cooperation to counter terrorism.

8. Participants noted the progress that the Government of Timor-Leste had made since its independence. Some participants expressed that it was essential for the UN to continue its presence there. They noted some ARF participants' continued contributions to the development of Timor-Leste.

9. The Meeting was briefed by the Myanmar delegation on the government's efforts to bring about a transition to democracy through the seven-step roadmap. Some participants urged further progress on national reconciliation, and for inclusiveness of the democratization process.

10. Some participants noted that the security situation in the Pacific Island region remained a cause of concern. The Meeting noted the success to date of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands under the auspices of the Pacific Island Forum.

11. Participants exchanged views on the situation in Aceh and Papua provinces and were briefed by the Indonesian delegation on the latest developments and on measures aimed at resolving the issue in a

comprehensive and satisfactory manner adopted by the government of Indonesia.

Voluntary Background Briefings

12. The Meeting welcomed the following voluntary briefings:

- Briefing by Myanmar on the Situation in Myanmar (**Annex D**).
- Briefing by Myanmar on the recent Summit Meeting on Economic Cooperation Strategy between Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand (**Annex E**).
- Briefing by China on the latest development of the Six-Party Talks on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula.
- Briefing by Australia on the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, with which New Zealand and Papua New Guinea associated (**Annex F**).
- Briefing by Malaysia on the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-terrorism (**Annex G**).
- Briefing by Malaysia on the Recent Negative Travel Advisories Issued by the United States on Visiting Sabah (**Annex H**).
- Briefing by Indonesia on the Concept of ASEAN Security Community (**Annex I**).
- Briefing by Malaysia on the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Center (**Annex J**).

Non-Traditional Security Issues

13. Participants had an in-depth discussion on strengthening cooperation in addressing non-traditional security issues. They were of the view that non-traditional security issues, including terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, money laundering and cyber crimes, continued to pose threats to the peace and security of the region and it should remain as one of the priorities on the ARF agenda.

14. The Meeting agreed there was an urgent need for more practical and pragmatic cooperative measures among the ARF participants to cope with the non-traditional security issues. In this regard, participants emphasized the importance of capability building, information sharing and intelligence exchanges among the ARF participants in their efforts to address non-traditional security concerns. Some participants expressed the hope that the ARF would establish relations with the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism in Kuala Lumpur.

15. Australia briefed the Meeting on its contribution to regional efforts in the fight against Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and HIV/AIDS (**Annex K**), and on the Ministerial Meeting on Combating Illegal Immigrants and Human Trafficking and introduced the follow-ups on the workshop on Managing Consequences of a Major Terrorist Attack conducted by Australia and Singapore in Darwin on 3-5 June 2003. The Meeting noted Singapore's presentation on the register of country points of contact for CBRN terrorism and Singapore's request for participants to submit their nominations by 22 December 2003. The explanatory note is at **Annex L**. The Meeting also noted plans by Australia and Indonesia to co-host a regional ministerial counter-terrorism meeting in Bali in February next year.

16. Some participants emphasized the importance of enhancing maritime security, and called for the ARF participants to undertake concrete cooperative measures including sharing of information for combating piracy and other maritime crimes. Participants took note of different workshops hosted by participants.

17. Participants expressed their concern over the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) as well as the heightened risk of WMD falling into the hands of non-state actors. Some called for the strengthening of measures such as export and financial control in preventing the proliferation of WMD.

Japan briefed the Meeting on the outcome of the Asian Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation held in Tokyo on 13th November 2003 (Annex M). Some participants also raised the challenges to national and regional security of small arms and light weapons, as well as land mines and urged the ARF to consider practical measures to address these issues.

18. The Philippines and Russia briefed the Meeting on their preparation for the next Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-terrorism and Transnational Crimes to be held in Manila in March 30-31, 2004, which would focus on transport security. Some participants proposed the inclusion of representatives from organizations such as International Law Enforcement Academy (Thailand) and the Southeast Asia Regional Center for Counter-Terrorism (Malaysia) in the meeting.

Consideration of CBMs

19. Participants agreed that progress had been made in the implementation of various CBMs, and that the level of confidence and trust had been enhanced under the ARF auspices. Participants agreed to further strengthen confidence-building measures, which should remain as a main thrust of the ARF process. \

20. The Meeting took note of the implementation of agreed CBMs and reports by organizing countries on the following activities:

- 7th ARF Meeting of the Heads of Defence Colleges/Institutions in New Delhi, 15-17 October 2003 (Annex N).
- Workshop on Managing Consequences of a Major Terrorist Attack held in Darwin on 3-5 June 2003.

21. Participants noted that the following CBMs that will be held this inter-sessional year:

- Seminar on Civil-military Relations and the Rule of Law in Brunei on February 11-12, 2004 (Brunei, US).
- 8th ARF Meeting of the Head of Defence Colleges/Institutions. (Singapore).

22. The Meeting revised the list of proposed CBM activities, removing those already implemented and adding new proposed CBMs to Basket 1 and Basket 2. The proposed revision to the list is at **Annex O**.

23. The Meeting received draft Concept Papers for the following proposed CBMs:

- China proposed to hold an ARF Seminar on Alternative Development (**Annex P**);
- China proposed to hold an ARF Seminar on Non-traditional Security Cooperation (**Annex Q**);

24. The Republic of Korea proposed to hold an ARF Seminar on Cyber-terrorism during the second half of 2004.

25. Japan briefed the outcome of 8th Tokyo Defence Forum and coming 3rd Sub-committee of the Forum.

26. The Philippines proposed to draft Terms of Reference of the Annual Meeting of the ARF Heads of Defence Colleges/Institutions before next ISG meeting in Yangon.

27. New Zealand briefed the Meeting on the progress of updating the ARF Register of CBMs and urged participants to provide full details of CBMs for the complete establishment of database of the Register.

Future Direction of the ARF

28. Participants were of the view that the ARF had made good progress during the past decade, and that the usefulness of the ARF as a forum for political and security dialogue and cooperation, with ASEAN as the driving force, should be maintained. (The ARF should continue to observe the basic principles featuring decision-making by consensus and non-interference?) At the same time, participants also stressed that the ARF should keep abreast with the times, and move forward at a pace comfortable to all. In this regard, the Meeting urged greater progress made in the implementation of the adopted (Nine Recommendations of the Stocktaking of the ARF process. ^

29. The Meeting stressed that it was important to increase the involvement of defence officials in the ARF process. To this end, they welcomed China's efforts in drafting the Concept Paper on "the ARF Security Policy Conference" (Annex R). They agreed to further discuss and try to reach consensus on the concept paper among the ARF participants for the submission to the ARF SOM in 2004.

30. Some participants also expressed the view that the ARF should strengthen informal liaison with other regional and international organizations such as the UN, APEC, SCO and OSCE as well as linkage between Track I and Track II.

(i) Preventive Diplomacy

31. Participants stressed the need to implement the Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy adopted at the 8th ARF Ministerial Meeting, and to continue discussion on preventive diplomacy as mandated by the ARF Ministers. Some participants suggested that the ARF EEPs conduct study on this issue. Some participants expressed the hope that the workshop to be held by Japan in March 2004 would produce concrete ideas and proposals to facilitate the ARF to implement the adopted paper on Preventive Diplomacy.

(ii) Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair

32. The Meeting complimented the ARF Chair for the efforts made in enhancing the role of the Chair. Participants agreed to extend further cooperation and support for the ARF Chair in carrying out the mandates outlined in the paper on the Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair. Some mentioned ASEAN Secretariat's assistance to the ARF Chair in the form of "ARF unit". Some participants expressed the hope that "the Friends of the Chair" could be introduced when necessary.

(iii) ARF Register of Experts/Eminent Persons

33. Participants expressed their appreciation of the efforts by the Republic of Korea in drafting the Guidelines for the Operation of the ARF EEPs (**Annex S**), and encouraged further discussion. They also expressed their hope that consensus could be reached, so that the operation of the EEPs could be initiated at an early date.

(iv) Annual Security Outlook

34. The Meeting observed that the continued publication of the ARF Annual Security Outlook was an important contribution to transparency, and therefore to confidence-building, among ARF participants. Therefore, the co-chair encouraged the ARF participants to submit Annual Security Outlook on voluntary basis to the ARF Chair for compilation before the next ISG on CBMs in the first half of 2004.

Arrangements for the next ISG Meeting

35. The Union of Myanmar welcomed the participants to attend the next ISG meeting to be held in Yangon on 11-13 April 2004.

Other Matters

36. The co-chair briefed the **ISG** on the outcome of the discussion at the Defence Officials' Dialogue held on 19 November 2003. A report on the Defence Officials' Dialogue is attached at **Annex T**.