

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

YANGON, MYANMAR
11-14 APRIL 2004

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 10th Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 18 June 2003, the Inter-sessional Support Group on Confidence Building Measures (ISG on CBMs), co-chaired by the Union of Myanmar and the People's Republic of China, held the second Meeting of the 2003-2004 inter-sessional year in Yangon, Myanmar on 11-14 April 2004.
2. Representatives from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, United States of America, Viet Nam and the ASEAN Secretariat attended the Meeting. The Defence Officials' Dialogue was held on 11 April 2004. The Agenda of the ISG Meeting is attached as Annex A, the Programme of Activities as Annex B and the list of Participants as Annex C.

Exchange of Views on the Regional and International Situation

3. The Meeting had an extensive exchange of views on recent political and security developments in the region and some countries specific issues were mentioned. The discussions were held in an open manner and covered the whole spectrum of political and security issues.
4. The Meeting noted that the region and the world had witnessed significant changes in recent years. Participants expressed their belief that peace, cooperation and development in the region could only be achieved through concerted efforts of the countries in the region. They noted with satisfaction that relations between countries continued to be stable, and that regional cooperation was further enhanced within sub-regional, regional and multilateral frameworks.
5. The Meeting welcomed the outcome of the 9th ASEAN Summit held in Bali, Indonesia on 7-8 October 2003 and support was expressed for the Bali Concord II as the blue print to achieve an ASEAN Community which rests on its three pillars of ASEAN Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-cultural Community. The Meeting stressed the importance of the ASC in contributing to the further promotion of peace and security in the region, ASEAN's determination to move forward the stages of ARF and that ASC will strengthen ASEAN's role as the primary driving force in the ARF. The Meeting's support was expressed for China and India's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. The Meeting also noted the outcome of the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit held in Tokyo, Japan on 11-12 December 2003. They expressed their confidence that the development would contribute to the long-term peace and stability in the region.

6. 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 Korean Peninsula and 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 successful convening of the second round of the Six-Party Talks in Beijing and the Chairman's Statement thereof. Participants commended the Chinese government for its efforts in this direction. Participants welcomed the efforts to continue inter-Korean dialogue. They expressed their hope that DPRK would actively participate in the ARF.

7. The Meeting also noted the progress achieved in the fight against terrorism since the ISG on CBMs Meeting in November 2003. The Participants deplored terrorist attacks in various places and called for further strengthening of regional cooperation to counter terrorism. The Meeting supported the ongoing efforts of the ARF participating countries to prevent, suppress and eradicate acts of terrorism in all forms and manifestations and welcomed the outcome of the 4th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and the First AMMTC +3 (China, Japan and Republic of Korea) in Bangkok in January 2004.

8. The Meeting welcomed the follow-up activities for the realisation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, including the planned holding of ASEAN-China Symposium on the realisation of the Declaration.

9. Participants noted the improvements in the security situation in the Pacific, but acknowledged that challenges remained in attaining long-term objectives of reform. Participants noted the success to date of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) under the auspices of the Pacific Islands Forum.

Voluntary Background Briefings

10. The Meeting welcomed the following voluntary briefings:

- Briefing by People's Republic of China on the second round of Six Party Talks on the Korean Peninsula.
- Briefing by Indonesia and Australia on the outcomes of the Bali Regional Ministerial Meeting on Counter Terrorism. (Annex D)
- Briefing by the European Union on European Security Strategy, EU Strategy against proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, International Criminal Court (ICC). (Annex E)
- Briefing by the United States on the Concept paper: Revitalizing Annual Security Outlook (Annex F)
- Briefing by Malaysia on Malaysia's mediation role in the Peace Process in Mindanao. (Annex G)
- Briefing by United States on Global Posture Review. (Annex H)
- Briefing by Cambodia on Meeting on Non-Proliferation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ministry of National Defence, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Commerce of Cambodia with the Japanese Mission on Non-Proliferation. (Annex I)
- Briefing by Australia and New Zealand on Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). (Annex J)
- Briefing by Japan on Japan's efforts to promote cooperation for Non-Proliferation in Asia. (Annex K)

- Briefing by the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) on its activities (Annex L)

Non-Traditional Security Issues

11. The Meeting acknowledged that non-traditional security issues such as terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, money laundering, cyber crimes and infectious diseases posed serious challenges and that closer cooperation and mutual support were essential in tackling these issues, including capacity building, information sharing and intelligence exchange among the ARF participants

12 Participants reiterated that terrorism remained a serious threat to the region. Participants emphasised the need to further strengthen regional cooperation to combat terrorism, including through capacity building and information sharing and intelligence exchanges. The Meeting welcomed and agreed to actively participate in the SEARCCT's activities.

13. Participants welcomed the February 2004 Bali Regional Ministerial Meeting on Counter-terrorism, co-chaired by Indonesia and Australia, and the announcement of the establishment of the Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation (JCLEC).

14. The Meeting noted the particular importance of transport security for the peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. Participants endorsed the outcome of the ARF ISM on CT TC's held in Manila on 30-31 March 2004 which was co-chaired by the Philippines and Russia. (Annex M)

15. The Meeting underscored the need to enhance international cooperation to solve the problem of illicit drugs which continues to pose a threat to human security.

16. Participants expressed their continuing concern over the proliferation of (WMD), their delivery means, small arms and light weapons and underlined the importance of fulfilling their individual and collective commitments to multilateral cooperation in the fields of arms control, disarmament and non proliferation. Some suggested that the ARF could contribute to the strengthening of export controls in the region as a way of preventing the proliferation of WMD. The United States tabled a revised draft statement on non-proliferation, sought comments on the draft from ARF participants by the end of April in advance of the SOM in Indonesia in May.(Annex S)

Consideration of CBMs

17. Participants noted the progress made in the implementation of various CBMs and the level of confidence and trust realised under the ARF. Participants agreed to further strengthen confidence-bunding measures.

18. In order to update the register on CBMs, New Zealand requested members who have sponsored CBMs to complete the registration forms as soon as possible. Should members agree, the register could now be posted as an adjunct to the New Zealand Ministry of Defence website.

19. The Meeting took note of the implementation of agreed CBMs and their reports:

- The briefings by Brunei and U.S. delegations on the ARF Workshop on "Civil-Military Relations and the Rule of Law" in Brunei Darussalem, 11-12 February 2004 (Annex N)
- The briefings by the delegations of Japan and Thailand on the ARF Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy held in Tokyo, Japan on 16-17, March, 2004. (Annex O)

20 The Meeting noted the following new CBMs proposed for the consideration of the ARF:

- Japan's concept paper on the ARF Workshop on Civil-Military Cooperation in Post-Conflict Reconstruction Assistance.
- Singapore's concept paper on Regional Cooperation in Maritime Security.
- China's concept paper on holding of seminars on Alternative Development
- China's concept paper on Enhancing Cooperation in the Field of Non-traditional Security Issues.
- The Philippines' TOR on Heads of defence Colleges/Universities.
- US concept paper on ARF CBM Seminar, Regional Maritime Security.
- The Philippines' concept paper on the ARF Symposium on Civil-Military Operations.

21. The Meeting welcomed the register of country points of contact for CBNR terrorism prepared by Singapore and its request for participants who have not done so to submit their nominations before the ARF SOM in May.

22. The Meeting took note of the "Concept paper on the ARF Workshop on Civil-Military Cooperation in Post-Conflict Reconstruction Assistance" proposed by Japan. Some participants expressed their hope for further clarification so as to facilitate future discussion on the proposed workshop.

23. The Meeting noted that the outcome of 3rd Tokyo Defence Forum Subcommittee and the coming 9th Tokyo Defence Forum, which will commemorate Japan Defence Agency's and Self Defence Forces' 50th anniversary.

24. The Meeting revised the list of proposed CBM activities, removing those already implemented and adding new proposed CBMs to Basket 1 and Basket 2. (Annex P).

Future Direction of the ARF

25. The Meeting reaffirmed the important contribution of the ARF, as the only political and security forum in the region, to regional security and reiterated the importance of further strengthening the ARF, including its progress towards Preventive Diplomacy.

26. Participants expressed the view that the ARF continued to make further progress and that the role of the ARF as a forum for political and security dialogue in the region should be maintained. Participants agreed that ASEAN should remain the driving force in the ARF process. The participants stressed that the ARF should continue to move forward at a pace comfortable to all. The Meeting agreed that member countries should strive for progress in the implementation of the Recommendations of the Stocktaking of the ARF process.

27 The Meeting also discussed the topic of strengthening ties with other regional and international organizations such as the United Nations, SCO and OSCE as well as linkage between Track I and II, and recommended the consideration of additional Track II Meetings in association with upcoming ISGs.

28. The Meeting noted the Concept-Paper: Reconsidering the ARF Functioning for the Coming Decade by Japan.

Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair

29. The Meeting reaffirmed that the ARF Chair should assume an enhanced role, in coordination between ARF meetings with the aim of enhancing mutual understanding and promoting continuity and efficiency of the ARF process building on the paper "Enhanced Role of the Chair" adopted by the ARF. In this connection, the Meeting discussed several proposals including the "Friends of the Chair."

Proposal for ARF Unit and participation of ASEAN Secretariat in ARF

30. The Meeting welcomed the participation of the ASEAN Secretariat in the ISG on CBMs for the first time and agreed to invite the ASEAN Secretariat in all the ARF ISG and related meetings.

31. The Meeting discussed the drafts Terms of Reference for an ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat to support the enhanced role of the ARF Chair. The Meeting agreed to use the ASEAN draft as the basis for future consideration of this matter taking into consideration the views and expectations of the non-ASEAN ARF members. Participants supported the initial establishment of ARF Unit in the ASEAN Secretariat and recommended that this recommendation be forwarded to the SOM in Indonesia in May with a view toward approval by Ministers.

ARF Register of Experts/Eminent Persons

32. Participants discussed the final draft guidelines for the Operation of the ARF EEPs and expressed their hope that ARF Foreign Ministers' Meeting could adopt it to activate the EEPs at an early date. (Annex Q)

Preventive Diplomacy

33. The Meeting discussed the principles and scope of Preventive Diplomacy to ensure the continued relevance of the ARF to the changing global situation. The Meeting emphasised the need to further explore ways and means for ARF to implement Preventive Diplomacy. The Meeting also noted Canada's "Food for Thought/Non Paper on Preventive Diplomacy".

34. The Meeting welcomed the recommendations contained in the Co-chairs' summary at the ARF Workshop on Preventive Diplomacy, held in Japan in March 2004, which would serve as a useful basis for taking the ARF process forward to implement Preventive Diplomacy and recommended that the workshop's conclusions and recommendations be forwarded to the SOM for further consideration.

Annual Security Outlook

35. The Meeting observed that the ARF Annual Security Outlook promoted transparency, and therefore contributed to confidence building among ARF participants. The Meeting encouraged members that have not done so, to submit their inputs to the next Annual Security Outlook to the ARF Chair for compilation before the ARF SOM in May 2004.

Arrangements for the next ISG Meeting

36. Cambodia and European Union proposed to hold the next ISG on CBMs for 2004 - 2005 inter-sessional year.

Other Matters

37. The Meeting stressed the importance of increasing the involvement of defence officials in the ARF process. In this regard, the Meeting supported, in principle the revised Concept Paper on the ARF Security Policy Conference (SPC) by China and agreed to continue to work out the specific format of the SPC. The Meeting agreed that comments be submitted to the co-chairs by end April 2004 and that a revised draft be submitted to the ARF-SOM in May 2004 for consideration of the ARF-SOM.

38. The Co-Chairs briefed the ISG on the outcome of the discussion at the Defence Officials' Dialogue held on 11th April 2004. A report on the Defence Officials' Dialogue is attached as (Annex R).